

**Fairhaven Planning Board  
January 24, 2017**

**A. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

Mr. Hayward opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and noted they were not being recorded on the Government Access Channel because this was to be an informal work session with the Master Plan Consultant, VHB, but future meeting were anticipated to be recorded.

Present: Chairman, Wayne Hayward, John Farrell, Jr., Rene Fleurent, Jeffrey Lucas, Cathy Melanson and Ann Richard.

Absent: Vice Chair-Gary Staffon and Clerk-Peter Nopper

William Roth, Planning Director, was also in attendance.

**Acceptance of Minutes:**

January 10, 2017 – Wayne Hayward had a few corrections to the minutes. Ann Richard made a motion to accept the minutes as amended and was seconded by Jeffrey Lucas. The motion passed unanimously.

Wayne Hayward advised the Board that he did put in an amended budget to cover additional projected salary expense.

**Bills:** None

**B. Current Planning:** None

Receipt of Plans: None.

Approval of Plans: None.

Revised plans: None.

**C. PUBLIC HEARING:** None.

**D. LONG RANGE PLANNING:** Meeting with Master Plan Consultant – VHB – Jeff Morrison-Logan

William Roth began by stating he gave a tour of Fairhaven to the Consultants on this day (Tuesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>) around Fairhaven. He said the Consultants also had interviews with Town Staff and organizations throughout the day. They met with the Council on Aging Director, Kevin McLaughlin (who is the Chairperson on the Economic Development Committee, as well as a business owner), the Fairhaven Business Association (Cathy Melanson), Wayne Hayward and Mr. Roth himself. Mr. Roth also stated that they met with Mark Rees (Town Administrator), Dr. Baldwin (School Superintendent) and Tim Cox (Harbormaster).

He explained that DPW Superintendent's, Vinnie Furtado and Linda Shick were at a conference in Boston, but that VHB also spoke with John Charbonneau, Highway Superintendent. VHB also met with Louise Barteau (Open Space Committee), Wayne Fostin (Conservation Agent/Building Commissioner) and Deidre Healy (Sustainability Committee). Anyone they missed or were not available would be contacted over the phone.

Mr. Morrison-Logan then gave a brief description of their day and insights. He said, "It was an awesome day. Great day."

He said they toured the Center of Fairhaven, Fairhaven High School area, newer subdivisions, Scoticut Neck area, and there they found it was the opposite of what they had thought it was going to look like. They also toured West Island, Shaws Cove Road, talked about the empty school buildings and toured Benoit Square Corridor.

Mr. Morrison-Logan told the Board he was there this evening to hear from the Board. He would like to understand where they are in thinking of Fairhaven; where there are issues. He stated they would be using the next three to four weeks to get to know the Town of Fairhaven.

Mr. Morrison-Logan then went over the time table for Fairhaven. He noted the first three months would be the emerging vision: issues and opportunities, and interviews.

The next four to nine months would be drafting the Master Plan, broadening goals.

Months ten to twelve would be implementation, how do you get there!

He explained the team would have six meetings with the Board and they would be communicating with Mr. Roth and Mr. Hayward every two weeks. They would also be suggesting two public forums throughout the process.

Wayne Hayward asked about public forums being staggered to get the best input. Mr. Morrison-Logan said they would meet with the Board first, then the next month would be the public forum.

Mr. Roth asked how they were going to get the public to participate, what ideas worked in the past for the team?

Mr. Morrison-Logan went over some ideas for bringing the Public Forums together that have worked for them in the past. He explained they can use a mini remote that is something like a poll taker, and ask questions in the meeting and the public can answer on their mini remote. He said he would ask them 'what is your vision for the Town'. He said they could set up a survey online through survey monkey to add more participation. He also stated depending on the number of people they could do small group discussions.

There were discussions on creating vision boards on big poster boards and have them available around Town so residents could review them. Mr. Morrison-Logan said it was really up to the Board and how formal or informal they wanted the action pieces.

Jeffrey Lucas stated that he would like to see broad goals to seek feedback from residents, perhaps an online survey asking for narratives and a link back to the Planning office as a funnel through survey monkey.

A little discussion to who was going to host the website. Mr. Roth though VHB would host a website, but Mr. Morrison-Logan stated that he thought Mr. Roth would add a page to the Town website. The two will review after the meeting.

More ideas of how to get the community involved were discussed. Perhaps information at the library, meeting with different associations in Town (like NFIA, etc) who could add something to their bulletin board, a drop box, Farmer's Market.

Mr. Morrison-Logan suggested a "Celebrating Master Plan" kickoff.

The discussion then turned to who else VHB would be in contact with from Staff among the Town. Mr. Roth said the team would conduct phone interviews with housing, tourism, DPW, Historic Committee, Fire and Police, the Librarian.

John Farrell asked if they would be talking to local business owners, and suggested perhaps the Southcoast Group.

Mr. Roth suggested Paul Downey, who owns the AT&T building and leases out space to individual companies.

Cathy Melanson made a suggestion that a vision board of the project be put up at Town Meeting.

Mr. Roth stated that his office could send a postcard out to pass out the survey link.

There were discussions on upcoming candidates' nights for this year's election, and perhaps the vision boards be present at those evenings with a few Board representatives there to pass the word. More discussion on perhaps making up fliers and mailing them or handing them out to residents and/or precinct captains.

Discussion on what night would work best for residents, for a Public Forum. A night meeting or a Saturday afternoon. Ann Richard suggested having childcare available with high school students so that parents can fully attend the meeting.

