

# Forward Sunapee

All Committees Meeting  
February 11, 2026

# Agenda

- Formation of Nonprofit - Update/Mission/Moving Forward
- Committee Updates
- Group Discussion Topics
- Open Q&A and Next Steps

# Update - Formation of Nonprofit

- Forward Sunapee officially formed NH nonprofit corporation in January 2026 and are awaiting IRS approval for our 501(c)(3) exemption
- Primary objectives are to pursue FSI mission (see next page) and enable FSI to:
  - Implement community's shared vision, heritage and commercial vibrancy
  - Strengthen collaboration
  - Pursue donations to supplement volunteer time
  - Focus on Harbor first and include other parts of Sunapee where appropriate
- Transition Steering Committee to Board of Directors
  - Add 2-4 new Board members to increase diversity
  - Consider changes to committee structure
- Secondary objective - Riverway to pursue transfer of Riverway properties into new nonprofit (*Note - this is separate and distinct from core nonprofit initiative - FSI will proceed with or without this action*)
  - Pursue formal shareholder vote consistent with informal vote in summer 2024
  - Leverage properties to achieve broader objectives

***NOTE - Reminder that until we receive the IRS approval for the 501(c)(3) status, fundraising efforts will be very limited and targeted – and even once that is received there are allowable and unallowable activities***

# Mission of the Forward Sunapee Initiative Nonprofit

The mission of the **Forward Sunapee Initiative pending 501(c)(3) nonprofit IRS approval** is to:

- **Preserve history and culture:** Protect Sunapee Harbor (and surrounding area) charm, heritage, and commercial activity
- **Encourage year-round vitality:** Foster community life and activity in all seasons, supporting local businesses and events.
- **Strengthen economic resilience:** Promote sustainable economic development in the harbor and surrounding areas.
- **Enhance the village and lake:** Support projects that maintain and improve the lakeside village and safeguard the lake and Sugar River's water quality. (leverage this to create the draw)
- **Maintain public access:** Ensure that the harbor area remains open and welcoming for all
- **Support community programs:** Coordinate recreation, education, cultural, and charitable activities that enrich Sunapee life.

# What's Next

The formation of the FSI nonprofit marks an exciting turning point –enabling the organization to **accept charitable donations**, apply for grants, and better implement the community's vision for Sunapee Harbor and nearby areas.

- FSI will soon **file for its IRS Determination Letter** requesting official 501(c)(3) status which we expect later in 2026.
- FSI will host **community meetings and enhance communications** to gather input & set priorities.
- **Fundraising and outreach** initiatives in 2026 will be **subject to some limitations** while awaiting IRS approval of 501(c)(3) application and thus be limited and targeted
- SHR will separately seek **shareholder approval** to transfer its properties and support enhancement of harbor properties subject to IRS confirmation of 501(c)(3) status
  - Transaction creates synergies and opportunities given common missions of FSI and SHR and enables the long term financial sustainability of SHR.
  - Resolution passed by SHR Board in November 2025 - ***“Resolved, the Sunapee Harbor Riverway (SHR) Board of Directors agrees to pursue, promote and recommend to the SHR shareholders to vote to approve a shareholder resolution to authorize the Board of Directors to donate and transfer all the SHR assets and liabilities to the Forward Sunapee Initiative nonprofit corporation.”***

# Moving Forward Together - Guiding Principles

**Forward Sunapee – Guiding Principles** - Encourage collaboration, transparency, and community participation and support of residents, local organizations, and businesses, **we can ensure Sunapee Harbor continues to thrive—now and for generations to come**

1. **Respect Above All** - We treat one another—and the broader Sunapee community—with dignity, courtesy, and good faith. Disagreement is natural; disrespect is not. We listen to understand, not to win.
2. **Positive and Constructive Engagement** - Our work is grounded in solutions, not grievances. We focus on what can be built, improved, or strengthened, and we offer criticism only when it is constructive and accompanied by a path forward.
3. **Bridging Economic and Social Divides** - We recognize that Sunapee includes a wide range of economic realities, lived experiences, and perspectives. We seek to bridge—not deepen—perceived or real divides by ensuring our decisions consider impacts across the full community.
4. **Commitment to Forward Progress** - Progress is rarely linear. We remain committed to moving forward even when we encounter setbacks, delays, or disagreement. We learn, adapt, and persist.
5. **Open-Mindedness and Intellectual Curiosity** - We approach our work with humility and openness, recognizing that no single group or individual has all the answers. We remain willing to revise our thinking as new information and perspectives emerge.
6. **Stepping Outside the Echo Chamber** - We actively seek out viewpoints that differ from our own and engage with them thoughtfully. Healthy organizations grow by listening beyond familiar circles and challenging comfortable assumptions.
7. **Responsible Use of Social Media** - We are mindful that social media can amplify misinformation, escalate conflict, and oversimplify complex issues. We choose measured, respectful, and transparent communication and avoid reactive or divisive online behavior.
8. **Facts Over Conjecture** - Our discussions and decisions are grounded in verified facts, data, and credible sources whenever possible. When opinions are offered, they are clearly identified as such and supported by evidence where available.
9. **Transparency and Accountability**- We operate openly, communicate clearly, and take responsibility for our actions and decisions. Trust is earned through consistency, honesty, and follow-through.
10. **Stewardship of Sunapee’s Future** - We act with a long-term perspective, recognizing our responsibility to current residents and future generations. Our work is guided by what will best serve the enduring vitality, character, and well-being of Sunapee.

