

TOWN of RIDGEFIELD – PUBLIC HEARING & BOS MEETING

NOVEMBER 2, 2016 – 7:30 P.M.

TOWN HALL/LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM

UNREVISED/UNAPPROVED MINUTES

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription.

In attendance: R. Marconi, R. Hebert, M. Kozlark, S. Zemo

Absent: B. Manners

R. Marconi called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and then opened the Public Hearing. He read the call for the Public Hearing – *“Notice is hereby given that a **Public Hearing** will be held on November 2, 2016, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall/Large Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut to consider changes in Ridgefield Code under Chapter 274: Article II: Peddling and Soliciting.*

Joanne Meder, Director of Town Planning, came forward to participate in the discussion.

R. Marconi asked for comments first from the Board of Selectmen. M. Kozlark commented on #2, re term of Permit – regarding selling on Main St. This is not serving the policy where retail use is permitted.

R. Hebert stated he feels the statute is now “good”.

S. Zemo asked Joanne Meder for her comments. Does she see something we should consider? Joanne stated she had read an earlier draft; she has a couple of comments. Tonight’s draft is the end result. Let’s make sure we have accomplished our objectives.

Joan Zawacki, Silver Spring Rd. – read a statement she had prepared. She is involved with two grandfathered sites and she feels that the sites are being considered differently; for example, hours of operation. Zoning regulates each property. Ms. Zawacki stated she wanted to talk “things out” If someone does work out their differences, do we now say there are two vendors at that location. Does that limit the type of business each vendor can establish? There could be additional conflicts. Competition is one thing; conflicts can arise.

Tracy Carter, Branchville Rd. stated she is the “other vendor” Ms. Zawacki is referring to. Her business is to provide coffee and bagels – no cooking and no hot food. She doesn’t compete with anyone who sells hot dogs in the afternoon. Her hours are 6-9 in the morning. She has a full-time job during the remainder of the day. She sells the coffee and bagels to provide extra income for herself.

M. Kozlark stated we need to look at the ordinance and discuss as if we ourselves are the people involved.

It was agreed to leave # 274-8 B-3 and B-4 as they are. Both locations have to be State approved.

John Katz, Old Ridgebury Rd., stated we should take out the 6-9 coffee time. We are allowing two specific locations for food trucks – one on Route 35 and the other one on Route 7 with two operations at the same location.

R. Marconi closed the Public Hearing at 7:57 and reconvened the Board of Selectmen Meeting
BOS Meeting

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to approve as amended the proposed draft of the Ridgefield Code under Chapter 274, Article II: Peddling and Soliciting and schedule a Town Meeting for Wednesday, November 16, 2016, at 6:30 p.m., Town Hall/Large Conference Room, 400 Main St., Ridgefield, Connecticut, for consideration of this draft. Motion passed 4-0.

1. Public Comment – There were no comments from the public.

2. Ridgefield Prevention Council Interview: LouAnn Daprato

LouAnn Daprato came forward to express her interest in serving on the Ridgefield Prevention Council. They have vacancies for one adult member and two student members. R. Marconi read the letter received from Ms. Daprato

R. Marconi asked Ms. Daprato to tell the BOS about herself and why her interest in the Prevention Council. She indicated that she has lived in Ridgefield for twenty-nine years and has been exposed to a lot of situations. Last year, one in particular involved addiction. S. Zemo stated he knows Ms. Daprato as a “real worker bee”. He is thrilled to have her come forward.

M. Kozlark thanked Ms. Daprato for coming forward. We welcome any assistance to help address these issues. Ms. Daprato stated information about these problems needs to get out to the people of the Town. She helped with a recent fund raiser.

R. Hebert stated he has known Ms. Daprato for quite some time and thanked her for coming forward.

Use of narcotics is a progressive disease. One cannot take a test and know that they are likely to have an addiction problem. A person needs to know that becoming involved with narcotics is a serious illness and one that the individual has made the choice to become involved with.

