



**TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
UNAPPROVED/UNREVISED MEETING MINUTES**

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

Tuesday May 16, 2023 Present:

IN PERSON

Robert Hendrick (Chair)
Joseph Dowdell (Vice Chair)
John Katz
Ben Nneji
Susan Consentino
Elizabeth DiSalvo (7:09-9:29)

VIRTUAL

Mariah Okrongly

Also Present: Alice Dew, Director of Planning and Zoning

Absent: Joseph Sorena, Christopher Molyneux

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hendrick called meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and quorum was established.

1.1. Distribution of agenda & previous minutes

1.2. Distribution/acknowledgement of correspondence

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

2. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 2.1. **RZ-23-1; 0 Ethan Allen Highway (G10-0057; 27.013 ac.)** Zone change application per Section 9.2.C of the Ridgefield Zoning Regulations for changing the zone from B-2 to Multi Family Development District (MFDD): Tax Assessor's Lots G10-0057. *Owner/Applicant: Ridgefield Professional Office Complex LLC (35 days to close Public Hearing is June 20, 2023-no extension days used)*
<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91000>

This is a rezone application for 0 Ethan Allen Highway. Public hearing for all three applications, RZ-23-1, SP-23-7 and SP-23-8 were opened at same time because the 3 applications are tied together.

Robert Jewell representing the applicant, Ridgefield Professional Office Complex, LLC, spoke. Mr. Jewell gave a summary of the applications. The Special Permit is simultaneously being reviewed by Inland Wetlands. Change of zone is not dependent on Inland Wetlands approval. Mr. Jewell requested RZ-22-1 be made part of this record as well. Mr. Jewell gave history of property and zone changes. Applicant purchased property in 2005. Since 2013 it has been B2 zone. There has been no serious interest in property since 2013.

Mr. Jewell gave highlights from memo prepared by Ms. Karen Martin of SLR. This rezone application is in direct response to previous application that was denied by Planning and Zoning board in 2022. Applicant has addressed reasons for denial. There will be no entrance on Route 35 other than emergency vehicles only.

There will be 92 units with 14 affordable units in the apartment building for period of 40 years.

Dr. Lipton spoke. He gave his driving principles of this application. Some of what he spoke about included enhancing wetlands, creating something new, respecting native landscape, maintaining distance

between units, limiting inclines, and creating a spot for residents to get together. Maximizing energy and sustainability factors were also a driving principle. Dr. Lipton is also planning on solar roofs for part of the project. EV stations will be installed.

Property has been marketed since 2005 as B2 Zone. Parcel that is 2.1 acres is included in rezone.

Mr. Williams with SLR Consulting gave an overview of the proposed 29.2 acres project.

There was a presentation which included a map of proposed project. Images of the site was presented. The project includes 13 buildings, which includes apartments and town homes. There is a water tower as well as a sewer facility that is soon to be decommissioned.

As part of 901 Ethan Allen, there is a stream channel crossing. The current 30-inch metal pipe is crushed and a new improved crossing is proposed.

Ms. Shelly Plude presented the new improved stream crossing. The crossing is up to the standard of Army Core requirements. Elevations and flood planes were discussed. Raising elevation of crossing in order to get into the site.

Parking includes garage parking as well as parking spaces. Apartment parking spaces will include permeable pavers. There is an open lawn area. Grading was discussed. There will be a gated entrance on the property off Rte. 35 for emergency vehicles. Pool drainage was discussed. Ridgefield regulations specify 4-inch caliper tree. Applicant is asking to be allowed to plant 2.5 to three-inch caliper trees. Erosion control plan was presented.

Todd Ritchie, registered professional engineer and certified flood plain manager, presented the utilities and stormwater management plan. Separation of buildings was discussed and will need Commission approval. Has WPCA approval with minor conditions.

Michael Stein presented. Discussed number of town homes and apartments. Building height and proximity were discussed. Traffic was discussed.

Commission is waiting for peer review from engineer's report.

Public comments included:

- Geothermal and natural gas supply
- Gating of the facility
- Handicap accessibility
- Dumpsters
- Snow removal
- Support for this project

All three Public Hearings will be continued.

- 2.2. **SP-23-7: 0 Ethan Allen Highway G10-0057**; Special permit application for construction of thirteen Multifamily residential buildings, one community meeting house, outdoor pool amenity space, stormwater management system, associated site work. *Owner/Applicant: Ridgefield Professional Office Complex LLC. (35 days to close Public Hearing is June 20, 2023-no extension days used)* <https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/90988>.

