



FAIRLEE NEWSLETTER

July 2016

FAIRLEE WORKS BECAUSE...

We write this newsletter having just completed one of Fairlee's iconic moments, the 4th of July. This year's parade, led by a team of bagpipers, celebrated national parks and forests, and was enhanced by a spectacular Fairlee Forest Festival on July 2nd and a barbecue and band on July 3rd. The Selectboard is grateful for **the significant volunteer hours** that went into planning the 4th celebration (Lisa Hinsley, Ann Green, and Brian Hanson) and the Fairlee Forest Festival (Lynne Fitzhugh and the Friends of Fairlee Forests), and is deeply appreciative of a generous contribution that helped fund the Town's fireworks show.

Other invaluable volunteers include members of this year's and last year's Recreation Council (Samantha Hickman, Clyde Blake, Cami Buster, Crystal Champagne, Brooke Gladstone, Matthew Jung, and Victoria Lacasse) who help to ensure that our Town Beach is run smoothly. **Fairlee works because of its volunteers.** Many, many thanks from all of us to all of you.

TOWN CONVERSATION

We invite every community member to a special Town Conversation on Monday, July 25th. From 4 to 5 in the afternoon, the Selectboard will meet with representatives from the Agency of Transportation (AOT) and Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) to discuss what our Town is able to do to calm traffic on state-maintained Route 5. Afterwards, we will have an open dialogue about priorities, and about strategies to attract more visitors, customers, and Town residents. Join us for parts or for all of the session. The Selectboard's work is led by our voters and Town residents. **Please participate in the conversation!**

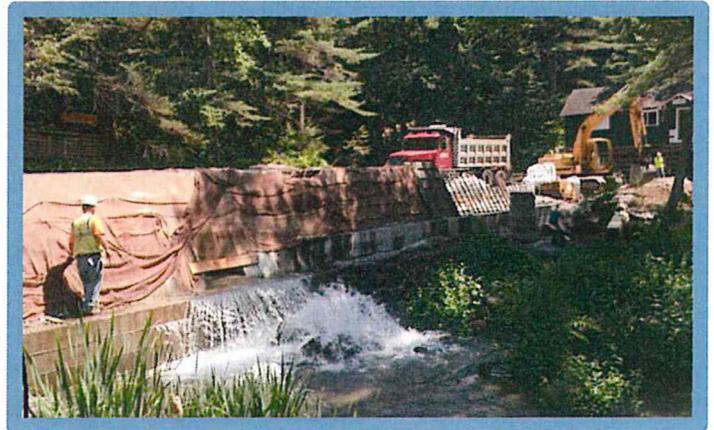
TOWN HALL RENOVATION

Funded by a capital budget of \$75,000-plus and tightly managed by local resident Leet Ware, our historic centerpiece, the Town Hall, now has a lovely new slate roof, which we anticipate will keep us high and dry for the next century.

LAKE FAIRLEE DAM

After a one year delay followed by the hiring of Hebert Excavation, the Lake Fairlee dam is a hotbed

of activity. The complex project, led in 2013 by Fairlee's Selectboard, has resulted in unusual levels of cooperation among Fairlee, West Fairlee, and Thetford and is a model for inter-town collaboration.



SUMMER HIGHWAY PROJECTS

After the flooding on **Quinibeck Road** in 2013, it was evident that the Town needed to invest in highway work near its intersection with Route 244 to prevent similar emergencies in the future. This summer's project will re-establish the ditch that runs along the west side of the road between Route 244 and Hebbard Road. While the project did not require bidding, Brian Hanson sought bids to help ensure the best value for the Town's funds. The project was awarded to Thomson Excavation at the Selectboard meeting on July 11.

Engineering firm Tata & Howard recently completed surface borings on **Lake Morey Road**, in preparation for a close examination of the layers of pavement, sand, and rock that have accumulated over years of spotty repair and deferred maintenance. The engineering study, paid in part by a \$30,000 Class 2 Road grant facilitated by Brian Hanson, will help define what needs to be done over the long term to more effectively maintain Lake Morey Road.

