



To: Fairfax Planning Commission  
From: Emily Klofft, Regional Planner  
Date: March 13, 2026  
Subject: Summary of Public Outreach

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The Fairfax Pizza & Planning outreach event was held on February 17<sup>th</sup>. The event was advertised via a mailed postcard and online. Roughly 35 residents attended in-person, with an additional 10 responding via the online comment form option. Residents were asked to consider the strengths, weaknesses of life in Fairfax, as well as the opportunities and challenges the Town might face in the future. Below is a brief summary of residents' responses. Full notes are attached.

**Strengths: What are some of the great things about living in Fairfax?**

- Quiet small town life with farms, dirt roads, and no traffic lights.
- Scenic views of Mount Mansfield.
- A strong K-12 school system and community.
- Lots of opportunities for community gathering and recreation: Recreation Department, Community Centers, the Town Forest and the new Garland Park.
- Convenient location to amenities and jobs nearby while staying more affordable than Chittenden County.
- A great collection of small local businesses.

**Weaknesses: What would you change about living in Fairfax to make it a better place to live?**

- Increased government communication and transparency.
- Reduce high property taxes.
- Improve walkability and bikeability in town, with the need for more crosswalks across VT 104 and sidewalks from Nan's Mobil to Huntville Road
- Protect character of the Village and improve aesthetics of new development.
- More housing that is affordable for all- especially senior and disabled residents on fixed-incomes.
- Concerns about the increase in chain stores, storage units & the sale of the pharmacy.
- Develop an industrial park and/or infrastructure to support clean industrial development that could reduce residential property taxes.
- Desire for more local restaurants and small shops.
- Need for public transportation as there is none currently.
- Desire for additional recreation sites such as tennis/pickleball courts, track & trails.

**Opportunities: Think 10-20 years in the future- what new opportunities could Fairfax benefit from?**

- Protect and expand green space, including a town green in the Village and a community garden.
- Improve water and wastewater infrastructure that can support residential and a potential industrial park.
- An increased number of small locally owned businesses, including more restaurant options. Capitalize on Fairfax's proximity to many major ski areas with local businesses and short-term rentals.
- A strong Community Center and recreational programming, especially for youth and senior residents.
- Striking a balance between new housing and preserving Fairfax's rural lands. There is a need for more housing options at affordable price points and housing for seniors in the Village.
- Consider local land trust and other options to preserve rural and agricultural land.
- More community-scale renewable solar energy.

**Challenges: Think 10-20 years in the future- what new challenges could Fairfax face?**

- Differing concerns about zoning regulations- some want to see no future changes to create more stability, some want larger lots and decreased density in the Village and some were concerned about limiting the ability to develop lots.
- Continued increase in property taxes is a major concern, need to ensure that community grows in a way that supports increasing the Grand List while keeping costs low, especially educational costs.
- Increased pressure from larger businesses/chains could drive out smaller local businesses.
- Capacity of water/sewer infrastructure is not well-understood, this will be important for future growth.
- Development pressure on farmland will likely increase, with a need to plan strategies such as land trust to protect farms.
- Ensuring Fairfax remains an attractive community to younger families and the middle and working classes with affordable housing options.
- Addressing police needs and potential crime issues.