



Town of Ridgefield Planning and Zoning Commission

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 6, 2025
(Revised/Approved)

ATTENDANCE

Commission & Staff

NAME	TITLE/ROLE	PRESENT		NOTES
		Yes	No	
Robert Hendrick	Chair	X		
Mariah Okrongly	Vice Chair	X		
Joe Dowdell	Commissioner	X		
Ben Nneji	Commissioner	X		Via Zoom
Elizabeth DiSalvo	Commissioner	X		
Chris Molyneaux	Commissioner	X		
Joe Sorena	Commissioner	X		
Sebastian D'Acunto	Commissioner	X		
Ben Nissim	Commissioner	X		Arrived at 7:03 PM
Alice Dew	Director (Staff)	X		

Others – Steve Foundoukis, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

- *Chair Hendrick called meeting to order at 7:01 PM via Zoom; Quorum established.*
- Letter from M Loomis dated April 29, 2025 re: Pickleball courts. PZC is not involved because an application has not been submitted. Mr. Hendrick informed the commissioners that funds for the POCD update were approved during the Annual Town Meeting on May 5, 2025.

Motion to add 4.2.1 for approval of site walk minutes for May 4, 2025 to agenda. Maker: M. Okrongly; Second by B. Nissim. Unanimous Approval

Motion to limit time for 43 Danbury Road, AH-24-2 discussion during public hearing to 1-1/2 hours. Maker: J. Sorena; Second by M. Okrongly. Unanimous Approval

2. PUBLIC HEARING

- 2.1. (Contd.) **AH-24-4: 43 Danbury Road:** Affordable Housing Application per CGS §8-30g for 20 units apartment building, replacing the existing structures. *Owner: Ljatif Ramadani; Appl: Peter Olson.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/99636>

Attorney **Peter Olson** spoke on behalf of the applicant. Based on discussions with the property owner of 35 Danbury Road, there are no immediate plans for a curb cut consolidation at this time. The applicant is willing to cooperate with a curb cut consolidation plan as part of approval if one becomes available in the future.

Abigail Adams, landscape architect of A2 Land Consulting, Fairfield CT, spoke on landscape design modifications. The sconce light has been switched to a down light. The pillar lights have been switched out so there are no reflections of light on the pillars. The surrounding fence will have a stone veneer and not just be concrete.

Mr. Sorena asked if the trees on Mountainview Avenue can be preserved since the public has been very adamant on a buffer along Mountainview.

Ms. Adams responded that the proposal calls for the removal of these trees.

Ms. Okrongly asked Ms. Adams to provide a visual representation of her proposal.

Mr. Hendrick pointed out that the proposed building will have a commercial district on one side and a residential district on the other side. He asked **Ms. Adams** to add some more depth to her design for the property adjacent to Mountainview.

Ms. Adams stated that she will submit her revisions at the next meeting.

Laura Neulawan, the architect, stated that the building will be fully sprinkled and handicap accessible. It will meet or exceed the requirements of the Connecticut State Building Code and the International Energy Efficiency Code. Appliances will be energy efficient and there will be electric heating. Natural gas for heating or appliances is not planned currently.

Benjamin Doto, Civil Engineer, 36 Mill Plain Road, Danbury CT, stated that with a building of this size, all trees on the east side of the building must come down. If the property design were mirrored or flipped, the parking lot would have to go in front of the building which would require an active driveway on Mountainview Avenue. The proposed fire hydrant will be moved to the south side of the driveway. Construction fencing will be extended all the way across Mountainview and Danbury Road will be the main point of access during construction. As required by the Fire Marshall, a keypad will open the emergency access gate on Mountainview, and the gate will remain open for 15 minutes. There will be a manual key to override the keypad in the event of a power outage. The building design has been carefully thought out and has a good mix of one- and two-bedroom apartments and amenities like garages.

Joe Balskus, Traffic Engineer, presented his Amended Traffic Study which was prepared in accordance with industry standards. The basic conclusions from the original submission remain the same. The proposed building is a low traffic generator. The data for crashes at the Grove Street intersection was updated to include 2024 figures. The combined data from 2021 to 2024 show a total of 13 crashes or about 4 per year with no serious injuries. Per CT DOT data, the daily peak volume has gone down in the past 20 years. The proposed building would add a net change of 30 cars out of 1500 at peak hours. The site driveway analysis showed no impacts or significant degradation, and sightlines are ample. The proposed building would have no significant impact on traffic operations.

Ms. Okrongly asked for pedestrian data on the intersection of Grove Street.

Mr. Balskus stated he would research the data and include it in his report.

Chair Hendrick agreed that pedestrian vehicle interactions at the Grove Street intersection should be addressed.

Jeremy DiCarli, Senior Planner, Tyke Planning and Policy Group, who provided the Technical Application Review had no questions for the applicant's representatives.

