



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD Planning and Zoning Commission

APPROVED/REVISED MINUTES PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION Zoom Webinar

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

April 5, 2022 Present: Susan Consentino
 Elizabeth DiSalvo
 Joseph Dowdell (Vice Chair)
 Robert Hendrick (Chair)
 John Katz
 Christopher Molyneaux (Joined at: 7:30 p.m.)
 Ben Nneji
 Mariah Okrongly
 Joseph Sorena

Also Present: Alice Dew, Director of Planning & Zoning and ZEO
 Eileen White, Recording Secretary

I. Call to order

Chair Hendrick called the Meeting to Order at 7:06 p.m. via the Hybrid Model. There was a delay due to technical difficulties. The following Commissioners attended the Meeting via Zoom: Mr. Dowdell, Mr. Molyneaux, Mr. Nneji, Ms. Okrongly and Mr. Sorena. A quorum was established.

II: Discussions:

1. Affordable Housing Plan. Presentation by Mr. Goldenberg, AHC

Mr. Goldenberg presented the Draft of the Affordable Housing Plan (“Draft Affordable Housing Plan”) that had been sent to the Commissioners.

Initially, Mr. Goldenberg gave a background of the Draft Affordable Housing Plan that took a year in the making, with the Affordable Housing Committee conducting thirty personal interviews and compiling data from over 900 on-line responses to a survey. The 900 signify ten percent of Ridgefield households.



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Since the Draft Affordable Housing Plan has a deadline of submission to the State of Connecticut by June 1, 2022, the Planning and Zoning Commission is required to have a Public Hearing by mid-May, before voting on the plan.

Mr. Goldenberg stated that the Town of Ridgefield could proactively decide how Ridgefield will look, rather than have the State decide how it will look.

Mr. Goldenberg touched on several key points from the Draft Affordable Housing Plan, including differentiating Affordable Housing from that required by 8-30g, defining “ALICE” (“assets limited, income constrained, employed”), which effects 42% of Ridgefield renters and 28% of Ridgefield homeowners and that 102 housing unit points are needed for a Second Moratorium.

The Commissioners and Mr. Goldenberg discussed various aspects of the Draft Affordable Housing Plan setting realistic goals for the next five years, including that being proactive now might garner 70-80 affordable housing units.

Questions from Commissioners included asking what a housing unit is in terms of how many people should be living there, considering septic measurements go by the number of bedrooms and what incentives can be put into place to satisfy both Affordable Housing and 8-30g.

Mr. Goldenberg stated that on page 10 of the Draft Affordable Housing Plan, it was conveyed that more assisted housing could be created as shown from the \$50,000 given to Mr. Goldenberg and the Committee for a feasibility study.

Mr. Goldenberg also conveyed the concept of a Housing Trust Fund which some other Connecticut towns are using.

Mr. Goldenberg stated that Trumbull, Connecticut created an incentive for people to convert their non-conforming Accessory Dwelling Units (“ADU’s”) to conforming Accessory Dwelling Units.

Commissioner Katz expressed concern over language in the Draft Affordable Housing Plan that he said was pejorative about zoning created in the Town of Ridgefield in the 1940’s to keep out a diverse population. Mr. Goldenberg said that there was data to support the wording.

Commissioner Katz also stated that if the Town makes diverse housing stock, the State will leave Ridgefield alone.

Commissioner Sorena asked about what the State could do if their guidelines were not followed with Mr. Goldenberg saying that the State could impose fines and penalties.



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Commissioner Nneji about the “missing middle” housing and Mr. Goldenberg said there was a link in the Draft Affordable Housing Plan that the Commission could click on to learn how to create a transitional housing zone.

Mr. Goldenberg asked the Commissioners to thoroughly peruse the Draft Affordable Housing Plan and to keep this Matter ongoingly on their Agenda.

The consensus was that the Commission would carefully read the Draft Affordable Housing Plan and place it on a future Agenda.