M. Kozlark moved and R. Hebert seconded a motion to appoint LouAnn Daprato to fill the adult vacancy on the Ridgefield Prevention Council for a four-year term. Motion passed 5-0.

3. Conservation Commission Items:

- Request for Easement Swap at 20 Mopus Bridge Road

There were two members of the Conservation Commission present for this discussion: Jim Coyle, Chairman, and Susan Baker

There has been a long-term violation of the Town Open Space Ordinance at the horse farm at 20 Mopus Bridge Road. Mowing and/or grazing horses on portion of a 1.799-acre parcel on which the town holds a conservation easement is not allowed. The easement requires that the land be left in its natural state. In order to eliminate this violation, the Conservation Commission explored the possibility of doing a land easement swap as described in the October 6 letter to the property owner. The owner has agreed to this swap. The Commission states that they understand that this swap will require an 824 referral, Public Hearing, and Town Meeting. They are waiting for the official survey map which the Commission has yet to receive. The owner of the property will still have access to the river and additional piece of open space behind the easement. R. Marconi stated that if there is no reason for a Phase 1, then we won't do one.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to schedule a Public Hearing on November 16, 2016, following the already scheduled Town Meeting that evening, relative to the proposed easement swap at 20 Mopus Bridge Road as being presented by the Ridgefield Conservations Commission. Motion passed 4-0.

- McKeon's Farm Lease to Henny Penny Farm
Present for this discussion was Whitney Freeman, manager of Henny Penny Farm. She previously signed a six-month agreement. The State requires at least a five-year lease. She is applying for a round of grants. Two applications are in process, one in May and one in October. There are different categories in which she can apply, but she needs a current lease to do so. Town Counsel, David Grogins, is preparing a lease for the BOS to review at their November 16th meeting, and then will next post a Public Hearing date. There needs to be a ten-day separation between a Public Hearing and a Special Town Meeting.

John Katz, Old Ridgebury Rd., stated the water source for the Henny Penny Farm is from his property. Going forward, Mr. Katz stated he needs to protect his property. The well has not gone dry so there has not been a problem, but should a problem arise, he would have to be able to restrict the use by the Henny Penny Farm of his water supply. Whitney Freeman stated if she were able to put in a well, then she would have her own water supply.

M. Kozlark asked if there have been comments from any other neighbors. There have not been problems to date. The Conservation Commission has jurisdiction over the property. They realize that there is not a current lease in effect.

S. Zemo inquired if there is any education use of this property? Whitney Freeman shared her enthusiasm for the property and her projects and animals.

The thought is for the BOS to review the proposed lease on November 16 and if it is approved, then a Public Hearing could be scheduled for the first BOS Meeting in December.

4. Selectman's Report

- Paul Sutherland has submitted his resignation as he is moving out of town.
- Portland Avenue Bridge – David Grogins is reviewing the document regarding the funding for the redo of the bridge. Once he reviews it and it is approved, then R. Marconi can sign it. This will result in the bridge being put into DOT influence. 80% of the funding will be Federal funding and 20% will be from the Town of Ridgefield. R. Marconi stated he wants to be sure all details are set. Draft issues will be sent to Planning & Zoning for their approval. The State saw the proposed plan. The road that comes in at a slant will be shut down. The thought is to make the access road further south.
- Two tickets are available from the Ridgefield Education Fund for the Harlem Wizards on November 18.
- About 1300 absentee ballots have been requested. Ridgefield's voter registration is expected to go above 18,000.

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 10/19/16

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the October 19, 2016, Board of Selectmen Meeting & Public Hearing. Motion passed 4-0.

6. Executive Session: Future Lease of Town-Owned Property

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 8:55 p.m., and go into Executive Session to discuss “Future Lease of Town-Owned Property”. Motion passed 4-0.

The Board returned to Public Session at 10:01 pm. No vote was taken.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 10:01 p.m. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet L. Johnson