

DRAFT Minutes
Ridgefield Tree Committee
February 10, 2026
6:37 p.m.

**This is a Summary of the Activities of the Committee
and not a verbatim transcript**

In attendance: Tree Warden: Steve Lavatori. Members: Tom McManus (Chair), Paul Shotton, Ian Dow, Bob Roth, Don Hulnick, Kitsey Snow (7 p.m.). Excused: Ryan Bossis.

Approval of Minutes of Past Meetings

Mr. McManus referred to the minutes of the meeting of the Committee on January 13 that had been provided to the members in advance of the meeting.

UPON motion duly made (Shotton), seconded (Roth), and carried, it was RESOLVED that these minutes were APPROVED 5-0.

Meeting with Board of Selectpersons re: Ridgefield's Promotion by Sustainable CT

Mr. Shotton related news of a recent well attended meeting with the Board of Selectpersons celebrating the elevation of the Town of Ridgefield from Bronze to Silver status by Sustainable CT for 2025, in part because of increased visibility of the Tree Committee's organization and planting activities with assistance and guidance from the Tree Warden. Only 17 other municipalities (of CT's 169) are rated SILVER, and only 12 are rated GOLD.

Arbor Day Celebration at Ballard Park on Saturday May 16

Mr. McManus reminded the Committee that the celebration of Arbor Day would be later this year than the past 2 years, partly because Ridgefield's elevation often delays the onset of spring in town, and also because official Arbor Day usually conflicts with the anniversary of the Battle of Ridgefield. Our speaker this year will be Danica Doroski, Urban Forestry Coordinator of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).

Additional Development Proposed on Main Street

The Committee discussed proposed development of two lots (559 & 563) on Main Street, widely considered to be a central location of the Battle of Ridgefield in 1777. Mr. McManus noted that the driveway entrance to #563 includes a ~150 yr.-old American Elm, which may deserve special protection if/when construction is eventually permitted.

Forestry Management Plan

The Committee discussed additions to the Forestry Management Plan proposed by Mr. Bossis. Mr. McManus recited the 5 main goals of the document on the first page of the latest (2003) edition, mentioning recent instances where the Town's Tree Ordinance had been overlooked, and proposed that the document be as succinct as possible to encourage compliance with requirements such as obtaining a permit to plant on Town property. Mr. Lavatori and Members agreed; they also agreed that the 2022 *Policy on the Use of Native Plants on Town-Owned Property* should be included as a condition of the permit, but that lists of recommended species and other information and advice should be referenced in the document but not included in it. Updating this document remains a priority of the Committee.

More Trees to Plant

Mr. McManus spoke about planting goals for 2026. More locations on Main Street; expand project to other state highways; Ridgefield High School; another near Library; Richardson Park.

Mulching Recently Planted Trees

The Committee discussed the need for post-planting care (e.g. mulching, shaping) for the 40 trees planted on Main Street in 2024-5, and eventually for trees to be planted in 2026.

Adjournment

UPON motion duly made (Roth), seconded (McManus), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned at 7:40 p.m. Motion passed: 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom McManus, Chair