

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 3, 2025
(Unrevised/Unapproved)

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		
Elizabeth DiSalvo	Commissioner	X		
Chris Molyneaux	Commissioner		X	
Joe Sorena	Commissioner		X	
Sebastian D'Acunto	Commissioner		X	
Ben Nissim	Commissioner		X	
Alice Dew	Director, (Staff)	X		

1. CALL TO ORDER

- *Chair Hendrick called meeting to order at 7:00 PM; Quorum 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>).

- Letter from R Steinhart dated May 26, 2025
 - Chair Hendrick explained to Commissioners Mr. Steinhart's letter regarding concerns in regards to Silver Spring Country Club. A. Dew along with A. Paranjape, Zoning Enforcement Officer and Chair Hendrick, have met with Mr. Steinhart and have had no reason to issue violations. A. Dew stated she and Aarti Paranjape, ZEO, recently visited Silver Spring Golf Course due to a new complaint regarding potential erosion, which there was not. Silt fence had been removed as work was completed. Chair Hendrick has reviewed complaints as well and agrees and is supportive of staff.
- Steve Foundoukis is no longer the recording secretary and the Office of Planning and Zoning is currently looking for a new recording secretary.

1.3. Approval of agenda.

2. PUBLIC HEARING

- 2.1. **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. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100776>

Commissioners had a sitewalk of the property this past Sunday.

Brandon Arcamone presented. He explained he has two frontages of his property. The above-ground pool is going in what is considered to be the “back yard”. Pool meets setbacks and has agreed to move pool closer to house and decrease size of deck per Inland Wetlands Board request. Pool will be 130 feet away from Bloomer Road which borders the back yard. There was discussion of trees and wooded area between house and Bloomer Rd.

AAC recommended approval with conditions of dark brown composite decking, similar material/color lattice, and installation of evergreen near neighbor.

Applicant has spoken to neighbors and stated that he does want to clean up the area. Neighbor, John Knoche, 374 Branchville Road spoke. Neighbor was concerned and wanted to make sure pool was minimum 35 feet away from property line. Neighbor does not have any objection if 35 foot minimum is met.

Alice Dew read staff report.

Planting plan was distributed and discussed. The planting plan presented at Public Hearing was approved by IWB with conditions, per Applicant.

Public Hearing closed at 7:22 without objection.

- 2.2. **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. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100702>

Chair Hendrick clarified there is no new floor area, it is really a conversion.

Pablo DeMiguel presented. Applicant presented to AAC last year and the applicant has made changes on this application to reflect AAC comments. Sign and logo of a star was added and is part of this application. The sign/logo meets the regulations. “Atlantis” sign and logo was shown on screen. The letters will be illuminated. Parking plan was discussed. A few spots will be added in front of store to comply with number of parking spaces needed. All parking that exists today will remain and 3 spaces will be added. An ADA parking spot will be added.

A Dew showed pictures with banners that are not permitted. A. Dew spoke with Jake Muller, Director of Public Works, and discussed the possibility of added sidewalk along Farmingville. Discussion of possibly of sidewalk along Danbury Rd as well was had. Sidewalks in proximity to gas pumps was discussed. M. Okrongly suggested possible bollards to protect pedestrians if close to road.

M. Okrongly requested nicer fencing around propane tank.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Christopher Rees, 4 Mountainview Ave., spoke regarding sidewalk and pedestrian safety on Northwest side of property.

Public Hearing closed at 7:43 PM

3. OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS

- 3.1. **(Continued) 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>

Chair Hendrick started drafting possible Special Conditions and distributed at meeting. A. Dew drafted some as well in the Staff report. Chair Hendrick summarized his draft of Special Conditions which included items such as exiting the property, emergency driveway, construction work/time, Mountain View Ave for parking/deliveries, and northeast corner be replanted with variety of native plants, discrete fence if necessary.

E. DiSalvo suggested entering and leaving via Mountain Ave due to safety. She realized the neighbors will be upset, but feels the majority of traffic will come out of property and turn right therefor having minimal impact on neighborhood but will be a safer option.

M. Okrongly mentioned the possibility of switching 2-2BR at 80% and 1-2BR at 60% to 1-2BR at 80% and 2-2BR at 60% “affordable”, planting bond and native plantings. A. Dew will research adult bus stop.

Discussion continued to next regular meeting.

- 3.2. **(Continued) 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 discussion.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101096>

Robert Mordente presented. Fairfield County Bank sold their insurance services to Hub Insurance so they want to change the sign. Design was shown. A new design was passed out by Applicant without letters being italicized due to AAC recommendations.

