

Planning and Zoning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 10, 2026
(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		via Zoom
Elizabeth DiSalvo	Commissioner	X		
Chris Molyneaux	Commissioner	X		via Zoom
Joe Sorena	Commissioner	X		
Sebastian D’Acunto	Commissioner	X		via Zoom
Ben Nissim	Commissioner	X		
Tom Beecher	Commission Council	X		via Zoom
Aarti Paranjape	Director, (Staff)	X		

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hendrick called meeting to order at 7:05 PM; Quorum established.

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

1.2. Administrative Announcements & Correspondence

- Atty Beecher is present but will be part of the Executive Session at the end of the meeting.

1.3. Approval of agenda.

Mr. Hendrick asked to add FP-26-1 to the agenda. It is not a Public Hearing. It should be at the end of Old Business.

There was a sitewalk on Sunday.

Mr. Sorena made a motion to add FP-26-1 to the agenda after Old business. Motion seconded by Mr. Nissim.

Motion carries and Mr. Nneji abstains due to technology issues. Motion carries 8-0-1.

2. ENFORCEMENT (COMPLAINTS/VIOLATIONS)

2.1. 34 Bailey Avenue – Discussion under Executive Session

This is the only item that is open but will be discussed later on the agenda under Executive Session.

3. PUBLIC HEARING

- 3.1. **(Contd) SP-25-15: 59 South Street:** Special Permit Application (per 9.2.A and 5.3.D.3 and Sec 4.2.B) for relocation of Pump station, decommissioning on pump station and construction of new gravity sewer from new pump station to South Street WWTF at 59 South Street (E14-0158), F15-0056 and F15-0057. *Owner: Town of Ridgefield; Applicant: Matthew Formica.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/98507>

Mr. Formica was present via Zoom to present the application. He discussed the updates since the last meeting including: updates on neighbor concerns, site walk with PZC, outreach with adjacent property owner "Charter Group" about easements, uploaded cut sheet and civil drawing with trench details, working to obtain proposal from survey for A2 survey for trees – in progress, and request an extension of the public hearing for another couple weeks to complete the outstanding items.

