



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
APPROVED/REVISED MEETING MINUTES
RECORDING OF VOTES

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting. This is not a verbatim transcription.

Tuesday, October 22, 2024 Present:

IN PERSON

Robert Hendrick, Chair
Joseph Dowdell, Vice Chair
Mariah Okrongly
Elizabeth DiSalvo
Ben Nissim

VIRTUAL

Sebastiano D'Acunto
Ben Nneji

Also Present: Alice Dew, Director, Planning and Zoning

Absent: Chris Molyneaux, Joe Sorena

1. CALL TO ORDER

Robert Hendrick, Chair, called meeting to order at 7:02 PM in the Town Hall Annex, Meeting Room #2 and via Zoom and quorum was established.

1.1. Distribution of agenda & previous minutes. (Published on Commission's webpage prior to meeting.)

1.2. Administrative Announcements & Correspondence

(Note: Correspondence *related to an application* will be uploaded to the relevant application file (see links on agenda items) and reviewed/acknowledged during the relevant public hearing. Correspondence unrelated to an application will be acknowledged as this point in the meeting, and uploaded to the Commission's webpage at <https://www.ridgefieldct.gov/planning-and-zoning-commission/pages/correspondence>).

- a. Correspondence received from J. Corley – October 22, 2024
Ms. Dew will distribute the correspondence via email.

1.3. Approval of agenda.

2. PUBLIC HEARINGS

2.1. **(Contd.) A-24-2: 58 Prospect Ridge:** Text Amendment change (Per RZR 9.2.B) to amend text in Section 4.5 - MSDD floating zone. Applicant: Robert Jewell. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/97773>

Mr. Jewell gave an overview of the revisions since the last meeting. He said that updates are about the sidewalks, list of trees to be removed, a property tax analysis, Planner's memo for 2013 MSDD application, and zoning history of the area. He talked about the Comprehensive plan, which is the zoning map and regulations vs POCD.

Mr. Canning, Traffic Consultant Engineer from Kimley/Horn spoke and discussed the traffic counts. He stated that the study was done in December of 2023. Average of four hundred trips during the morning and afternoon peak hours were noted on East Ridge Road. Four proposed homes will produce maximum of eight trips.

Members expressed concerns and Mr. Hendrick said that the applicant should consider evaluating the traffic study where all the properties included in the zone change will generate the traffic. Study should include the Friday school rush hours where larger number of students walk to town.

Mr. Jewell gave the history of the area and shared Zoning maps of Ridgefield from 1946 to present. He shared changes in population census. He talked about the zones during the adopted of Zoning maps since 1946. He said the subject property always stayed at RA zone since its creation however some of the neighboring property zones on Halpin lane were introduced as present MFDD zone.

Discussion ensued regarding the Historic District Commission (HDC) jurisdiction and Village district Consultants. Mr. Jewell said Village district has more statutory discretion than HDC. This property can mimic the similar protection as stated in MSDD regarding the historic requirements. Members also discussed about the referral from Board of Selectman.

Mr. Sullivan talked about the driveway apron and added that he will revise the plans as per suggestions by Fire Marshall.

Mr. McBride: Prof. of Anthropology for UConn spoke he also has worked with the Ridgefield Historic Society. The property is southeast of the battlefield; however, battlefields are always larger than anticipated. Early November he will do a survey.

Mr. D'Acunto expressed concerns about the overlay zone and its intensification to neighboring properties.

Ms. DiSalvo suggested leaving the front property out of the proposed floating zone, and keeping just the rear property. She expressed concerns about the screening between the units.

Discussion ensued regarding the WPCA approval. Applicant mentioned that when they presented the application to WPCA for the proposed 4 dwellings, WPCA had commented that they have capacity.

Ms. Throckmorton gave an overview of the proposed number of trees to be removed. She said tree survey shows thirty-eight trees on property, nineteen trees are proposed to be removed whereas the actual number is only sixteen as applicant has removed few diseased trees which will be replaced by thirty seven trees. She added only two of the trees, Pin Oak and Sugar Maple are significant trees which shall be removed as they in the middle of the proposed roadway and shifting driveway to save these two trees will in fact affect the trees on the southern property line and the driveway shall be closer to neighboring property. She talked about the screening and explaining replacing invasive Norway Maples for better screening. She stated that the proposed planting will provide screening between the units.

Applicant mentioned that they will work with Commission to incorporate the suggestions and concerns regarding the preservation of streets, historic structures. The applicant will revise text amendment to include the protection of the existing buildings. Applicant will bring the revisions as stated above, will submit the archeology study, curbs cuts, sidewalks, revising lot lines to keep the front lot out of proposed MSDD.

Public comments including, Historic District Commission Chair regarding the historic nature of the street and the structures, exclusion of affordability as stated in the letter by Affordable Housing Committee, expansion due to new construction, 8-30g regulations, traffic issues.

Public hearing continued to November 06, 2024. Applicant will submit extension until November 07, 2024.

- 2.2. **(Contd.) RZ-24-1: 58 Prospect Ridge:** Rezone application (Per RZR 9.2.C and 4.5.A.1) for existing RA zone properties F15-0063 and E15-0206- two parcels of the affected following properties with Assessor's ID E15-0204 and E15-0274, E15-0205; F15-0006; F15-0007; F15-0008; to floating zone MSDD. *Owner: Thomas Montanari; Appl: Robert Jewell.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/97517>

Discussion combined with the A-24-2 application.