Public Comments:

Christopher Rees (4 Mountainview Avenue), on behalf of the Mountainview, Hillsdale, and Island Hill Neighbors Association requested that the public hearing be continued to the next meeting as the community is still in the process of reviewing the applicant's submissions. The presentation by the applicant's traffic engineer should be attached to the public record. The community would like to understand the data points being used by the applicant. It appears that the applicant is filtering the data on crashes and should explain how they are querying the database.

The community's position is that Danbury Road is already at a service level F (high delays, high volumes, and extensive queuing). The proposed building would jeopardize the safety of an overcapacity road. It is also important to consider that all exits from the proposed building are forced right hand turns into an intersection that already has a lot of injuries. The easy solution is to reduce the number of units in the building so that the net trip generation is zero. This would increase safety and still make the building profitable.

Mr. Hendrick stated that the commission has no intent to close the public hearing tonight. The applicant has requested that the public hearing be continued through the May 20, 2025, meeting.

John Scala (18 Roberts Lane) asked if the dumpster enclosure could be moved and if arborvitaes can be planted along his property line so that he doesn't have to look directly at the dumpster.

Mr. Hendrick stated that this area is considered wetlands and would require a special application.

K. La Barre asked if any consideration was given to school bus stops and their impact on traffic during peak hours.

Mr. Hendrick stated that the PZC cannot regulate school bus stops and neither can the applicant.

Renee Whitworth (17 Mountainview Avenue) pointed out that elementary school buses are required to get as close to the students as possible and this can impact traffic. This is a large building on a residential street. She also asked if the building would be pet friendly.

Mr. Olson stated that the applicant would submit a supplemental report to address the additional traffic concerns raised tonight. The applicant does not wish to go back to the wetlands board and will instead look to fit in some screening on the west side of the dumpster. No decision on whether the building will be pet friendly has been made.

Benjamin Doto added that the dumpster has fencing all around to match the fencing on the stone wall.

Ms. Okrongly asked whether the applicant had had any conversations with the neighbors.

Mr. Olson answered that other than the public hearings, there have been no discussions.

Continued to next regular meeting on May 20, 2025

- 2.2. **(Contd.) A-25-1:** Text Amendment change (Per RZR 9.2.B.) to amend Section 3.2.B.1; 3.3.B.2.b and 3.2.B.2.d for following language (1) Permit 2-Family Dwellings as a permitted use in all residential zones; (2) Amend the Accessory Dwelling Unit ("ADU") Regulation to permit ADUs accessory to both 1 and 2-family dwellings; and (3) To permit ADUs on properties that are not owner-occupied provided the ADU is deed restricted at 80% AMI in perpetuity. *Applicant: Robert Jewell.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100229>

Continued to next regular meeting on May 20, 2025.

- 2.3. **SUB-25-1: 15 Bear Mountain Rd:** Re: subdivision application under Section 7.5 of Subdivision Regulations to create two lots from parcel of ± 6.05 acres with existing dwelling in RAAA zone. Owner: Giovanni Capocci; Applicant: Michael Mazzucco. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100239>

Mike Mazzucco, Civil Engineer, Danbury CT spoke on behalf of the applicant. The building plan calls for the removal of seventeen significant trees and the conditions on the wetlands permit were incorporated into the building plan.

Ms. Okrongly asked if there was a plan to replace the number of trees that would be coming down.

Ms. Dew will check to see if a special permit is needed when the accessory unit on the property becomes the primary dwelling unit.

Public Comments:

Andrea Beebe (33 Main Street) wants to preserve the 30-inch diameter hickory tree on the property.

Mike Mazzucco agreed to replace the existing hickory tree on the property.

Motion to close public hearing. Maker S. D'Acunto; Second B. Nissim. Unanimous Approval

3. OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS

- 3.1. **(Contd.) A-24-3:** Text Amendment change (Per RZR 9.2.B) to add a Temporary and Limited Development Moratorium. *Commission initiated.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/99421>

Mr. Hendrick asked the Commissioners to come to a resolution on this matter so as not to keep kicking the can down the road. Section B has been tweaked the most in the revised draft while zoning permits have been deleted from Sections 1 and 2. Multifamily projects cannot be done in Ridgefield with a zoning permit. The revised draft addresses a lot of discussion amongst the commissioners and the public's input and concerns. While not rewriting the entire POCD, the data parts must be updated as well as our regulations in several sections.

Ms. Okrongly asked **Ms. Dew** to contact the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance to ask if there is a defined process for PZC to ask for additional funds to expand the scope of the POCD beyond Branchville.

Commissioner DiSalvo noted concerns in regards to the process of assessing town zoning ‘as a whole’ during the moratorium and expressed interest in getting consultants (specifically a hired planner) to assist with the commission’s work during the moratorium. Her concern being that the consultants hired to implement the Branchville study would only address Branchville and would not meet the commission individually on an ongoing and as needed basis needed to address the town as a whole.