Mr. Hendrick noted the extension, and he doesn't see an issue. Discussion ensued by the PZC. Ms. Okrongly stated she missed the site walk and will schedule her own. Ms. Okrongly feels there should be public benefit associated with development on town land. She is aware that the WPCA did not want to make the path discussed. She felt the site should be left in condition to accommodate the path. She would also like to hear the public benefit beyond the repairs of the sewer. Ms. Okrongly would appreciate at the next meeting that this would be addressed. Mr. Formica felt he addressed some of this in the last meeting. He restated possible failure, cost, DPW pumpstation removal, and leaving the pathway of gravity open to future path should the Conservation Commission want to do that. He felt the path had come from the previous town engineer, Charlie Fisher. It wasn't clear what the initial request would require for a path. So, given what the WPCA is a necessity to replace the pump station, the project would not impede the path in the future should the path be required. Ms. Okrongly wants more consideration for the path in the future. She feels it would be an extra benefit to the community and achieve the goals of the application. Mr. Formica understands what Ms. Okrongly is saying but has concerns, including the path crossing onto private property. Ms. Okrongly understands that they are not making an ADA pathway. Ms. Okrongly would like to see this project leave the area where the pathway would be in a condition where the pathway could easily be constructed. Mr. Formica says there is an easement and area that has been loamed and seeded, he wants to know what she wants more specifically. Ms. Okrongly felt that when pressed this topic was dismissed at the last public hearing. She would like a more thoughtful response on what we are leaving after we finish this project so that the community, if they decide to make this walking path - what are we leaving them to work with. Mr. Hendrick stated that the WPCA should add a narrative or notes on the plans, if amendable to the idea, that they acknowledge that the pathway that will be cleared and will be left in a condition (i.e. stump removal and things like that) that the potential creation of a pathway in the future will be facilitated or eased. Ms. DiSalvo would like to see it generally flattened and cleared. Mr. Hendrick says that because this is a Special Permit, there are 11 special criteria that should be evaluated, including the Plan of Conservation and Development. Mr. Sorena states that unfortunately this is an application under public processes, the lowest responsible bidder will be chosen and mirroring the other comments, he would like the applicant to consider and advise the PZC on if they can issue an addendum during the bid process or modify the documents to allow the things the other Commissioners have mentioned and suggest that the contractor, when in Quail Ridge, possibly minimize the impact and phase the job so that that is the first phase and expedited. Those things can be suggested because it is public procurement. Mr. Hendrick believes whatever conditions of approval are placed on the permit would need to be complied with by the contractor. Mr. Sorena isn't sure if they can do that. Mr. Hendrick thinks if they didn't, they would not be in compliance. Mr. Sorena suggests minimizing the impacts to Quali Ridge is a priority. Mr. Formica appreciates the comments on the pathway. He will have additional information available to show what the site will look like when done. Ms. DiSalvo asks if they are going through the woods or grass. Mr. Formica agrees that it will be the woods. Ms. DiSalvo stated that because they are going through the woods, they shouldn't do anything that would impede the ability to create a future path. Mr. Formica will create a narrative to that effect for the next go around. Mr. Nneji has a question/suggestion that Mr. Formica needs to be a little more proactive with the condominium community because they have a lot of concerns on the proximity of construction activities to their homes. Mr. Nneji asks what has been done to work with the neighbors. Mr. Formica stated that he had reached out to the owners to discuss the easements and project with association members. They were noticed about the public hearing and came to comment at the last hearing. At the request of the PZC, Mr. Formica had another public meeting with the WPCA to answer questions and take a deep dive into their concerns. They were in attendance, subsequent to that meeting they extracted passages from plans and specs to show what the contractor constraints are. Mr.

Mr. Nneji did not see a formal landscaping plan. Mr. Formica stated that there was. The sewer line will be loamed and seeded. Mr. Nneji asked for that information to be snipped out of the narrative and placed on the planting plan. Mr. Nneji asked about screening – he would like to see evergreen screening.

Ms. Paranjape stated that once the easements are finalized, there will be a condition about the easements in the permit. No additional staff comment. Mr. Hendrick moved along to public comment.

Nancy Tine, 120 Prospect Street – She was present in the room. A member of the Prospect Woods Condominium Association. She mentioned the highlights in the bid document. She would like to change the hours from 7-3 to 8-4. She felt 7 was a little early. She would also like the association to approve any restoration that takes place before it is completed. Insurance-wise, she wants to be named as additional insured. She questions what happens if in 1 to 3 years from now something happens related to the project. She wants to know the timeframe if something happens.

Mr. Formica states there is a one-year warranty. Then it will become the responsibility of the WPCA to fix the issue if it was project related. Ms. Tine asked what the timeframe was from the WPCA. Mr. Formica stated that if it was due to the work, it would be in perpetuity the responsibility of the WPCA. Mr. Sorena and Mr. Formica discuss what is on the contractor typically and what is on the contractor in this instance.

Ms. Tine has concerns about the pool and sink holes due to water underneath. A condo building was sinking and the foundation had to be repaired. She is also concerned that a sinkhole could lead to road or building repair.

Mr. Sorena asks questions on behalf of the contractor.

Ms. Tine asks about the easement. She feels that the Town would be asking and giving the easement to the condo association for comment and review by insurance company and attorney. Mr. Formica says that is correct and they are trying to add any constraints that are wanted prior to it going back and forth between the attorneys. He wants to work together to meet their needs and concessions. Concessions would include hours, etc. Ms. Tine asks about a traffic plan and how they are going in and out. She read the 35 pages and there are no concerns other than what they are currently talking about. Mr. Formica stated the traffic plan would be provided by the contractor and agreed upon prior to starting work. Mr. Sorena brings up traffic flow and tracking pads. They discuss the process of the attorney review. Mr. Hendrick states that it is not the PZC responsibility to take on attorney review. Mr. Hendrick is only interested in what the PZC can regulate. Mr. Sorena states that Ms. Tine needs an attorney. He says that AECOM is a respected company and that having to spend money to protect the condo association is not the per view of the PZC. Mr. Hendrick states that they should come back next time if their concerns have not been addressed by the next round of edits.

