

Planning and Zoning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 21, 2025
(Revised/Approved)

ATTENDANCE

Commission & Staff

NAME	TITLE/ROLE	PRESENT		NOTES
		Yes	No	
Robert Hendrick	Chair	X		
Mariah Okrongly	Vice Chair	X		via Zoom
Joe Dowdell	Commissioner	X		
Ben Nneji	Commissioner		X	
Elizabeth DiSalvo	Commissioner	X		
Chris Molyneaux	Commissioner	X		
Joe Sorena	Commissioner	X		
Sebastian D'Acunto	Commissioner	X		via Zoom
Ben Nissim	Commissioner	X		
Aarti Paranjape	Director, (Staff)	X		via Zoom

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hendrick called meeting to order at 7:02 PM; Quorum established.

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

1.2. Administrative Announcements & Correspondence

Ms. Okrongly discusses Ms. Paranjape's high quality administrative report.

Ms. Paranjape asks if we will be discussing the moratorium.

Ms. DiSalvo asks a question about enforcement actions. Mr. Hendrick states that it is important, in addition, to be specific about all relevant subjects within the resolutions of approval. Ms. Paranjape briefly discusses the process of including conditions on the approval and follow up inspections. Mr. Hendrick suggests that we discuss this further later in the agenda when we discuss the moratorium.

1.3. Approval of agenda.

No adjustments.

2. ENFORCEMENT (COMPLAINTS/VIOLATIONS)

2.1. 362 Old Sib

Ms. Paranjape briefly discussed the violation and ongoing enforcement action.

2.2. 967 Ethan Allen: Hoo Doo Brown. Counsel sent the certified letter on October 8, 2025.

Ms. Paranjape briefly discussed the violation and ongoing enforcement action. Mr. Hendrick explains that the PZC is not using Atty. Beecher because he has an existing relationship with the owner of this restaurant making it a conflict of interest.

2.3. **34 Bailey Avenue:** Counsel sent the letter to the applicant re: the issues/concerns raised by the Commission for not using heat pumps exclusively at the above property per testimonials during the Public Hearing.

Ms. Paranjape briefly discussed the violation and ongoing enforcement action.

94 Soundview is an additional property with a complaint that is recent but has not made it on the agenda. Ms. Paranjape has researched the project and is working with the applicant to understand the extent of the work in comparison with the building permit and approval. Ms. Paranjape is reviewing zoning complaint/issues and Mr. Jay (building department) is reviewing building permit complaints/issues. Mr. Hendrick discusses the specifics of regulated earth movement as it is related to the building of a newly constructed home. Discussion continues on the possibility of neighbor conflict.

3. OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS

3.1. **(Continued) SP-25-8: 258 Main Street:** Revision to Special Permit per (Per 9.2.A and 3.1.C.2) for allowing to host outdoor private events not related to museum in RA zone. *Owner: Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum Inc; Applicant: Bob Jewell. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101885>*

Discussion from PZC ensued on the conditions of approval included in the Resolution of Approval. Ms. Paranjape created a draft version which was then edited by Mr. Hendrick and then presented to the PZC by sharing the document on the screen. Additional topics discussed include: type of events, lighting, conditions of agreements, expiration date, findings and reasons for decisions, blackout periods for events due to shared use of parking lot with the church, and standard conditions.

Motion to approve the application with the special conditions as amended and shown on the screen. Motion by Mr. Sorena. Seconded by Mr. Nissim. Motion carries unanimously in favor.

3.2. **(Continued) MISC-25-4: 150 Danbury Road:** Designation of a Community sign board location. *Owner: Ridgefield Bank; Applicant: Robert Jewell. <http://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/102934>*

Discussion ensued by the PZC with Mr. Jewell. Mr. Jewell reported that the Police Commission had no concerns and encouraged the use of this location as a community board. There is still no time limit but with the holiday season coming in the near future, they like to hang a Toys for Tots sign for the holiday season.