III: New Business:

- 1. SP-22-4, 34 Bailey Avenue:** Special Permit Application per Section 9.2 and per Section 5.1.D of the Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations for new construction of mixed use building with 3 commercial units on first floor and 25 residential units in the CBD zone. *Owner: Bailey Rail and Granary LLC./Applicant: Robert R. Jewell. To receive, schedule a sitewalk and public hearing.*

Mr. Katz motioned, Mr. Nneji seconded, to Acknowledge Receipt of the Application, Schedule a Site Walk for May 1, 2022 and a Public Hearing for May 10, 2022. Motion carried 9-0.

- 2. VDC-22-2, 34 Bailey Avenue:** Village District Application per Section 8.3 and Sec.5.1.B. of the Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations for new construction of mixed use building with 3 commercial units on first floor and 25 residential units in the CBD zone. *Owner: Bailey Rail and Granary LLC./Applicant: Robert R. Jewell. To receive, schedule a sitewalk and discussion.*

Mr. Katz motioned, Ms. Okrongly seconded, to Acknowledge Receipt of the Application, Schedule a Site Walk for May 1, 2022 and a Discussion for May 10, 2022. Motion carried 9-0.

IV: Old Business: None.



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V: Release of Bond:

- 1. 137 Ethan Allen Highway, #2019-061-REV(SP) (SR).** Request for release of bond for \$5,750.00 posted for Erosion and sediment control.

Ms. Dew stated that she, along with the Inland Wetlands Enforcement Officer, went to the site and all was stabilized.

Ms. Okrongly motioned, Mr. Katz seconded, to Release the Bond. Motion carried 9-0.

VI: Correspondence:

- 1.** Letter from Mr. P. Olson.

Commissioner Katz expressed concern that this was not a Public Hearing. He asked how is this under Correspondence and stated that the Commission needed to be careful.

The Chair stated that the Commission was being asked to listen to Attorney Olson's letter as he read it into the Record and not to decide anything tonight.

Attorney Olson stated that he had sent out two letters: one to Ms. Dew as Zoning Enforcement Officer and one to the Commission to satisfy the Town of Ridgefield's Regulations that state that if the Zoning Enforcement Officer does not take action on a matter previously decided, that the Commission must enforce the Regulation.

Mr. Katz expressed further concern that Attorney Olson's actions in stating his clients' case tonight were not appropriate.

Attorney Olson read the April 5, 2022 into the Record which had the November 19, 2021 letter from Mr. Richard Baldelli, former Zoning Enforcement Officer, stating that pickleball on the pickleball court had to be suspended until a Special Permit was issued by the Town. The November 19, 2021 letter was carbon copied to First Selectman Rudy Marconi, Chief of Police Kreitz and Parks and Recreation Director DiPinto, but Mr. Olson stated, no one had appealed the decision to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Commissioner Katz stated that he had called the Parks and Recreation Department to inquire about the pickleball court play and had been told it was suspended. He also drove by on two occasions and the nets were down and no play was taking place.

Commissioner DiSalvo asked about the Noise Ordinance and playing on the pickleball court at 8:30 a.m. Attorney Olson said he was not going to address the Noise Ordinance.



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Commissioner Katz asked, through the Chair, for Ms. Dew to enforce the November 2021 decision that the pickleball play be suspended until the process of obtaining a Special Permit Application was followed through.

The Chair stated that this was an Administrative Action by the Commission and needed no debate.

Ms. Dew said she would be sending a letter to the Parks and Recreation Department and the Town of Ridgefield stopping all pickleball play. Ms. Dew texted Parks and Recreation Department Director DiPinto so that he would cease the pickleball play.

VII: Approval of Minutes:

- **Regular Meeting-** March 22, 2022

Mr. Katz motioned, Ms. DiSalvo seconded, to approve as amended. Motion carried 9-0.

- **Sitewalk Meeting-** March 06, 2022

Mr. Katz motioned, Ms. Consentino seconded, Ms. Okrongly abstained, Ms. DiSalvo abstained, to approve as amended. Motion carried 7-0-2.

Mr. Jim Finger, Casagmo Board Treasurer, asked if there was an update to the Casagmo matter and invited the Commission to walk the site.

Ms. Dew said that Tighe-Bond had been retained, but it would take some time to assess the situation.

The Chair stated that Casagmo could be added as a Site Walk on May 1, 2022 without a vote, as this was an administrative action.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Eileen White