

RIDGEFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Town Hall, 400 Main Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877
May 21, 2026

Policy: Historic District Commission meetings will be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order and all participants are expected to conduct themselves with dignity and treat all those present with respect, empathy and civility.

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Ridgefield Historic District Commission (“HDC”) was held at 400 Main Street, Ridgefield CT 06877, on Thursday, May 21, 2026, and beginning at 6:30 p.m.

The following members were present:

Dan O’Brien (Chair), Sean O’Kane (Vice Chair), Kathleen Daughters, Harriet Hanlon and Helen Dimos (alternate for Rhys Moore)

AGENDA

1. **275 Main Street** – Repositioning of existing structure on the lot and expansion of existing structure.
2. **HB 5508 – Vote Against an Act Concerning Historic Districts and Historic Preservation** – Update on status and possible effects of this proposed legislation.
3. **Possible New Historic Districts**
4. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - **March 26, 2026 – Special Meeting Minutes**

Meeting:

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Dan O’Brien at 6:31 p.m.

1. **275 Main Street**

Mr. O’Brien said the applicants were not ready to present at this time.

2. **HB 5508 – Act Concerning Historic Districts and Historic Preservation**

Mr. O'Brien said that this bill with its onerous provisions detrimental to historic preservation in Connecticut has been effectively put on hold until 2027 by a bill which creates a seven-member task force to study issues related to HDCs, including examining the feasibility of: 1. exempting property owned by municipalities; 2. creating a nonbinding process for HDCs to review construction of, or work on, municipally owned buildings and structures; 3. establishing a statewide board to hear appeals of HDC decisions, as well as a process for these appeals; and 4. requiring HDCs to contemporaneously broadcast their certificate of appropriateness hearings online. The task force must also examine any issues its chairs deem relevant. It must report to the Planning and Development Committee by January 1, 2027.

3. **Possible New Historic Districts**

Mr. O'Brien attended the May 20, 2026 Board of Selectmen meeting at which time the Historic District Commission was approved for an appointment as the Study Committee for the possible addition of two additional historic districts located in the Olmstead Lane and West Lane areas.

Mr. O'Brien said that the Ridgefield Historical Society is in the process of providing historical information for each of the properties within the proposed historic districts for the Study Report. Mr. O'Kane said he and Ms. Kaplan would work on the architectural significance and take property pictures. Ms. Daughters said she would help with the pictures also. Ms. Dimos volunteered to meet the homeowners. Ms. Hanlon volunteered to assist Mr. O'Brien with the study preparation.

Mr. O'Brien sent out questionnaires to residents at both neighborhoods. For Olmstead, out of 27 properties, there were 11 responses all responding "yes" as to possible interest in a historic district. For West Lane, out of 17 properties there were eight responses with six responding "yes" as to possible interest in a historic district and two responding "no". Next step would be an informational meeting, inviting residents of both neighborhoods. Mr. O'Brien said there was a tentative date of June 23rd for a public meeting.

With the possibility of two additional Historical Districts, Mr. O'Brien said the Commission should eventually revisit the proposed Historic District signs. He thought something simpler would be more appropriate. Ms. Dimos asked what determined a Historic home. Mr. O'Brien said it was the National Park Service who set 50 years as the mark of a historic property.

4. **Approval of Meeting Minutes - March 26, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Dimos moved and Mr. O'Kane seconded a motion to approve the March 26, 2026 Special meeting minutes. Motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Dimos moved and Ms. Daughters seconded a motion to adjourn the Historic District Commission Meeting at 7:12 p.m. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Fields
Recording Secretary