Public hearing opened at same time with RZ-23-1.

Public Hearing will be continued.

- 2.3. **SP-23-8; 901 Ethan Allen Highway**, Revision to Special Permit (per RZR 9.2.A) for updating the north parking entrance involving emergency vehicles, parking requirements, fire safety and drainage. *Owners/Applicant: Ridgefield Professional Office Complex LLC. (35 days to close Public Hearing is June 20, 2023-no extension days used)* <https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91015>

Public hearing opened at same time with RZ-23-1.

Public hearing will be continued.

- 2.4. **A-23-1:** Regulation Text Amendment (per PZR 9.2.B) for Section 2.2; Section 7.3.D for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations. *Commission initiated.* <https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91638>

Statute passed at state level last year that requires municipalities, through their zoning regulations, to require any new parking lot, commercial, or multi-unit residential building with 30 or more parking spaces to have 10% minimum electric vehicle charging stations. Regulations allow Ridgefield to increase amount over state minimum. We have to update our regulations to state minimums at least. Commission has discussed several times and now is scheduling a public hearing. Public comment included a question as to whether there is any obligation to current parking lots.

Public hearing continued to June 6.

3. OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS

- 3.1. **SP-23-12; 120 Prospect Street;** Revision to Special Permit (per RZR9.2A) to widen the road and remove the sidewalk. *Owner: Prospect Woods Condominium Assoc. Applicant: Nancy Tine* <https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91481>

Nancy Tine presented. Special Permit application to eliminate two sidewalks. Complex is 40 years old and in need of improvements. Sidewalk project was started in April. At least one condo owner had objection/concerns regarding sidewalks. Owner's major concern was eliminating sidewalk near her unit and widening road. The Board agreed to extend her lawn to cover the footprint of the previous sidewalk and put in asphalt curbing. N. Tine stated Fire Marshal approval was received today. Work was started prior to application. Sidewalk(s) were discussed.

Motion to approve (Maker: J. Katz; second by J. Dowdell) Unanimous Approval

- 3.2. **(Continued) A-22-5:** Regulation Text Amendment (per PZR 9.2.B) for Section 2.2; Section 4.6 and Section 8.8 for Inclusionary Zoning. *Commission initiated.* <https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/89747>

Motion to reorder 3.2 and 3.1 (Maker: J. Katz; second by J. Dowdell) Unanimous Approval

Latest draft from T. Beecher was discussed.

Motion to approve draft as presented (Maker: J. Dowdell; second by J. Katz) Unanimous Approval

- 3.3. Discussion re: Digital Signage potential regulation change. <https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91467>

Motion to take draft to public hearing (Maker: B. Nneji; second by J. Katz) Unanimous Approval
Public Hearing scheduled for June 20, 2023.

- 3.4. (Continued) Discussion and possible action re: bills under consideration at 2023 General Assembly legislative session.

No news to share except legislatures have not rescheduled meeting date.

- 3.5. Discussion on Outdoor Eating Areas

Have to update based on state regulations. There is a draft, based off Westport's model. The draft will be uploaded to ViewPoint.

Motion to take draft to public hearing (Maker: M. Okrongly; second by J. Katz) Unanimous Approval

4. NEW BUSINESS

- 4.1. **REF-23-1:** 8 -24 Referral Application for possible purchase of property ID G10-0057 located at 901 Ethan Allen Highway totaling 2.191 acres. For receipt and acknowledgement.

Motion to receive, acknowledge and make positive referral. (Maker: J. Katz; second by B. Nneji) Unanimous Approval

- 4.2. **VDC-23-4; 4 Prospect Street:** Village District Application (per RZR 8.3 and 5.1.B) to install a wall sign “Raymond James” in CBD district. *Owner: MDJM LLC. Applicant: Ashlea Andrews.*
For receipt and scheduling a discussion.

<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91892>

Motion to receive and schedule discussion on June 6 (Maker B. Nneji; second by J. Katz) Unanimous Approval

4.3. Approval of Minutes

4.3.1.Special Meeting Minutes – April 18, 2023

4.3.2.Meeting Minutes-May 2, 2023

Motion to Approve (Maker: J. Katz; second by B. Nneji) Unanimous Approval

5. ADJOURN

Chair Hendrick adjourned meeting at 10:26 pm

Submitted by Misty Dorsch,
Recording Secretary

FOOTNOTES:

RZR = Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations

CGS = Connecticut General Statutes