TOWN CENTER

As was recommended by the Town Common Committee, the Town has purchased 12 granite posts for a traditional New England fence on the Common's north end, to protect its grass and create better parking. (For financial reasons, purchasing wood beams and extending the fence further around the Common must wait for another budget cycle.)

Local business owners and residents frequently complain about speeding on our Main Street, Route 5, which is maintained by the State of Vermont. **Safety and local economic development demand the calming of Route 5 traffic.** While Jason Bachus, our Chief of Police, has increased his presence on Main Street, **strategic tree planting** along Route 5 can also slow traffic and make the Town more appealing for residents, customers, and visitors.

At Town Meeting, voters approved \$2,500 in the capital budget for village center beautification. Zoning Administrator Chris Brimmer earned for the Town a \$1,000 grant for trees from Vermont Urban and Community Forest Program, and the Selectboard is considering individual donations for flowering trees that can be named in memory or in honor of a family member or friend.

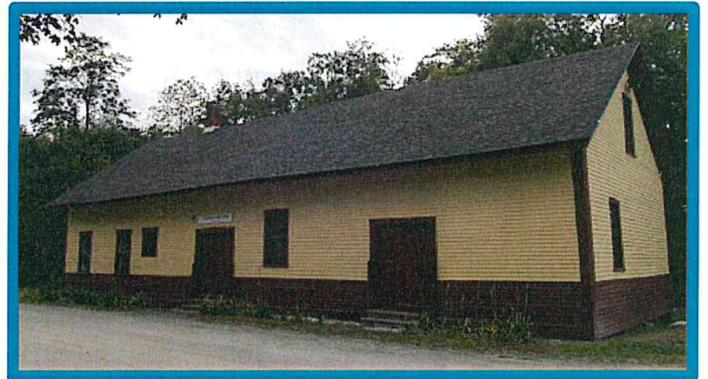
WATER TANKS

In our last newsletter, we described Fairlee's two reservoir tanks adjacent to Bald Top Road, and how the primary 265,000 gallon tank has a cracked roof. Having tapped the expertise of Tim Schaal, an independent structural engineer, engineering firm Aldrich + Elliott, and Gary Leach of Tata & Howard, we continue to evaluate ways to fix the tank roof as well as protect our water storage until repairs are completed. Additionally, the Selectboard and Brian Hanson are in conversations with the USDA and the State about project funding and loans.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Most of Fairlee's housing passes from one to another by word of mouth, and the Town's economic development is hampered by its dearth of workforce housing. To move forward in this area, Zoning Administrator Chris Brimmer initiated a **Buildout and Capacity Study** paid for by a Department of Housing and Community Affairs Municipal Planning Grant. A Steering Committee, led by Elizabeth Wilson, and

including Miranda Clemson, Larry Gatto, Cathy McGrath, Smith Reed and Peter Berger, has been working with planner Brandy Saxton. The purpose of the project is to understand the maximum capacity for construction and development in the central portion of the Town given existing zoning by-laws, infrastructure limitations, and geographic constraints, and to discover what it may take to welcome to Fairlee property redevelopment or new construction, for housing as well as for economic growth.



RAILROAD STATION

Russ Collins' flea market at the Railroad Station appears to have more vendors, customers, and browsers this summer than in the past. Several years ago, Treasurer Melissa Gahagan suggested transferring Railroad Station rental income balances (after expenses) to the Railroad Station fund.

Financed by these transferred balances and accomplished without taxpayer dollars, we were able to bore under Route 5 to replace the old cast iron waterline and now, once again, we have running water at the Station.

Comments or questions?

Peter Berger: selectboardchair@fairleevt.org

Jay Barrett: selectboardvicechair@fairleevt.org

Cathy McGrath: selectboardmember@fairleevt.org

Brian Hanson: townadministrator@fairleevt.org

Town of Fairlee
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JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

Fairlee Priorities and Opportunities
Monday, July 25th

4-5 PM: AOT and TRORC

5-6 PM: Conversation with Selectboard

6 PM: Weekly Selectboard Meeting

Grange Room, Town Hall