



**Ridgefield
Economic &
Community
Development
Commission**

400 Main Street • Ridgefield, CT 06877 • 203.431-2700

**Bob Knight – Chair
Kay Gelfman – Vice Chair
James Classey - Secretary
Commissioner Arasa
Nadia Blair
Sean Dowd
Jennifer Gioffre
Peter Kearney
David Perlmutter**

**Rudy Marconi, First Selectperson
ridgefieldct.gov**

Meeting Minutes

March 2nd, 2026 at 6:30pm in Town Hall Annex Large Conference Room

The meeting was called to order at 6:40pm.

Call to Order:

In attendance: Commissioners Corrin Arasa, Nadia Blair, James Classey, Sean Dowd, Kay Gelfman, Bob Knight and David Perlmutter. Guests include: Co-Chair Pamme Jones from the 250 Committee; Co-Chairs Patricia Yaffa, Chris Nolan, and volunteer Eric Berkley from Ridgefield Commission on Aging; Mark Riser, and Tim Stoddart.

Vice Chair Gelfman motioned to add item to the agenda: Review Budget Items. Arasa seconded. All in favor.

Commissioner Blair motioned to add item to the agenda: Matt Conway of Rise Up. Arasa seconded. All in favor.

Announcements: Next meeting is March 2, 2026.

Public Comment

Mark Riser of 36 Perry Lane came to support Pamela Stoddart of the Guild of Artists for her nomination for the cultural district award. Tim Stoddart of 28 Olmsted Lane came to support his nomination of Pamela Stoddart for the cultural district award as well.

Guest: Pamme Jones of the 250 Committee

Pamme is the Co-Chair of Ridgefield Commemorates America at 250 Committee. The

Committee's mission is to help implement and connect organizations to help commemorate this anniversary. The Committee had asked the ECDC to help market all events and the committee itself. ECDC will do so through its social media channels and email distribution lists. For more information, interested parties can go to www.Ridgefieldct250.org

Some events to help commemorate:

July 3rd Star Spangled Soiree at the Lounsbury house.
July 4th 11-2 free festival in Ballard Park.

Commissioner Blair shared Steven Wolf's proposal of a Ridgefield 250 Commemorative Mural.

Guest: Patricia Yaffa & Chris Nolan - Commission on Aging:

Patty Yaffa now Director of Board for Rides for Ridgefield – presented the ECDC with the Transportation Plan Initial Draft for Ridgefield CT. The pilot program is ready to launch in the next few months. They are asking the ECDC to help promote the launch of the pilot program and spreading the word. This will help increase opportunities for interaction and socialization amongst users. Social isolation is a challenge for the target audience and lack of transportation is a major factor. They have raised over \$43,000 and have \$15,000 allocated to help cover the pilot program. The Commission has asked if the ECDC is aware of grants or funding opportunities that may help support the program. Otherwise, is it possible some community members would be willing to help subsidize the cost.

Recap of Recent Events / Info

Commissioner Dowd mentioned the Ridgefield HS Business Symposium will be held Friday April 17th 8-1. Zoom invite to follow.

Vice Chair Gelfman attended the economic summit in Bethel. Tim Stoddart suggested Ridgefield hosting something similar.

Commissioner Blair will have a call with Parks and Recreation Director about updating and beautifying the gazebo.

Chair Knight asked about the status of the Dollar General store in the old Rite Aid space. Commissioner Perlmutter offered to look into it.

Approval of Minutes February Meeting:

Vice Chair Gelfman motioned to approve the February meeting minutes as submitted. Dowd seconded. All in favor.

Cultural District:

Commissioner Arasa reported that the Cultural District proposed to reconfigure its structure. ECDC will continue to chair, current subcommittee members are now advisors and will create a new working group.

Marketing:

Commissioners Arasa and Gioffre met to discuss goals for the ECDC - determine who is the ECDC's target market, work on consistency across social pages, and continue to engage with the business community. These are all top of mind.

Ridgefield Connect:

First event of 2026 slated for the last week of May.

Tiger Shank Tank:

Commissioner Dowd has a call with the Ridgefield Playhouse to discuss dates for this fall.

Planning & Zoning:

No Update.

Real Estate Update:

Commissioner Perlmutter created a spreadsheet of commercial buildings available for lease. ECDC members suggested hosted a "Business Breakfast" for mid-summer to discuss real estate matters.

Cultural District Award – Vote

Chair Knight motioned to change the name to Cultural Icon Award from Cultural District award. Perlmutter seconded. All in favor.

Commissioner Blair motioned to give Dan Levine the Cultural Icon Award. Arasa seconded. All in favor.

Knight motioned to add a Lifetime Cultural Impact Achievement Award for specific occasions. Gelfman seconded. All in favor.

Gelfman motioned to give 2026 Lifetime Cultural Impact Achievement Awards to Hildegard Grob Executive Director of the Keeler Tavern Museum and Pamela Stoddart Executive Director of the Guild of Artists. Blair seconded. All in favor.

Awarding is May 18th at 6pm in the Ridgefield Playhouse Lobby.

Budget Items:

Gelfman motioned to reallocate \$10,000 to the Cultural District from our current budget allocation. Knight seconded. All in favor. Exhibit has been submitted.

Commissioner Classey motioned to advertise for a paid P/T consultant to work on ECDC initiatives. Gelfman seconded. All in favor.

Matt Conway/RiseUP:

Nadia has asked the Commission to familiarize ourselves with the mission statement of RiseUP and how they may help with public art displays.

Meeting adjourned at 9:29pm