Ms. Paranjape includes the minutes from the police commission meeting. The police commission does not seek individuals to hang signs, so there could be a time with no sign. Ms. Paranjape states that the zone the location falls in limits the sign of the board. No lights or digital signs can exist. A digital sign would require a special permit. Mr. Hendrick clarifies that the approval would be subject to all of the PZC regulations related to community sign boards.

Motion by Mr. Sorena to approve the use of this property as a designated town sign board as stated in the Zoning regulations. Seconded by Mr. Molyneaux. Motion carried unanimously.

3.3. **Quarterly report:** July – September 2025 c/o Staff.

Ms. Paranjape discusses the quarterly staff report as shown on the screen. Discussion and questions on the specifics ensued by the PZC. Mr. Hendrick requested Ms. Paranjape look into previous agendas to see if AAC applications were ever on the PZC agenda and bring the response back to the PZC. Budget and staffing were discussed.

3.4. Temporary Moratorium Activities

Mr. Hendrick has asked to amend the agenda to include discussion on a group that approached Ms. Paranjape about whether or not this should apply to a specific group in a specific location. The daycare would like to understand the PZC's main intent on how this would apply to daycare.

Motion by Mr. Nissim and seconded by Mr. Molyneaux with no objection from the rest of the PZC to add this item to the agenda for discussion.

There is some ambiguity. The moratorium states that if there is any ambiguity, it should be discussed by the PZC. Ms. Paranjape states that a daycare use is an educational use but wanted to clarify to the Commission so if an application comes for a daycare that it will not be subject to the moratorium. Discussion ensued by the PZC on whether an educational use should be interpreted by the Director to include a private educational use. Ms. Paranjape read the inquiry into the record, which was submitted to the PZC office on 10/16/25 requesting that the moratorium not apply to daycares as educational use.

We did introduce what location was asking for this and distributing all the information about this question that the office had with the entire commission. This provided helpful framework to the discussion. We had notable discussion around this and determined that based on what is written in our regulations that ultimately informed our decision.

Motion was made, per discussion, to determine that applications for “Daycare use” would be considered “educational use” hence temporary moratorium per Section 8.10 shall not apply. Motion made by Mr. Molyneaux. Seconded by Mr. Nissim. 5 in favor and 2 opposed. Motion carries in favor with Mr. D’Acunto and Mr. Sorena opposed.

3.4.1. General Regulation Review. c/o chair

An excel sheet was circulated to the PZC for topics to work on. The list has been divvied with some names associated with specific regulations. There are a few blanks on the list that need to be completed by volunteer PZC members. The intent is to have some on the agenda for next week. Mr. Hendrick would like to discuss the village district issue first. Discussion ensued on having a Special Meeting to discuss these issues.

3.4.2. MISC-25-3: Branchville Strategic Review <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101786>

Discussion continued on Branchville Strategic Review with the outside consultants.

3.4.3. RFP – Re: Planning Services

Discussion continued on staffing needs for a Town Planner. As a temporary place holder until an appropriate Planner is hired, the salary can be reallocated to contract and outside planning firm for in house services. The funding has been approved for this need. Mr. Hendrick has been working with Ms. Paranjape to draft an RFP for this service. There is a need to get them plugged in quickly.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1. Approval of Minutes:

4.1.1. **September 30, 2025** – Sitewalk

4.1.2. **October 7, 2025** – Regular Meeting

Motion to approve the above meeting minutes for both Sitewalk and Regular Meeting, as amended. Motion made by Mr. Nissim seconded by Mr. Molyneaux. Ms. DiSalvo abstained, otherwise, Motion carried 6-0-1.

5. ADJOURN

Hearing no further business or discussion, meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM

Submitted by Beth Peyser,
Recording Secretary (via video recording)

FOOTNOTES:

PZC =Town of Ridgefield Planning and Zoning Commission

RZR = Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations

CGS = Connecticut General Statutes