



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

These minutes and motions (votes) are a general summary of the meeting. This is not a verbatim transcription.

Tuesday, December 19, 2023 Present: **IN PERSON** **VIRTUAL**
Joseph Dowdell Robert Hendrick
Susan Consentino (7:05) Ben Nneji
Chris Molyneaux
Sebastiano D'Acunto

Absent: Joseph Sorena, Mariah Okrongly, Elizabeth DiSalvo

Also Present: Alice Dew, Director of Planning and Zoning

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hendrick called meeting to order at 7:02 PM

1.1. Distribution of agenda & previous minutes.

Distribution/acknowledgement of correspondence

[Correspondence](#)

Correspondence related to current application(s) are uploaded to the relevant application and can be found through the Town of Ridgefield Website.

1.2. Distribution of agenda & previous minutes.

1.3. Approval of agenda

Sign discussion will be removed from Agenda.

2. OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS

- 2.1. **Branchville Planning Discussion:** As discussed in previous meetings (Aug-Oct 2023), the Commission wishes to set aside time over several meetings to allow new members to become re-acquainted with the previous studies (~2017) related to a long-term master plan for the Branchville district.

2.1.1. Discussion with Francis Pickering (Executive Director, WestCOG)

Francis Pickering gave a presentation on Transit Orientation Development. TOD is the development of residential, commercial and employment centers within one-half mile or walking distance of public transportation.

The components of TOD were explained. The following are the five components:

1. Mix of uses
2. Density of people and places-transit works best in dense areas
3. Human-scale environment-WestCOG has a grant to figure out how to improve service on Danbury Branch line.
4. Walkability - Reasonable distance and connecting sidewalks in order for TOD to work.

5. High quality mass transit.

Some topics Francis Pickering discussed included barriers to TOD and options to promote TOD. Ben Nneji suggested stages of TOD and secondly asked how to communicate why TOD is a positive thing.

Chair Hendrick asked how to make this successful without a good mass transit system in Ridgefield. Susan Consentino commented regarding Norwalk River and drinking water as well as flooding possibility.

Feasibility concerns include: sewer capacity, constraint with river and wetlands, and how to lower environmental impact.

3. NEW BUSINESS

3.1. Information on Natural Resource Inventory (NRI)- % Conservation Commission.

Eric Keller, Vice Chair of Conservation Commission and Jean Linville, Commissioner of Conservation presented. The prior NRI study was done approximately 10 years ago. The current study was done by grad students from Pace University with local high school students and West Conn which helped reduce cost of this study. Conservation Commission would like a more rolling study every couple of years versus once every 10 years or so.

Recommendations and conclusions from this study include:

- Geology and Soil – Creation of steep slope regulation
- Water Resources – Focus in reduction of pesticides and fertilizers and increase maintenance of septic systems
- Aquatic Habitats – protection of vernal pools
- Land use and protection – goal of 30% open space
- Terrestrial Habitats – hiring of forest manager
- Wildlife – how to best live with wildlife

Conservation Commission is asking for each board to do what is within their domain to help with conservation.

3.2. Sign Discussion

Removed from Agenda.

3.3. Approval of Minutes

3.3.1. Meeting Minutes – December 5, 2023

[2023.12.05.pzc .draft meeting minutes.pdf \(ridgefieldct.gov\)](#)

Motion to approve minutes (Maker C. Molyneaux, second by J. Dowdell) Unanimous Approval

4. ADJOURN

Chair Hendrick adjourned meeting at 8:56 PM

Submitted by Misty Dorsch,
Recording Secretary

FOOTNOTES:

RZR = Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations

CGS = Connecticut General Statutes