



**TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
APPROVED/REVISED MEETING MINUTES**

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

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

Present:

IN PERSON

Robert Hendrick (Chair)
Joseph Dowdell (Vice Chair)
John Katz
Mariah Okrongly
Susan Consentino
Christopher Molyneaux

VIRTUAL

Elizabeth DiSalvo
Joe Sorena

Absent:

Ben Nneji

Also present: Alice Dew, Director of Planning and Zoning

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hendrick called meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1.1. Distribution of agenda.

Continuation of public hearing for Inclusionary Zoning. The meeting this evening is about hearing from the public. Commissioners have asked for input from other towns and commissions. They have asked for input from the Affordable Housing Committee. The AHC does not have a consensus opinion.

1.2. Distribution/acknowledgement of correspondence

1.2.1. All emails and letters are under A-22-5 application

Received number of emails all of which are on Town of Ridgefield website. J. Sorena received phone calls regarding this matter and wanted to note that members of commission cannot comment outside of the public hearing or during deliberations. Chair Hendrick explained when an issue is discussed in a public hearing, commissioners are not permitted to talk off the record outside public meeting.

1.3. Approval of agenda

2. PUBLIC HEARING

2.1. (Contd.) **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>

Chair Hendrick invited public to speak.

R. Szentuki asked the question of the Commission if they are you aware of what price affordable house would be. Chair Hendrick explained Commissioners are here to listen, not answer. R. Szentkuti handed out worksheets that showed what an affordable house would sell for and how that affected the

sale price of the other homes in the development. Questions were raised regarding affordable housing regulations lowering the value of homes in Ridgefield. The question was asked multiple times how affordable housing will impact Ridgefield schools. There was discussion concerning the improvements to the water treatment plant in Ridgefield. It was clarified that work was being performed to improve the wastewater quality, not increase in compacity.

The Affordable Housing Plan was created by the Affordable Housing Committee and not the Planning and Zoning Commission. Ridgefield would need approximately 650 units to achieve state's goal of 10%. Chair Hendrick stated that this is not the P&Z Commission's objective and believes this is unrealistic. J. Katz explained the state has mandated for all communities to come up with viable plan for affordable housing. J. Tartaglia spoke and mentioned several documents that he has submitted. Bob Jewell submitted a letter on January 18, 2023 and discussed several points, stating that he felt it was a huge mistake to include single family as part of the mandate. The lending process for home building was also discussed. Multifamily residences are a fairly new development in Ridgefield and Chair Hendrick brought up concern of 8-30g and the zoning regulations not needing to be followed with the exception of health, safety and welfare. Discussion was had on levels of affordable housing and changes in income with rented units.

Possibilities to leave single family housing out entirely of affordable housing and possibly look at certain zones was suggested. Chair Hendrick noted the idea of a sub-committee after the public hearing is closed. Questions arose again regarding why the P&Z initiated discussion concerning Inclusionary Zoning. It was suggested by a resident that the P&Z not vote and the P&Z Commission does not discuss any affordable housing. Chair Hendrick summarized and said plan is mandated. When creating a plan there are a number of ideas that the P&Z Commission should look at/investigate/consider in order to advance affordable housing in Ridgefield. Inclusionary zoning seems to be one that is objected to less. The idea is that when development comes forward, affordable housing should be included. Six neighboring towns have inclusionary zoning, some have only as incentive. Certain approved projects were inquired about but Commissioners will not speak on particular properties. Adaptive reuse was brought up. This is a town with mainly single-family homes. There was a suggestion of incentive and not a mandate. Chair Hendrick explains again that the P&Z Commission is still in discussion and nothing has been decided. State regulations were discussed on how it impacts the ability of Planning and Zoning Commission to deny applications if there is 30% affordable housing units in the project. Several residents strongly encouraged the Commission to allow Inclusionary Zoning in certain zones only. Other town models and numbers were discussed and the Commission is collecting evidence. They Commission feels that when a project does come there should be a mandatory minimum affordable. Chair Hendrick asked Commissioners if they would like to close public hearing. M. Okrongly would like to hear from Board of Selectman and Affordable Housing Committee (beyond Mr. Goldenberg's letter). She also suggested a housing trust and talking to Board of Finance. Public hearing continued to February 7, 2023 meeting.

3. ADJORN

Meeting was adjourned at 8:57pm.

Submitted by Misty Dorsch,
Recording Secretary

FOOTNOTES:

RZR = Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations

CGS = Connecticut General Statutes