

**TOWN OF FAIRLEE
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 6:00 PM
Town of Fairlee Town Hall
Grange Room
75 Town Common Road
Fairlee, VT 05045**

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair Tiftt called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

PRESENT

Commission Members: Tim Danen, Chair (Absent); Doug Tiftt, Vice Chair, (Present); Lisa Avery (Present); Lynne Fitzhugh (Present); Susanne Pacilio (Present); Moriah Ludwig (Present online). A quorum was met.

Zoning Administrator: Chris Brimmer (Present)

Minutes Clerk: Joanna Bligh (Present)

Visitors: None.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS:

MOTION: Fitzhugh made the motion, and Ludwig seconded the motion, to approve the agenda as amended.

- Vice Chair Tiftt added a discussion of a Conservation Commission speaker at the Town Meeting.

Vote: All approved, none opposed, and none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

HOUSEKEEPING:

- ZA Brimmer stated that after the Town Meeting, the Planning Commission will hold its Organizational Meeting to vote for a slate of officers. Adam Pritchard will be taking a 4-year term, and Tiftt will take a 2-year term.

MINUTES APPROVAL:

MOTION: Avery made the motion, and Pacilio seconded the motion, to approve the minutes from January 7, 2026, as amended.

Vote: All approved, none opposed, and none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

TAKE-AWAYS FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD LISTENING SESSION

ZA Brimmer asked the members for their comments from the Listening Sessions and reminded the members that the residents' comments in aggregate will be included in the Town Plan update.

- Avery asked about the Community Locker, and ZA Brimmer replied that it is a place to store books, brochures, or Town information for visitors.
- Fitzhugh asked about the Business Directory, and ZA Brimmer replied that during an upcoming meeting we will host a Business Roundtable to talk about keeping restaurants open late, coordinating hours, conveying economic data, encouraging business

expansion, and providing business sector communication. ZA Brimmer noted that business owners find it difficult to get away to attend a meeting.

- ZA Brimmer stated that another listening session should be for the police and fire chiefs, the Rec Council chair, and others providing services to the Town.
- Vice Chair Tifft added that there should be pages in the Town Plan focused on economic development, and that residents do not know about the Town Plan. Fitzhugh asked if any part of the Town Plan has been implemented. has been implemented.
- Pacilio asked about the Boat Ramp and the Greeter Program to prevent transporting invasives.
- Vice Chair Tifft asked about a boat ramp for the Connecticut River, and ZA Brimmer noted that river access is an aspirational item.

TIER 1B AND VISIT FROM TRORPC

ZA Brimmer provided the members with the map of the Regional Future Land Use (DRAFT) from Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission (TRORPC) and a letter from TRORPC to the Fairlee Selectboard dated January 17th, which listed the criteria for establishing a Tier 1B area in Fairlee for increased housing units.

Discussion:

- ZA Brimmer stated that the map is “unacceptable,” and there is no Tier 1 north of the palisades. TRORPC chief planner Kevin Geiger will be visiting Fairlee to discuss the map and the Tiers. The meeting date is TBD
- Ludwig noted that on the map the colors are mixed up.
- Avery agreed that the colors need to be redrafted.
- Fitzhugh stated that the map does not go to the north far enough.
- ZA Brimmer noted that for development to the north, there does not have to be bike-ped connection along Route 5. A bike-ped trail connection should go off the roadway.
- ZA Brimmer stated that he will drive Geiger around Town.
- Pacilio asked about developing housing near the AmeriGas property.

ZA Brimmer cited the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that would prevent home construction on that site.

- ZA Brimmer spoke about DownStreet (<https://downstreet.org/>), a first-time home buyer agency.
- ZA Brimmer encouraged the members to contact TRORPC to express opinions about the Regional Future Land Use map.
- ZA Brimmer noted that the Selectboard will speak for the Town to TRORPC.
- ZA Brimmer summarized that there is consensus from the Commissioners that the map is rejected.

SIGN ORDINANCE

ZA Brimmer stated that the Selectboard is focused on signage around Town because Fairlee has no sign ordinance. However, the content of signs is a first amendment right, and the Selectboard is considering controlling the language on signs. ZA Brimmer noted that the size and lighting of signs can be regulated. And the police can remove signs from the public right-of-way.

MOTION: Fitzhugh made the motion, and Avery seconded the motion, to pass along to the Zoning Administrator that a sign ordinance is an administrative issue.

Vote: All approved, none opposed, and none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

DARK SKY COMPLIANT

ZA Brimmer discussed that the dark-sky compliant lighting practices are not in the Bylaw. Avery noted that there is no national standard. Clemson forwarded materials about Dark Sky practices from the International DarkSky Association (<https://darksky.org/>).

Discussion:

- Pacilio asked if there were Vermont standards, and ZA Brimmer responded that DarkSky Vermont (<https://darkskyvt.org/>) are a division of DarkSky International and are only advisory.

AARP CHALLENGE GRANT

Smart Bike Parking Stations

ZA Brimmer announced an available grant of \$650 with no matching funds to build charging stations for ebikes.

Discussion:

- Avery asked if it was needed.
- Vice Chair Tiftt asked about the location of choice. He also suggested contacting Vt Bike and Brew to ask about their ebike chargers. He also mentioned that there are many different charging plugs.
- Avery suggested locating them at the library or Town Hall.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION AT TOWN MEETING

Vice Chair Tiftt noted that the Selectboard approved the Conservation Commission to be on the warrant. He asked for volunteers to speak at Town Meeting for the Conservation Commission. Fitzhugh suggested providing a handout. ZA Brimmer stated that this approval would be a major checkoff in the Town Plan checklist. Vice Chair Tiftt volunteered to speak at the Town Meeting.

MOTION: Fitzhugh made the motion, and Pacilio seconded the motion, to endorse approval of a Conservation Commission at Town Meeting because establishment of a Conservation Commission is included in the Town Plan.

Vote: All approved, none opposed, and none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING:

- Regular Planning Commission meeting on **March 4, 2026**.

ADJOURN

Vice Chair Tiftt asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: Ludwig made the motion, and Pacilio seconded the motion, to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 PM.

Vote: All approved, none opposed, and none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Transcribed by Joanna Bligh, Minutes Clerk

DRAFT