

Planning and Zoning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 28, 2026
(Unrevised/Unapproved)

ATTENDANCE

Commission & Staff

NAME	TITLE/ROLE	PRESENT		NOTES
		Yes	No	
Robert Hendrick	Chair	X		
Mariah Okrongly	Vice Chair	X		
Joe Dowdell	Commissioner	X		
Ben Nneji	Commissioner	X		Via Zoom
Elizabeth DiSalvo	Commissioner	X		Joined at 7:05PM
Chris Molyneaux	Commissioner		X	
Joe Sorena	Commissioner	X		
Sebastian D'Acunto	Commissioner		X	
Ben Nissim	Commissioner	X		
Aarti Paranjape	Director, (Staff)	X		

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hendrick called meeting to order at 7:01 PM; Quorum established.

1.1. Distribution of agenda & previous minutes. (Published on Commission's webpage prior to meeting.)

1.2. Administrative Announcements & Correspondence

- A seminar will be held online on 7/29 which is focused on discussing the implementation of Work, Live, Ride which is part of the Public Act that has been relevant in PZC Discussion.

1.3. Approval of agenda.

Ms. Okrongly suggested moving the new business and both preconcept meetings to the beginning of the agenda because the applicants are present.

Motion made by Ms. Okrongly to move both preapplications to the beginning of the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Sorena. Motion passes unanimously.

2. ENFORCEMENT (COMPLAINTS/VIOLATIONS)

No ongoing enforcement to discuss.

3. PUBLIC HEARING(S)

3.1. (Contd.) A-26-3: Text Amendment application (per RZR 9.2.B) to amend Section 7.5: Excavation Filling and Grading. *Commission Initiated.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104873>

Mr. Hendrick gave an overview of the past meeting discussion. The calculations were shared on the screen. Mr. Sorena was a part of drafting the language and calculations for this amendment and the PZC wanted him present for final discussion. Mr. Sorena gave an overview of the calculations and language.

Mr. Hendrick opened the floor to public comment. None.

Motion made by Ms. Okrongly to close the public hearing. Seconded by Ms. DiSalvo. Motion passes unanimously.

- 3.2. **A-26-6: Text Amendment** application (per RZR p.2.b) to amend Section 9.3.L: Notice of Hearing (Mailing to Nearby Owners). *Commission Initiated.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/106579>

Mr. Hendrick gave an overview of the draft language. Ms. Paranjape shared her screen. Ms. Okrongly asked a question about notifications to the adjacent municipality.

Mr. Hendrick opened the floor to public comment. None.

Motion made by Mr. Sorena to close the Public Hearing. Seconded by Mr. Nissim. Motion passes unanimously.

4. OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS

- 4.1. **IF PUBLIC HEARING IS CLOSED: A-26-3: Text Amendment** application (per RZR 9.2.B) to amend Section 7.5: Excavation Filling and Grading. *Commission Initiated.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104873>

Mr. Hendrick discussed the revisions to the text amendment and went over additional calculations.

Motion made by Ms. Okrongly to approve the text amendment as discussed this evening. Seconded by Mr. Sorena. Motion passes unanimously.

- 4.2. **IF PUBLIC HEARING IS CLOSED: A-26-6: Text Amendment Application** (per RZR p.2.B) to amend Section 9.3.L: Notice of Hearing (Mailing to Nearby Owners). *Commission Initiated.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/106579>

Hearing no discussion, Mr. Hendrick asked for a motion.

Motion made by Mr. Sorena to approve the draft as presented. Seconded by Mr. Nissim. Motion passes unanimously.

- 4.3. **VDC-26-6: 7 Bailey Ave: Village District Application** (per RZR 8.3; 5.1.B; 7.2.E.1) to paint exterior, new awning and window lettering "Lilia" in CBD zone. *Owner: Urstadt Biddle Properties Inc; Appl: Teresa Meyer.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/106378>

Mr. Hendrick gave a quick introduction to the application. Ms. Meyer was present to discuss the application. The VDC has already reviewed and commented on this application. The VDC stated that the awning and storefront would be an improvement without any special alterations or conditions.

