

TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN  
Economic Development Committee  
Minutes - Thursday January 23, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.  
East Room, Fairhaven Town Hall  
Fairhaven, Ma 02719

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2020 SEP -8 P 12:13

FAIRHAVEN,  
MASS.

**Quorum & Attendance:**

**Present:** Chairperson Kevin McLaughlin, Eddie Lopez, Bernie Roderick, Geoff Haworth,

**Absent:** Todd McGregor, Robert Espindola, Mark Rees, and John Seed

The Town Planner (Paul Foley) and the Building Commissioner (Kristian White) were also in attendance.

**Approval of Minutes – September 26, 2019**

Chairperson Kevin McLaughlin called the meeting to order and ensured everyone in attendance had a copy of the September 26, 2019 meeting minutes' draft. Eddie Lopez made a motion to accept the minutes and was seconded by Mr. Roderick. Motion passed unanimously.

**Potential Building Permit fee increases:**

Mr. Kristian White provided the committee a handout of examples of increases and the different types of permits and reviewed it with the Committee stating the last time the fees were increased was 2013.

Mr. Roderick inquired how we compared to other towns and cities of equal size and Mr. White let the committee know how pricing falls across the board stating that out of 52 random municipalities throughout the state 24 were above the \$10 residential/\$15 commercial, 15 were below, and 13 use the \$10/\$15 model. He advised that every town is different and there is no method in place for increases but it was recommended to increase \$10 for residential.

Mr. Roderick asked if the fees we collecting now are sufficient or do we need more and Mr. White said the town is trying to install town wide permitting software and any increases would be used to defer the cost. Due to the fees not being looked at since 2013 it should be analyzed.

Mr. White provided the committee a breakdown of where the bulk of the fees were coming from at this time and noted that permits are economy driven. Mr. McLaughlin stated there is not a lot of available land in this town and Mr. White confirmed that most of the permits for new developments are for demo and rebuild.

Mr. Lopez said that if the majority of permit money coming in now is for remodeling most homeowners will not see much of a change and he does not see a problem with making a change while the economy is good.

Mr. McLaughlin said Mr. White has a good handle on the data and asked to have it put on a spreadsheet to see what it will look like.

**Parking By-Law:**

Mr. Foley stated that O'Reilly's Auto Parts and Dollar General are planning to go into the Benny's site and they were looking at 209 parking spaces including the package store. He said they are actually gaining parking spots by taking away the overhang so customers can pull up to the store without crossing the drive. They have agreed to make the façade look better by adding some faux gables. They are also increasing the size of some of the planting aisles and adding trees to the street in front and back. Mr. Foley also told the committee that he recently took a tour of the Citizens Bank space to see some ideas on what it could be used for. He advised the committee he is proposing to do a Redevelopment Study for the entire Route 6 and 240 shopping plazas in order to analyze what is really needed for parking. It appears that some of the large asphalt parking lots are not used a lot and could be

used to build new developments. The study would continue the discussion on how a bylaw could be more modern and updated.

**Broadband Study Committee:**

Mr. McLaughlin advised the committee that Mr. Espindola, who gave a quick overview in the last meeting, was not able to attend tonight's meeting so they will keep this on the agenda for the next scheduled meeting.

**Incubator:**

Mr. McLaughlin advised the committee Todd MacGregor has information regarding this topic and unfortunately he is out of town and not able to attend the meeting. This item will be kept on the agenda to be discussed in the next meeting when he is in attendance and can present it to the committee.

**Goals of Economic Development:**

Mr. McLaughlin stated he forwarded the FXM Fairhaven Economic Development Report to all the committee members to keep focused on the agenda's and goals of this committee. FXM came back with recommendations and set 5 goals for the committee. At this time there are no action items for the goals they will keep them on the agenda to refer to when needed. Mr. Foley advised the committee those goals were also adopted in the Master Plan and the proposed Economic Development Study would accomplish fulfill several of the goals.

**Route 6/240 Redevelopment Study:**

Mr. Foley let the committee know that the Town is eligible to apply for the State's Community Compact grant. He wants to use it as a match for a Federal Grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to do the Redevelopment Study. He is asking the Board for \$5,000 towards this plan to show the State and the EDA that the Town is buying into the plan. Mr. Foley noted that most of the proposed area is in the Opportunity Zone and people who may want to invest in the Opportunity Zone want to have the zoning and other incentives in place to develop. Mr. McLaughlin motioned to authorize \$5,000 be used towards the Rt. 6/240 study, the motion was seconded by Mr. Lopez and the vote to approve was unanimous.

**Meeting Schedule for 2020:**

Mr. McLaughlin advised the committee to take a look at the proposed meeting schedule for the entire year and the schedule will be sent along to members who are not present. We will look at it next time when people have a chance to check their schedule. The next committee meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2020 at 6:30PM the third Thursday of the month.

Bernard Roderick advised the committee he will not be able to attend meetings due to other Town meeting obligations every Thursday from February 20, 2020 through April 16, 2020. Mr. McLaughlin said he will see if any of the dates can be changed to accommodate this.

**Committee questionnaire:**

Mr. McLaughlin advised the committee the Selectman office is asking all boards to answer basic questions outlined in the Committee Questionnaire. Mr. Foley stated the selectmen are looking for one answer for each question from the committee. Mr. McLaughlin reviewed each question with the members and said he will forward a copy of the questionnaire to all the members of the committee to look over and discuss at the next meeting.

**Member resignation:**

Mr. McLaughlin advised the committee that member John Seed has been appointed as President for the New Bedford and Wareham Boys and Girls Club and would no longer have the time needed to give and support the committee. He stated Mr. Espindola forwarded this information to the Board of Selectman to advise them of this resignation and that it is an appointed. Mr. Foley stated it would be good to remind Mark Rees that another committee member will be needed and request it be added to the Selectman meeting agenda.

**Any other business reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the post of this meeting:**

Mr. McLaughlin asked the committee if anyone had any other business they would like to address and no one had any.

Geoffrey Haworth made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Bernard Roderick. Motion passed at 8:15pm unanimously.

Respectively submitted,

Mary Lou Krosschell  
Recording Secretary