Motion to approve application as submitted with modification of letters being vertical per AAC’s recommendation. *(Maker: E. DiSalvo, second by M. Okrongly) Unanimous Approval*

- 3.3. **IF PUBLIC HEARING IS CLOSED: 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. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100776>

Motion to approve as presented with landscape plan and according to AAC’s recommendations *(Maker: B. Nneji, second by E. DiSalvo) Unanimous Approval*

- 3.4. **IF PUBLIC HEARING IS CLOSED: 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. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100702>

Motion to approve with following conditions: fencing around propane tank not to be chain link and approved by P&Z office staff, sidewalks along the west and north side of property on Danbury Road and Fairfield Road. If space allows for sidewalks by the gas pumps, if sidewalk needs to move closer to road, bollards will be installed to protect pedestrian traffic. *(Maker: M. Okrongly, second by B. Nneji) Unanimous Approval*

4. NEW BUSINESS

- 4.1. **VDC-25-4: 8 Prospect Street:** Village District Application (Per RZR 8.3 and 7.2.E.1 and 7.2.E.4) for a wall sign “Flipping Creative-a mindful market” in front and rear of the building in the CBD zone. *Owner: Byray LLC; Appl: Ashlea Andrews. (For receipt and discussion)*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101368>

Ashlea Andrews presented via Zoom. The sign was shown on screen. The sign will not be illuminated and meets regulations.

Motion to approve as submitted (*Maker: E. DiSalvo, second by M. Okrongly*) *Unanimous Approval*

- 4.2. **SP-25-5:- 29 Prospect Street:** Revision for Special Permit (Per 9.2.A) File #2014-008-PR-SP-VDC for a modification to the General Condition #11 to use the emergency access for exit to trucks on Grove Street in CBD zone. *Owner: 29 Prospect Street LLC; Appl: Michael Loya. (For receipt and schedule discussion. Staff suggest discussion at next regular meeting on June 17th or Public Hearing on July 1.)*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101457>

Motion to receive and schedule Public Hearing July 1st (*Maker: M. Okrongly, second by E. DiSalvo*)
Unanimous Approval

- 4.3. **SP-25-6: 22 Catoonah Street:** Revision for Special Permit (Per 9.2.A and 5.1.D.9) for educational use to hold summer camps from 9-3 PM during June-August in CBD zone. *Owner: Ridgefield Holdings LLC; Appl: Kate Haase-MacDonald (For receipt and discussion)*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/95891>

Applicant, Kate Haase-MacDonald presented. Per applicant, they are licensed through the State of Connecticut. This is not daycare. There will be a summer camp at the facility. There are no issues with traffic or parking.

Motion to approve (*Maker: B. Nneji, second by E. DiSalvo*) *Unanimous Approval*

- 4.4. **REF-25-2: Old Stage Coach C06-0047:** 8-24 referral request for a lease of approximately 0.6 acres at lower meadow on Old Stage Coach Road (aka McKeon Farms approx. 8.5 acres) to the American Chestnut Foundation for a Germplasm Conservation Orchard use.

M. Okrongly questioned why a representative is not coming to Planning and Zoning meetings for referrals and presenting.

Chestnut Society would like to plant trees.

Motion for positive referral (*Maker: M. Okrongly, second by E. DiSalvo*) *Unanimous Approval*

- 4.5. **Bond Release: 5 North Salem Road Application #2019-054-AH.** Request of a full bond release posted for erosion control.

Continued to next meeting.

- 4.6. **Discussion:** House Bill 5002: An act concerning housing.

Chair Hendrick gave a background of this bill. It is a bill that has been sitting in legislature as a “dummy bill” and had a heading and very little text. Suddenly 92 pages were added to the bill, which

took many by surprise. This bill has an impact on local zoning regulations. Ridgefield will be statutorily required by the State to update many of the current regulations.

Chair Hendrick sent a quick note to all representatives due to the quick timeline that the bill was passed. There was discussion of the State Representatives and the lack of communication. Chair Hendrick will draft a letter and bring to Commission to review at next meeting.

E. DiSalvo would like to try to set up a meeting with the State Representatives and Planning and Zoning Commission possibly after things slowdown in Hartford.

Discussion of possibly adding Planning and Zoning meetings to calendar. Alice will send out a doodle poll to find Commissioner's availability.

4.7. Approval of Minutes:

4.7.1. May 20, 2025 Meeting

Motion to approve with amendments as needed (*Maker: M. Okrongly, second by E. DiSalvo*)
Unanimous Approval

5. Adjourn

Chair Hendrick adjourned meeting at 8:53 PM

**Submitted by Misty Dorsch,
Recording Secretary (via video recording)**

FOOTNOTES:

PZC =Town of Ridgefield Planning and Zoning Commission

RZR = Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations

CGS = Connecticut General Statutes