Motion to approve A-24-3 with the start date of June 1, 2025 for 6 months. Maker: M. Okrongly; Second by J. Dowdell. Motion carries 8-1-0 with J. Sorena voting against

- 3.2. (Contd.) **VDC-25-1: 470 Main Street:** Village District Application (Per RZR 8.3 and 5.1.B) for screening fence for HVAC condenser. *Applicant: Jason Orleman; Owner: REG-UB Properties LLC.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100579>

Motion to approve VDC-25-1 with special conditions. Maker: M. Okrongly; Second by B. Nneji. Unanimous Approval

- 3.3. **If Public Hearing is closed: AH-24-4: 43 Danbury Road:** Affordable Housing Application per CGS §8-30g for 20 units apartment building, replacing the existing structures. *Owner: Ljatif Ramadani; Appl: Peter Olson.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/99636>

Public Hearing continued.

- 3.4. **If Public Hearing is closed: A-25-1:** Text Amendment change (Per RZR 9.2.B.) to amend Section 3.2.B.1; 3.3.B.2.b and 3.2.B.2.d for following language (1) Permit 2-Family Dwellings as a permitted use in all residential zones; (2) Amend the Accessory Dwelling Unit ("ADU") Regulation to permit ADUs accessory to both 1 and 2-family dwellings; and (3) To permit ADUs on properties that are not owner-occupied provided the ADU is deed restricted at 80% AMI in perpetuity. *Applicant: Robert Jewell.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100229>

Public Hearing continued.

- 3.5. **If Public Hearing is closed:-SUB-25-1: 15 Bear Mountain Rd:** Resubdivision application under Section 7.5 of Subdivision Regulations to create two lots from parcel of ± 6.05 acres with existing dwelling in RAAA zone. *Owner: Giovanni Capocci; Applicant: Michael Mazzucco.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100239>

Motion to approve with special conditions. Maker: S. D’Acunto; Second by M. Okrongly Unanimous Approval

4. NEW BUSINESS

- 4.1 **SP-25-3: 384 Branchville Road:** Special Permit Application (Per RZR 9.2. A and 3.4. C.1) for construction of an above-ground pool at a property with two front yards. *Owner/Applicant: Brandon Arcamone. For receipt and schedule sitewalk and Public Hearing. (Staff suggests sitewalk June 1 and public hearing June 3)* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100776>

Motion to receive, schedule sitewalk on June 1 and public hearing on June 3. Maker: M. Okrongly; Second by E. DiSalvo. Unanimous Approval

- 4.2 **SP-25-4: 130 Danbury Road, Unit 5B:** Revision to Special Permit Application (Per RZR 9.2 and 5.2.D.1) for creating a new floor area approximately adding 1200 sq ft. for expansion of convenience/retail store in B-1 zone. Owner: Kelly Copps Hill Realty LLC; Appl: Pablo DeMiguel. *For receipt and schedule possible sitewalk and discussion. (Staff suggest discussion on May 20th.)*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100702>

Motion to receive, schedule sitewalk June 1 and public hearing June 3rd. Maker: M. Okrongly; Second by J. Sorena. Motion carries 6-2-1 with S. D'Acunto and E. DiSalvo voting against and R. Hendrick abstaining.

- 4.3 **REF-25-1: 217 Danbury Road:** § 8-24 Referral Application for purchase of property by Town of Ridgefield located at 217 Danbury Road. *For acknowledgement and comments.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101098>

Motion for positive referral. Maker: M. Okrongly; Second by J. Sorena. Motion carries 8-1 with S. D'Acunto voting against.

- 4.4 **VDC-25-2: 401 Main Street: Village District Application** (Per RZR 8.3 and 7.2.E.1) for a wall sign “Hub Insurance Services” in the CBD zone. Owner: Fairfield County Bank; Appl: Robert Mordente. *(For receipt only, discussion will be held May 20th after AAC/VDC meeting)*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101096>

Application received and will be discussed at next meeting.

- 4.5 **Bond Release Request:** 500 Main Street – The Elms; File number 2013-061. Request for FULL RELEASE of bond for: Erosion and Sediment Control & Stormwater Management.

Motion to release bond in full. Maker: Ben Nissim; Second by C. Molyneaux. Unanimous Approval

4.6 Approval of Minutes

4.2.1: Meeting Minutes: [April 1, 2025](#) and [April 23, 2025](#)

Motion to approve April 1 and April 23 meeting minutes and May 4 sitewalk minutes. Maker: E. DiSalvo; Second by Ben Nissim. Unanimous Approval

5 Adjourn - Meeting adjourned at 10:42 PM

**Submitted by S. Foundoukis
Recording Secretary**

FOOTNOTES:

PZC =Town of Ridgefield Planning and Zoning Commission

RZR = Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations

CGS = Connecticut General Statutes