Public Hearing continued to November 6, 2024.

- 2.3. **(Contd.) SP-24-21: 58 Prospect Ridge: Special Permit Application** (per RZR 9.2.A and 4.5.A) for construction of four new dwellings and associated site work at 62 East Ridge and 58 Prospect Ridge. *Owner: Thomas Montanari; Appl: Robert Jewell.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/97519>

Discussion combined with the A-24-2 application.

Public Hearing continued to November 6, 2024.

3. OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS

- 3.1. **If Public Hearing is Closed: A-24-2: 58 Prospect Ridge:** Text Amendment change (Per RZR 9.2.B) to amend text in Section 4.5 - MSDD floating zone. *Applicant: Robert Jewell.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/97773>

Public Hearing continued to November 6, 2024.

- 3.2. **If Public Hearing is Closed: RZ-24-1: 58 Prospect Ridge:** Rezone application (Per RZR 9.2.C and 4.5.A.1) for existing RA zone properties F15-0063 and E15-0206- two parcels of the affected following properties with Assessor's ID E15-0204 and E15-0274, E15-0205; F15-0006; F15-0007; F15-0008; to floating zone MSDD. *Owner: Thomas Montanari; Appl: Robert Jewell.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/97517>

Public Hearing continued to November 6, 2024.

- 3.3. **If Public Hearing is Closed: SP-24-21: 58 Prospect Ridge:** Special Permit Application (per RZR 9.2.A and 4.5.A) for construction of four new dwellings and associated site work at 62 East Ridge and 58 Prospect Ridge. *Owner: ANB Enterprises LLC; Applicant: Robert Jewell.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/97519>

Public Hearing will be continued to November 6, 2024.

- 3.4. **SP-24-34: 3 Big Shop Lane:** Revision to Special Permit Application (Per RZR 9.2.A; 5.1.D.1) to add a roof and weather walls over outdoor patio. *Owner: 1-7 Big Shop Group LLC; Appl: Scott Yandrasevich.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/98616>

Mr. Jewell gave an overview of the proposed project. He expressed concerns with the comments of Architectural Advisory comments asking to make it a detached structure vs an attached roof as proposed.

Mr. Hendricks inquired what is the logistics behind proposing this roof, where the restaurant has a capacity and that there is outdoor seating available.

Applicant explained the need especially inclement weather can be used at the same time not making it permanent.

Discussion ensued regarding the aesthetics, preservation of the building, open structure. Members suggested to amend the plan resembling what exists on the left.

Members requested to go back to Architectural Advisory again for their comments.

Revision to Special Permit continued to November 6, 2024.

- 3.5. **VDC-24-19: 3 Big Shop Lane:** Village District Application (per RZR 8.3 and 5.1.B) to add roof and weather walls over outdoor patio. *Owner: 1-7 Big Shop Group LLC; Appl: Scott Yandrasevich.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/98615>

Discussion was combined with SP-24-34.

Revision to Special Permit continued to November 6, 2024.

- 3.6. **SP-24-35:115 Danbury Road:** Revision to Special Permit (Per 9.2.A and 7.2.E.3 and 7.2.G and 7.8.C) two wall/building signs at "FuelCo" Gas station. *Owner: 115 Danbury Road Associates LLC. Applicant: Haifa Eljamal.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/98731>

Ms. Dew gave an overview of the application, which was triggered due to the violations of sign installed not permitted under zoning regulations.

Applicant was not present at the meeting. Due to lack of information members denied the application.

Motion to deny application as proposed. (Maker: M. Okrongly; second by J. Dowdell) Motion carries unanimously.

4. NEW BUSINESS

- 4.1. **VDC-24-20: 1 Bailey Ave.:** Village District Application (per RZR 8.3 and 7.2.E) for awning sign “reFabjack”
Owner: Regency Centers Corporation. Applicant: Carolyn Onorato. For receipt and possible discussion.
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/98682>

Applicant gave the preview of the proposed awning with the sign. Members suggested changing the font to align with the harmony of signs on the Main Street.
Members added a special condition that the applicant will consider the change of font to match the neighboring awning.

Motion to approve application with special conditions. (Maker: S. D’Acunto; second by B. Nissim). Motion carries unanimously.

- 4.2. **SP-24-36: 622 Main Street:** Special Permit Application (Per 9.2.A and 7.2.E.3) for a second sign “Corner Café”.
Owner: Victor Vescera. Applicant: Lana Sexton. For receipt and schedule Public Hearing. Staff suggests Public Hearing on November 19th. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/98896>

Motion to receive and schedule Public Hearing for November 19, 2024 (Maker: M. Okrongly; second by E. DiSalvo. Motion carries unanimously.

4.3. Approval of Minutes

- 4.3.1: Meeting Minutes: October 10, 2024.

Motion to approve (Maker: M. Okrongly; second by B. Nissim). Motion carries unanimously.

5. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 PM

Submitted by (via video recording)
Aarti Paranjape, Zoning Enforcement Officer
FOOTNOTES:
RZR = Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations
CGS = Connecticut General Statutes