No additional applicant comments. No additional staff comments. Mr. Formica will submit an extension to the PZ Office.

Needs for the next meeting:

Survey with the identification of trees

Clarifying a narrative around the condition of the pathway for future use as a trail.

The Hearing did not close and will continue to the next meeting on March 24, 2026.

4. OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS

- 4.1. **IF PUBLIC HEARING IS CLOSED: SP-25-15: 59 South Street:** Special Permit Application (per 9.2.A and 5.3.D.3 and Sec 4.2.B) for relocation of Pump station, decommissioning on pump station and construction of new gravity sewer from new pump station to South Street WWTF at 59 South Street (E14-0158), F15-0056 and F15-0057. *Owner: Town of Ridgefield; Applicant: Matthew Formica.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/98507>

Public Hearing was not closed.

- 4.2. REF-26-1: 195 Danbury Road: 8-24 Referral for proposed pickle ball court, located at 195 Danbury Road, land is part of lot number E13-0175. *Owner/Applicant: Town of Ridgefield.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104467>

This was not discussed at the last meeting. This was a second step for a referral to the municipal improvement. Mr. Hendrick states they need to make a positive referral, or negative, but positive would make sense since they approved this application at the last meeting.

Ms. Okrongly makes a motion to make a positive referral on behalf of the pickleball court. Seconded by Mr. Sorena. Motion passes and its unanimous.

4.3. **Temporary Moratorium Activities**

This was discussed at the last meeting. And New business came out of this which is on the agenda under Item 6.

4.3.1. **MISC-26-1: General Regulation and Zone Reviews c/o Chair**

This item was not discussed.

4.3.2. **MISC-25-3: Branchville Strategic Review**

This item was not discussed.

4.4 **Flood Plain Application**

This item was added to the agenda. Ms. Paranjape read the application description into the record. The PZC conducted the site walk on March 8. Mr. Fontaine gave a brief overview of the application and proposed plans for a bridge over the Norwalk River.

The PZC made substantial comment on "scour critical". The bridge is in a FEMA flood zone and FEMA floodway. The plans were shared on the screen and described in detail. They will be installing a new traffic light and crosswalk.

Limited PZC discussion ensued. Ms. Paranjape says that the PZC cannot vote. This is just for the applicant to present but the IWB will be having a public hearing and the PZC must wait for the IWB to make a decision.

Mr. D'Acunto asked if the PZC could vote conditionally based on IWB approval. Ms. Paranjape discouraged this.

It is possible that the application could change based on IWB comment.

Mr. Nneji is going through the.opengov checklist and this requires a formal statement of maintenance plan and asks if it is going to be required or not in the plans for this application. Mr. Fontaine states that the town will own the bridge upon completion of construction and it is not standard for state projects to require maintenance plans after the construction is complete. Mr. Hendrick is looking for the section. Mr. Sorena asks if it is an 80/20. Mr. Fontaine says that yes, it is 80/20, but because this bridge is being replaced it would be handled under state and federal guidance. Mr. Sorena states that it is not the town bridge so maintenance or any additional work would be the state's responsibility. Mr. Fontaine clarifies that this is actually a town bridge. Ms. Paranjape points to Section 6.1 for guidance. Ms. Paranjape will follow up with Mr. Fontaine to clarify what section to move to. Ms. Paranjape will clarify maintenance with the applicant after the meeting.

This is continued until after the IWB has made a decision.

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION Re: 34 Bailey Avenue

A motion was made by Ms. Okrongly to move the executive session to the end of the agenda. Ms. DiSalvo seconds. Motion passes and it is unanimous.

