



## TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD Planning and Zoning Commission

### APPROVED/REVISED MINUTES PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

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

November 23, 2021                      Present:                      Susan Consentino  
   Elizabeth DiSalvo  
   Joseph Dowdell (Vice Chair)  
   Robert Hendrick (Chair)  
   John Katz  
   Ben Nneji  
   Maria Hutchings Okrongly  
   Joseph Sorena

Absent:                      Christopher Molyneaux

Also Present:    Richard Baldelli, Director, Planning and Zoning, ZEO  
   Eileen White, Recording Secretary

#### **I.            Call to Order**

For the first time since the Covid-19 Pandemic began, the Meeting was in-person at 66 Prospect Street.

Prior to the election of officers, Mr. Baldelli presided over the Meeting. He asked for introductions around the Conference Table. He introduced Ms. White, Recording Secretary to the new Commissioners: Ms. Elizabeth DiSalvo, Ms. Maria Hutchings Okrongly and Mr. Joseph Sorena (Mr. Molyneaux being absent) and asked that Ms. White be able to be recognized for the clarification of names and such for recording purposes.

Mr. Baldelli explained the procedures for the election of officers the Planning and Zoning Commission ("the Commission").

Mr. Baldelli also mentioned that name plates have been ordered, but they may be back-logged.

#### **II:          Election of Officers**

**Mr. Katz motioned, Mr. Nneji seconded, to nominate Mr. Hendrick as Chair. Mr. Hendrick abstained. Motion carried 7-0-1.**



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**Ms. Consentino motioned, Ms. DiSalvo seconded, to nominate Mr. Dowdell as Vice Chair. Mr. Dowdell abstained. Motion carried 7-0-1.**

#### **III: Executive Session – Planner/ZEO interview**

**Mr. Katz motioned, Mr. Nneji seconded to move the Executive Session to the end of the Agenda. Motion carried 8-0.**

Because of the Agenda change from the previous motion, the Commission proceeded to discuss Item Number Two Under Discussions and Vote.

#### **IV: Discussions and vote:**

1. Planner/ZEO position.
2. Appointment of a Business Zones-Subcommittee Member.

Commissioner Hendrick gave an overview of the history of the Business Zones Subcommittee for the new Commissioners. This included two specific areas in the last six months of possibly allowing residences on the ground floor of businesses and the possible revision of restrictions in the B-2 zone.

The Commission discussed whether they should liaison with other Town Committee and whether the Chair should discontinue being on the Business Zones Subcommittee. The consensus was that the Chair should remain on the Business Zones Subcommittee.

**Mr. Katz motioned, Mr. Sorena seconded, to add Commissioner DiSalvo to the Business Zones Subcommittee. Ms. DiSalvo abstained. Motion carried 7-0-1.**

3. Meeting and Site-walk calendars for 2022.

Mr. Baldelli conveyed that Ms. Paranjape, Office Administrator, always checks with the Temple and other institutions before composing the calendar. Mr. Baldelli explained that the Conference Room being used tonight is only available to the Commissioners on Tuesday nights.

Commissioner Consentino distributed a proposal to changes for both the Meeting Calendar and the Site Walk Calendar. Mr. Baldelli suggested that each calendar revision be considered



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separately. Mr. Baldelli also stated that Meetings did not have to occur twice a month.

Ms. Consentino presented that the February 22, 2022 Meeting be eliminated and that the April 12, 2022 Meeting be shifted to April 5, 2022.

**Ms. Consentino motioned, Ms. Okrongly seconded, to approve the calendar changes as presented. Motion carried 8-0,**

At 18:59 on the record made by Ms. White's phone, Mr. Baldelli stated that the Town's recording device was no longer working. Ms. White had two other devices recording as back-ups.

The Commission discussed the fact that Sundays have always been the days for site walks. Mr. Baldelli stated that site walks do not have to occur twice a month. He also conveyed that the calendar for 2022 had to be filed with the Town Clerk as per statutory requirements.

The Chair said that because the calendar had been revised for 2022, the Site Walk slated for both February 20 and April 10 would no longer be necessary.

**Ms. Consentino motioned, Mr. Sorena seconded, to approve the site walk changes as presented. Motion carried 8-0,**

#### 4. Meeting location – Zoom vs In-person.

The Chair stated that the group e-mails on this topic showed that there is support for having in-person meetings and some sort of hybrid arrangement for Commissioners and the public.

Mr. Baldelli said that the law that allows Commissions to have zoom meetings will expire in April of 2022. The Legislature will go into session starting in February of 2022.

Discussion ensued regarding whether or it was feasible for the Town IT Department to work with a Commissioner and First Selectman Marconi to allow in-person and hybrid meetings of the Commission to take place and still comply with the State law and FOIA rules.

**Mr. Katz motioned, Ms. DiSalvo seconded, to give Mr. Hendrick permission to investigate the legal and financial feasibility to create in-person and hybrid meetings of the Commission using the 66 Prospect Street building. Motion carried 8-0.**



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#### IV: New Submissions:

**1.VDC-21-11:** Village District Application per Section 8.3 and Sec.5.1.B. of the Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations for building sign “Cake box” at **427 Main Street**. *Owner: Carleen Addressi Baer. Applicant: Jordan Gregory. For receipt and discussion.*

Mr. Baldelli stated that the Village District Commission has reviewed this application and approved it as submitted on November 9, 2021.