Motion made by Ms. Okrongly to approve as presented. Seconded by Mr. Nneji. Motion passes unanimously.

4.4. Temporary Moratorium Activities

- 4.4.1. **MISC-26-1: General Regulation and Zones review.** c/o Chair

Ms. DiSalvo added a preliminary write-up on data centers and shared it with the PZC. Ms. Paranjape added a few things. Noise control, energy usage, visual buffers, and water were the main discussion points in the regulation language. She has asked the PZC to review the initial language for discussion.

Mr. Nissim had reached out to the Conservation Commission on steep slopes. He has heard back and will move forward drafting language.

4.4.2. **MISC-25-3:** Branchville Strategic Review

No discussion about this item.

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

- 5.1. **MISC-26-5: Pre-submission concept Review** (per RZR 9.2.E) for proposed development of an affordable 8-30g multi-family development of three-story residential building with 14 apartments associated parking, utilities, stormwater management, landscaping and related site work at 27 Abbott Avenue in R 7.5 zone. *Applicant: Brian Carey* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/106764>

Mr. Carey, the engineer, was present to discuss the application. Mr. Carey had an initial discussion with office staff who suggested submitting this application for discussion. This application has been pending in front of the IWB for some time. The application is in progress for an 8-30g application. Mr. Carey discussed the conceptual plan to the PZC. He is asking for early guidance and PZC input. Ms. Oksongly asked about pervious vs impervious proposed pavement. Mr. Hendrick asked about snow removal. Mr. Sorena and Ms. DiSalvo asked about parking. Mr. Sorena asked about how many bedrooms the apartments contain. Mr. Sorena asked about ADA accessibility and size of units. Mr. Carey gave a brief overview of the court process and the judgement for the IWB denial which was overturned in court. Mr. Klein gave a brief overview of the conditions attached to the application. Mr. Carey stated that the conditions must be standard conditions. The IWB has limitations on what they can add as conditions at this time. Ms. Oksongly asked what comparable construction quality throughout means, as shown on a slide presented by Mr. Carey. Ms. DiSalvo asked what applicable median income means. The PZC asked about the credit and points for affordable housing on these units. Mr. Nneji asked about the IWB application. Ms. Oksongly is concerned about the potential for this building to impact the Gilbert Street flooding issues. She is also concerned about no additional parking for guests or a second car. She is also concerned about parking and delivery vehicles on the street with the number of units. Mr. Sorena is concerned about fire ingress and egress. Mr. Hendrick asked if the applicant has had a discussion with the fire and police. Mr. Carey stated that it was done three years ago but they need to do an updated traffic study. Ms. Oksongly is concerned that the applicant is not willing to change their application but a lot of the concerns that are presented by the PZC are safety related. Ms. DiSalvo is concerned about the water runoff and pervious surface issue. Mr. Sorena is concerned about the peak discharge rates for the 100-year storm. Mr. Oksongly has requested information on the 100-year storm. Ms. Oksongly asked questions about the water treatment system and where the water discharges. She expressed concerns that water would run into Abbott. The applicant clarified that all water is designed to discharge to the rear part of the lot in the vegetative buffer. Mr. Hendrick asked a question about the infiltration system design and the wall. Ms. DiSalvo asked about the mechanical system in the garage and if it was slightly altered if it would be possible to add more cars within the parking garage. She also asked about solar panels and alternate plans. Ms. Oksongly mentions the sustainability checklist that is newly introduced to the zoning regulations. Mr. Hendrick advised the applicant of a few things between now and submitting an application. He recommends discussing with the fire department and scheduling an interdepartmental meeting. The applicant is interested. Mr. Hendrick states that this application will require peer review particularly on the stormwater system and the traffic, ingress/egress, deliveries, snow removal, and vehicular movements on the site. Ms. DiSalvo suggested that if there is one large truck in the driveway no additional vehicular traffic can get in or out of the driveway. Mr. Hendrick has concerns with ADA accessibility. Mr. Carey has no additional questions but believes this application has been reviewed from a stormwater perspective. There are questions in the preapplication packet that have been presented to the PZC to help obtain additional information prior to submitting an application. Ms. Oksongly suggested that the density might be creating parking and traffic concerns. Mr. Hendrick stated that it will be looked at more analytically once the consultant reports have been provided. At this point he believes that the site is at maximum development capacity. Mr. Nneji asked for simulation such as if the applicant reduced the footprint to fewer units, would it address these concerns. Mr. Hendrick also asked for the draft regulation amendment that would be submitted with the application. He asked for explanation why they felt it was necessary or