Mr. Morrison-Logan tossed an idea out that in one town they created a poster and had it at the local schools and asked children at the schools to write down 'I wish the future could be..', he said it was well received by the schools and they got some great ideas from the children. He said they could plan a family event and have a "Color your vision" table for the children, so the parents could attend the meeting.

A few **Action items** that came from the discussions:

Visual Boards by VHB would be created for Candidates Night & other spots in Town would be made and available by February 20, 2017. The Planning Board is meeting on February 21, 2017; so they could see them.

The next meeting with the Planning Board would be March 14, 2017.

The following meeting with the Planning Board would be March 28, 2017.

And either April 5, 2017, or April 6, 2017, would be the first Public Forum. It would be held at Town Hall in the upstairs auditorium, possible 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. with refreshments.

There were then discussions on how they would work the Planning Board meetings.

Mr. Morrison-Logan said he would set up a SharePoint site, and email everyone the password. The Board would then be able to get on the site a week in advance to look over information before VHB came back to meet with them.

Mr. Roth cautioned everyone not to use the "reply all" button when responding to comments.

Mr. Morrison-Logan stated that they like one point of contact, and that is Mr. Roth. He would share the information out to him and Mr. Roth would send to all the members. Mr. Roth agreed he would set up a "Master Plan" basic information page on the Town website with attachments and links.

There was a brief discussion, without a decision being made, on the use of a social media/Facebook page. There is a Town policy that has to be followed to making up the page.

The Board with Mr. Morrison-Logan than started to discuss "Hot Topics", with Mr. Morrison-Logan itemizing what he and the team felt were the Hot Topics in Town.

**1. Land Use** – Rising Sea level. Infrastructures on the waterfront and integrating tourism use, keeping in mind rising tide. The “center” of Town as the tourism core, being historical, with restaurants. There isn’t a lot of tourism on waterfront. Historic Protection.

Everyone agreed there has to be a maintaining of the working waterfront, and using that to the fullest advantage; whether it be a Fish Market or Restaurant. Ideas were discussed.

Discussion to having the ‘walking/hiking paths’ in Fairhaven designated on its own map or kiosk.  
Action item from the Open Space Committee: A priority to have the walking paths highlighted in a map.

**2. Zoning Redevelopment** – Benny’s, Kmart, Shaw’s, Atlas Tack. Fairhaven is a year round community.

Mr. Morrison-Logan said the team thought small businesses are doing pretty well, but a lot of the big businesses seem to be leaving Town. He said they saw a big difference with commercial vitality on Route 6 vs. Alden Road. They also noticed there was a lack of rental condo choices.

Discussion ensued, with these topics. Regulations-overregulated or driving to outcome you are looking for? Vacancies, how do you prioritize? Southcoast, lessons learned or opportunities to be learned from other communities. Does zoning reinforce what you are looking to do? And of course preserving what we have.

The team’s observation included historic demolition and why isn’t there in place in Fairhaven?

**3. Transportation** – There was little to no impression on transportation, as the Team toured Fairhaven they felt it didn’t look like there were huge traffic issues.

Mr. Morrison-Logan said the team felt the Board should consider complete streets. Pedestrian, bicycles, vehicles, trucks, buses – how complete are the streets we have now? What is the policy for complete streets, what are the funds available?

Wayne Hayward stated he felt Route 6 was a tough place for complete streets. He said that’s why we have the bike path.

Ann Richard expressed that currently North Fairhaven traffic at the Main, Middle and Howland Road intersection is an issue and she felt it would be worse at the Benoit Square corridor depending what happened with Oxford School.

Wayne Hayward discussed the SRTA buses and if there was maps on where there stops were, or more importantly how to get to their stops.

A discussion on signage and light signaling was had. Wayne Hayward expressed that the lights East of Adam were not newly put in and the loops in the signal light changes are not working correctly.

**4. Public Infrastructure** – Mr. Morrison-Logan stated that he and his team would be communicating with Fire/Police and what their plan is for the future. They will be also talking with Sewer Department and the Library.

**5. Natural Resources** – How is the Town making it the best of the best? How do you get into “proactive” vs. reactive (this could be added to a top 10 list).

**6. History of Cultural** – Tourism Director, Chris Richards should be contacted to discuss further. The team will reach out to him.

**7. Town Policy** – Purchase of town vehicles. Sustainability. Recycling. A wish is a better recycling space.

Mr. Morrison-Logan said that the team wondered, "What's happening?" "Where's the growth?" "Hey look over here, at this big project in town." and they weren't sure they could answer those types of questions.

Mr. Hayward said there were and has been big things happening in the Town. That the town has had the first set of solar panels in the area, the wind turbines, and they have two new elementary schools that were recently built.

Mr. Morrison-Logan stated that Fairhaven is a quaint, small community. It's very unique, has a wonderful waterfront, and history. National Resources are amazing.

The Team will move forward in their work and meet back up with the Board in near future.

**E. CORRESPONDENCE:**

None

**F. OTHER BUSINESS:**

In other business, John Farrell, Jr. stated that he was presently on the Open Space and Recreation Committee as the designee for the Planning Board, and with his late work schedule he believes he is not the best candidate to attend; so he was asking if anyone else would like to attend.

Ann Richard said that she will take over the designee for this Committee.

John Farrell, Jr. made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Jeffrey Lucas. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Patricia A. Pacella  
Recording Secretary