

October 10, 2026

Rob Hendrick, Chairman
Ridgefield Planning & Zoning Commission
Town Hall Annex
66 Prospect Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877

Re: 29 Lakeview Drive 8-24 referral – for Distribution to the Commission

To the Members of the Planning & Zoning Commission:

We, the below, are the neighbors of 29 Lakeview Drive. We believe you are aware the town owns and now wants to sell the property. It was acquired by the town by strict foreclosure in September, 2025 following a decade of unpaid taxes, blight and legal wrangling. The Selectpersons now want to sell the property to recover the unpaid taxes and legal fees. The neighbors made requests to the Board of Selectpersons to put some conditions on the sale and for the town to address some problems on the site before its sold. The Selectpersons opted to not put any conditions on the proposed sale and sent it to you for the required 8-24 referral for the sale of town-owned land.

You should understand the history of this property and the negative impact it has had on our neighborhood for more than a decade. A brief history:

2013 - the property was in poor condition when it went into probate following the death of the owner.

2016 - it was purchased by an individual for \$125,000, who proceeded to do extensive work on the property with no permits, including the construction of a large shed and extensive land disturbance and filling.

2017 - 29 Lakeview Drive first appeared on Blight Prevention Board's agenda

2018 – The property was formally declared blighted.

2018 – 2024 - It remained on the Board's agenda for nearly a decade, while the owner was given multiple chances to correct his errors, and obtain proper permits. During this time, no property taxes were ever paid by the owner. The owner and his father then commenced a series of legal maneuvers to avoid foreclosure and a tax sale by the town, dragging the process out even further.

2024 - The house was demolished in June 2024 by the owner, but the site remained blighted for another year or more.

2025 - The town finally took title in September, 2025 via foreclosure.

2026 - The town wants to sell the property.

The neighbors on Lakeview Drive, Lookout Drive and Great Hill Road have suffered for a decade the disaster we had to look at every day. There was an abandoned fuel oil tank (exposed to the elements) for years on the property, along with heavy equipment and

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construction debris. Neighbors were harassed by the owner and his father. We have attached some photos of what it looked like for all those years.

Our concern is that the damage done to the property by the previous owner has not been rectified. We are appealing to you, to ensure the issues on this property are rectified, before the town even considers selling it. Here are the remedies we are looking for:

- 1.) Grade the lot to the level it was at originally as topsoil was added by the previous property owner, causing drainage issues on at least two abutting properties.
- 2.) Get the stonewall on the northside of the property up to code. The height of the improperly installed stone wall should be corrected. The previous owner built a stone wall without permits and it continues to crumble, causing erosion issues onto the 25 Lakeview Drive property.
- 3.) Fix the trench dug on the southern side of the house, that exposed the well located at 1 Lookout Drive
- 4.) Remove the 3-foot high pile of concrete foundation rubble
- 5.) Install proper erosion control
- 6.) Remove the incorrectly installed membrane (it's sticking out of the surface along the stone wall edge)

In addition,

7.) Repair the road - because of the heavy equipment used to do work on the property and then to demolish the property, the road is torn up. We have many people who walk in our neighborhood and the road is treacherous to walk on. We have made many requests to the town highway department to repair the road and for some reason unbeknownst to us, we keep falling off their list.

8.) General upkeep of the property now that it's in the town's hands.

Whether the town sells it or donates it for open space, we are simply asking for reasonable consideration for all the negative impact this property has had on our neighborhood for so long – the visual blight, the inability to sell our homes if we needed to, and the stress associated with the 10-year battle with the owner, who caused all of the problems.

We encourage a P&Z representative to come out and meet with at least one of us, to see the issues for yourself. Thank you for your consideration.

Signed by:

Don Murphy, Great Hill Road

Linda Murphy, Great Hill Road

Ellen Burns, Great Hill Road

Claire Watson Garcia, Lookout Drive

Baxter Garcia, Lookout Drive

Bevin Carsten, Lookout Drive

Abbye Carsten, Lookout Drive

Stacey Smith, Lakeview Drive

Frank Bereza, Lakeview Drive

Moirra Morris, Lakeview Drive

Gina Ryan, Lakeview Drive

Cindy Crean, Lakeview Drive

Alice Simon, Lakeview Drive

Bruce Simon, Lakeview Drive