appropriate in this instance. Mr. Klein clarified that they would like to submit a zone change to facilitate next steps as far as development or construction if though it is not required under 8-30g.

- 5.2. **MISC-26-6: Pre-submission concept Review** (per RZR 9.2.E) for Branchville Schoolhouse Restoration Project at 302 Old Branchville Rd. in RAA zone. *Appl: Stephen Bartkus.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/106795>

Mr. Hendrick gave a quick overview of the application. The applicant came forward to discuss the application to the PZC. The Branchville Schoolhouse is a town owned building, and the Historical Society would like to preserve the use of the building while utilizing it for a exhibition and meeting space for the Historical Society. A small addition is proposed to provide ADA accessibility because the main access to the building is many feet off the ground on original stone boulders. The design of the addition is meant to be visually light so as not to compete with the building. The applicant gave an overview of the site plans. Ms. Okrongly asked if the whole building would be taken down. Just the shed will be removed an the existing structure will be restored but not rebuilt. The PZC inquired about HVAC, septic, landscape design, and lighting. Ms. Okrongly discussed the newly added sustainability checklist. Mr. Hendrick asks if it will be used as Institutional Use. Ms. Paranjape states that it is educational/Institutional use. Ms. Paranjape suggests expanding upon use in the application as it is presented because use could impact traffic patterns. Two individuals from the Historical Society came to the table to discuss the traffic patterns and general use that could increase traffic flow. They are estimating a maximum capacity of 35 in the structure. It is proposed that future use would be light. Mr. Sorena asked if the Historical Society had discussed the plans with the neighbors. The Historical Society stated that the neighbors were very supportive of the plan. Mr. Nneji asked about parking. The Historical Society stated that there are 8 parking spaces currently and, in the future, they are proposing 7 parking spaces and one larger van sized space. Permeable surfaces are proposed for the parking lot. Mr. Hendrick stated that the applicant should discuss everything with the neighbors in advance of coming back. Ms. Okrongly stated that she would like a traffic report if they were considering rental use of the property. The applicant inquired about the EV charging station. Ms. Paranjape clarified that if they redo the parking it could trigger a requirement of EV parking space. The applicant has concern about the historical nature of the schoolhouse and the appearance of the charging station. Ms. DiSalvo suggests that having an EV charging station would draw people to the lot when the building is not in use. The PZC argued overall that the EV charging station requirement will not be triggered. Mr. Dowdell asked if there would be amplification or outdoor events. The applicant stated there would be no outdoor events.

5.3. **Department Annual Report** – July 2025 – June 2026

Ms. Paranjape presented the annual report. Discussion continued by the PZC on the statistics presented on the applications reviewed by the PZC.

- 5.4. **Meeting Minutes** - Regular Meeting, July 14, 2026
 Sitewalk Minutes, July 26, 2026

Motion made by Ms. DiSalvo to approve the meeting minutes for July 14 and July 26 as amended, if amended. Seconded by Mr. Nneji. Motion passes. Ms. Okrongly is abstaining

6. **ADJOURN**

Hearing no further business or public discussion, meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Submitted by Beth Peyser,
Recording Secretary (via video recording)

FOOTNOTES:

PZC =Town of Ridgefield Planning and Zoning Commission

RZR = Town of Ridgefield Zoning Regulations

CGS = Connecticut General Statutes