**Mr. Katz motioned, Mr. Dowdell seconded, to approve as submitted. Motion carried 8-0.**

**2. SP-21-21:** Revision to Special Permit Application per Section 9.2 of the Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations for adding thirty new parking spaces at Parks and Recreation facility at **195 Danbury Road**. *Owner :Town of Ridgefield. Applicant: Steven Sullivan. For receipt scheduling a sitewalk and discussion.*

There was a technological problem with Mr. Baldelli’s computer and the viewpoint could not be viewed for those of the public in attendance.

Mr. Hendrick moved his computer over to Mr. Baldelli’s computer so that the viewpoint could be viewed by the public.

Mr. Baldelli clarified the zoning procedure for the new Commissioners.

Ms. Consentino was recused due to her employment with the Parks and Recreation Department.

**Mr. Katz motioned, Mr. Sorena seconded, to approve. Ms. Consentino was recused. Motion carried 7-0..**

**3. REF-21-4:** 8-24 Referral Application for donation of land 7.14 acres Assessor’s ID ID G08-0012- Danbury Road. *Town of Ridgefield. For acknowledgement and review.*

In the absence of a workable computer, Mr. Baldelli spread a physical map before the Commission done by the Assessor for the proposed review area. He stated that the land that is being contemplated is suitable to be put under the perusal of the Conservation Commission.

**Mr. Katz motioned, Ms. DiSalvo seconded to acknowledge as a positive referral. Motion carried 8-0.**



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**4. REF-21-5:** 8-24 Referral Application for donation 0.378 acres of land  
Assessor's ID C-08-0028- Ledges Road & Ridgebury Road. *Town of Ridgefield.*  
*For acknowledgement and review.*

**Mr. Katz motioned, Mr. Nneji seconded, to acknowledge as a positive referral. Motion carried 8-0.**

**V: Release of bond:**

- 1. 54 Catoonah Street, #2018-070-SP,** Request release of a \$86,000.00 Bond,  
posted for Erosion and Sediment Control, for, and during, site work  
construction.

Mr. Baldelli stated that State law has whittled down bonding to being limited to Erosion and Sediment Controls.

Mr. Baldelli said that the Project Engineer had written a letter that was distributed to the Commission. Mr. Baldelli furthered that he inspected the property and was satisfied with it.

**Mr. Katz motioned, Mr. Nneji seconded, to release the Bond. Motion carried 8-0.**

- 2. 219 Bennetts Farm Road, #2013-014-SR-REZ-S-SP,** Request release of a  
\$5,000.00 Bond, posted for Erosion and Sediment Control for, and during, site  
work construction.

Mr. Baldelli stated that the Project Engineer had written a letter that was distributed to the Commission. Mr. Baldelli furthered that he inspected the property and was satisfied with it.

**Mr. Nneji motioned, Ms. DiSalvo seconded, to release the Bond. Motion carried 8-0.**

**VI: Correspondence:**

- Sulzinsky letter.

Mr. Baldelli stated that the Sulzinsky letter alleged zoning violations regarding a pickleball court. He left the Meeting Room to make copies of his response to the Sulzinsky letter, while the Commissioners considered the Affording Housing Committee's invitation.

The Chair clarified that the noise ordinance is enforced by the Police Department.



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Mr. Baldelli said that the Parks and Recreation Department needs a Special Permit if they want the pickleball to stay where it is.

- Affordable Housing invitation.

The Commission has been invited by the Affordable Housing Committee to attend the December 1, 2021 meeting at 7 p.m. in the Large Conference Room at Town Hall.

#### **VII: Approval of Minutes:**

- **PZC Meeting-October 26, 2021**

Since the following Commissioners were not yet Commissioners at the October 26, 2021 Meeting: Ms. DiSalvo, Mr. Molyneaux, Ms. Okrongly and Mr. Sorena, they were recused.

**Mr. Katz motioned, Mr. Dowdell seconded, to approve as amended. Motion carried 5-0.**

#### **VIII: Executive Session**

**Mr. Katz motioned, Ms. Okrongly seconded, to go into Executive Session at 8:19 p.m.**

Those in the audience left the Conference Room and the door was shut.

No decision or votes were taken in Executive Session.

**Mr. Katz motioned, Ms. DiSalvo seconded, to come out of the Executive Session and return to the Working Meeting at 8:42 p.m. Mr. Nneji was out of the room. Motion carried 7-0.**

The consensus of the Commission was to schedule a Special Meeting for November 30 to discuss Personnel.

Discussion ensued on how to place items on the Agenda. The Chair stated he will solicit items from the Commissioners.

Mr. Nneji returned to the Conference Room at: 8:43 p.m.

Commissioner Katz acknowledged Mr. Baldelli for his outstanding years of service as Zoning Enforcement Officer and said that Ridgefield will be “poverty stricken” without him.

Congratulations to Mr. Baldelli on his upcoming retirement.

**Mr. Katz motioned, Mr. Nneji seconded, to adjourn.**



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#### **VIV: Adjourn**

**The Meeting adjourned at: 8:46 p.m.**

Hearing no further discussion, the Chair adjourned the Meeting at: 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eileen White