# Committee Update - Route 11 and Connectivity

- Goal: To calm traffic on Rt. 11 from Sargent Rd. to Main St. with a focus on Safety
- Monthly meetings with Committee to define desired outcomes
- Participated in Highway Safety Committee with four members of NHDOT from District 2
- Fantastic meeting in January with 2 members of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC) to plan a demonstration project on target area in May/June timeframe
- The demonstration project will entail the use of temporary physical props (medians, road markings, signs, trees, park benches, etc.) for a 10-day trial to demonstrate what might be used to achieve the committee's goals

# Committee Update - Route 11 and Connectivity - Traffic Slowing Demonstration Project Concepts



# Committee Update - Riverwalk

- Prioritized three key short term actions targeted for 2026
  - Signage for the trail,
  - Landscaping on path between livery and insurance agency, and
  - Installing retaining walls and creating more flat public area at Harbor House lot
- Focusing next on Town owned land - working on a very detailed 'ask' for information and detail from the Town
- Trying to emulate a model that works in other towns around the State and within Sunapee – snowmobile clubs around the state work to make improvements on Town owned lands
- Soliciting feedback on naming/renaming ideas - please vote/provide feedback
  - Riverwalk
  - Sugar River Walk
  - Sugar River Trail
  - Sugar River Heritage Trail
  - Sugar River Headwaters Trail

# Committee Update - Housing

- Sorting out the complication that this is a much wider issue at the Town and State level and the harbor area may not be the best place on which to focus
- Working through how to follow the Plan NH process is to take their recommendations (which are based just on what they did in the Charrette process) and do additional work to sort out what to actually do - which can be very different than Charrette recommendations;
- Researching approaches that other towns have tried to address this as well as pursuing other information gathering

# Committee Update - Planning & Zoning

- Focus on supporting Forward Sunapee goals around commercial growth and housing affordability impacted by the town's current Zoning Ordinance.
- Work more closely with other committees to coordinate Planning & Zoning project priorities
- Determining next steps on Waterfront District Proposal
  - Soliciting input from community members impacted
  - Feedback from Planning Board members
  - Composition of advocacy committee members
- Existing Village Commercial Zoning Ordinance provides scope for attractive development of potential FSI harbor properties

# Committee Update - Harbor Reconfiguration

Committee continues to explore an adaptive re-use of the town-owned land in the harbor area:

- Additional parking on the Ben Mere parcel - Given the constrained parking availability, this could be key foundation piece to improve the viability of future harbor development and also improve ability to host outdoor events such as the Econ Dev Committee has suggested; some progress on this front and believe we have an option or two that may have legs; ongoing work to be done
- Creating green space on approximately half the existing parking lot area on the waterfront – overwhelming consensus is that the existing gazebo is not a good structure or site for a music venue and objective is to move this “site” to either the new green space or to a portion of the existing green space in front of the beach.
- Potential / plausible new stage and location
- Create additional public docking slips – Harbor’s supply of slips for visiting boats is very limited – exploring possibility of a dock extension from the beach area (something similar to one of the T docks in front of Wild Goose)– to create +/-15 boat slips and encourage more harbor visits by water.
- Participating in joint Harbor and Econ Dev meetings for potential development of 34-36 River

# Committee Update - Harbor Stage Concept



# Committee Update - Economic Development

- **Building momentum through programming & engagement**

Launched the 5K Poker Race, driving strong participation, business donations, and private donor support; proceeds helped fund a nearly full summer music schedule and sparked discussion on expanding events into shoulder months.

- **Advanced harbor marketing & business collaboration**

Developed a cohesive harbor marketing/social media concept and facilitated working sessions with business owners to strengthen year-round vitality.

- **Evaluating development options for 34–36 River Road**

Working with Harbor Reconfiguration Committee to conduct comparative analysis of mixed-use (retail + residential) versus boutique hotel development to assess risk, cost, and long-term sustainability.

# Group Discussion Topics

- Committee Reconfiguration Discussion and Feedback (to be a periodic/annual review process)
  - Provide thoughts and suggestions for potential reconfiguration of the six committees into a different set of committees - this may include new committees and *focus on tangible and tactical activities or may dissolve committees into other new committees* - some ideas below for group discussion
    - 34/36 River Road
    - Harbor Area Business Owners
    - PR/Communications
    - Events
    - Fundraising
    - Signage
    - Other??
- Challenges and Potential Solutions
- 34/36 River Road Development - see next page

# 34/36 River Road – Illustrative Example

- Riverway Board intends to donate properties that include 34 River with backup plan for FSI to purchase
- SHA Board intends to donate 36 River upon FSI approval of 501c3
- Team used Generative AI to draft illustrative example of multi-use, multi-tenants building and location on the site on 334/36 Main - not recommended design but starting point for further discussion
- Note that lot includes wetlands that may impact site



# Open Q&A and Next Steps

Open Q&A

Next Steps

- Reconfigure committees and participants
- Full community meeting(s)
- Execute limited PR and Communications plan