A motion was made by Ms. Okrongly to go into executive session at 8:20PM. Ms. DiSalvo seconds. Motion passes and it is unanimous.

Executive session was entered at 8:20PM after Item 6 was completed. The PZC came out of Executive Session at 9:13PM.

Ms. Okrongly, lead the PZC in discussion that the intent of the money is for similar projects for the town. This money is for that only and the PZC wants to be sure that there is no gray area. Ms. Paranjape stated that the money would be received by the finance department and it would go into an account for such projects.

A motion was made by Mr. Nissim for:

“In light of the competing claims concerning enforcement, and given the pledged financial commitment by the property owner to a similar heat pumps project for the benefit of the town, the Commission authorizes the Zoning Enforcement Officer to issue a zoning certificate of compliance for Zoning permit Z-23-17 for the 34 Bailey Avenue project Special Permit SP-22 upon receipt of full payment of the financial commitment made by the property owner.”

Motion seconded by Mr. Nneji. Mr. Molyneaux opposed. Motion carries 8-1-0.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Hendrick starts this by stating that even when the PZC works toward updating regulations, they need to go through the public hearing process as if they are an applicant. These four items are ready for public hearing and want to hear what the public has to say prior to making adjustments. Adjustments should not be made to these four amendments between now and the public hearing since they have been presented, so the public can read something that is not constantly changing. Save comments for discussion during the public hearing. Each of the amendments has a PZC Commission member who took the lead and that PZC member should present their amendment.

- 6.1. **A-26-1: Text Amendment:** Application (per RZR 9.2.B) to amend Section 2.2 – revise definition for “Bed and Breakfast” and add new for “Short-Term Rentals”. *Commission Initiated (For receipt and schedule Public Hearing. Staff suggests April 14 Public Hearing)* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104870>

Motion made by Mr. Sorena to receive and discuss 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4 on April 14. Seconded by Ms. DiSalvo. Motion passes unanimously.

- 6.2. **A-26-2: Text Amendment:** Application (per RZR 9.2.B) to amend Section 5- Additional Standards – Traffic Impact Analysis for the following Sections – 5.1.F; .2.F; 5.3.F; 5.4.F; 5.5.F; 5.6.F; 5.7.F and add a new Section 7.17 – Traffic Impact Analysis. *Commission Initiated. (For receipt and schedule Public Hearing. Staff suggests April 14 Public Hearing)* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104872>

Motion made by Mr. Sorena to receive and discuss 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4 on April 14. Seconded by Ms. DiSalvo. Motion passes unanimously.

6.3. **A-26-3: Text Amendment:** Application (per RZR 9.2.B) to amend Section 7.5: Excavation, Filling, and Grading. *Commission Initiated. (For receipt and schedule Public Hearing. Staff suggests April 14 Public Hearing)* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104873>

Motion made by Mr. Sorena to receive and discuss 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4 on April 14. Seconded by Ms. DiSalvo. Motion passes unanimously.

6.4. **A-26-4: Text Amendment:** Application (per RZR 9.2.B) to amend Section 10.1 – Application fees, Section 10.1.B: Application to the Zoning Enforcement Officer; Section 10.1.C: Applications to the Planning Director; Section 10.1D: Applications to the Planning and Zoning Commission. *Commission Initiated (For receipt and schedule Public Hearing. Staff suggests April 14 Public Hearing)* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104874>

Motion made by Mr. Sorena to receive and discuss 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4 on April 14. Seconded by Ms. DiSalvo. Motion passes unanimously.

6.5. Meeting Minutes

6.5.1. Regular Meeting Minutes – February 24, 2026

Motion made by Mr. Okrongly to approve as amended, if amended. Seconded by Mr. Nissim. Motion passes unanimously.

7. ADJOURN

Hearing no further business or public discussion, meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM.

Notes

Lis pendens: Addessi vs Planning & Zoning Commission Re 389 Main Street.

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