UNAPPROVED MINUTES

MINUTES

Ridgefield Conservation Commission

Town Hall Annex, First Floor Conference Room
66 Prospect Street Ridgefield, CT 06877
(203) 431-2713 ● conservation@ridgefieldct.gov

Meeting November 16, 2026 at 7PM

Present:	Pete Nichols	Allan Welby	Matt Sharp
	Roberta Barbieri	Anthony Markert	Jana Hogan
	Jim Coyle	Erik Keller	
	Jack Kace	Jim Liptack	
Absent:	Tommy McCarthy		

The meeting was convened at 7:06 PM by Chairman Keller. Commissioner Sharp **MOTIONED** to add two items to the agenda: 5a. "Remington Woods trail" and 5b. "Bamboo on Old Trolley". Commissioner Hogan **SECONDED** and all **APPROVED**.

1. Approval of Minutes

UPON motion duly made (Sharp), seconded (Nichols) and carried it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of November 2, 2026 be approved and filed in Town Hall.

2. CACIWC overview

Mr. Keller, Mr. Nichols, and Ms. Barbieri recently attended the Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions (CACIWC) annual conference. They shared their impressions of the event, and praised the keynote speaker.

3. Tree-cutting ordinance

Commissioner Kace gave an update on his research regarding tree-cutting ordinances. No municipalities in Connecticut have laws in effect which limit the clear-cutting of trees prior to construction permit approval. Commissioner Hogan noted that there are more restrictive policies in place in other regions of the country. She also recommended bringing this issue before the Tree Committee; Dr. Kace agreed.

4. Executive session—Violation enforcements/Taylors Pond

At 7:20 PM, Commissioner Nichols **MOTIONED** to enter into executive session for the purposes of discussing enforcement action and potential litigation. This was **SECONDED** by Mr. Sharp. The Commission returned to public session at 7:34 PM.

5. Arborist and surveyor contractors

Mr. Keller received a quote for $1,000 for forensic arborist services to evaluate cut trees on the Ridgebury Slope property. Mr. Sharp **MADE MOTION** to allocate $1,000 for these arborist services; Mr. Coyle **SECONDED**, and all commissioners were **IN FAVOR**.

Mr. Keller also received a quote for $2,500 for a partial property line survey at Ridgebury Slope. Mr. Sharp MOTIONED to allocate up to $2,500 for surveyor services. This was SECONDED by Mr. Liptack, and was unanimously APPROVED.

5a. Remington Woods trail

A homeowner whose property abuts the Remington Woods open space has applied for subdivision, and in so doing has revealed that a portion of the RCC's trail runs across this private property. Commissioner Liptack walked the trail and found two of the property corners clearly marked from a recent survey. Approximately 250 feet of trail will have to be rerouted, which will involve clearing some barberry. Mr. Liptack asserts that the project can be done quickly, and will not alter the shape of the trail as seen on the current map. Inland Wetlands recommends installing boardwalks in some of the wetter sections of the Remington Woods trail; the RCC will consider this for future projects.

5b. Bamboo on Old Trolley

The RCC has previously contracted with the Pond and Lake Connection to remove a stand of invasive bamboo on its property on Old Trolley Rd. Past herbicide treatments have been only partially successful, but unable to totally eliminate the stand due to its density. Mr. Keller recently spoke with the Pond and Lake Connection; they have agreed a plan to mow down the bamboo so it can be treated adequately in the spring, and once more next fall if necessary. The Highway Department has agreed to haul away the bamboo debris after it is mowed. The company has quoted the RCC $1,000 for mowing, and no more than $600 for each of the two herbicide treatments.

Mr. Sharp MOTIONED to approve up to $2,500 for mowing and chemical treatment to remove the invasive bamboo. This was SECONDED by Mr. Nichols, with all IN FAVOR.

6. Newsletter

The RCC's next newsletter will be published mid-December. Mr. Keller asked commissioners to send him materials to include within the next week; a draft will be sent out for review after Thanksgiving.

7. Reappointment of Commissioners

Commissioners Coyle, Kace, and Liptack are nearing the end of their respective terms. Those who wish to be reappointed to the board are asked to write to both Chairman Keller and the First Selectperson. Reappointments will be made in January by the Board of Selectpersons.

8. 2027 meeting schedule

Commissioners were presented with a proposed meeting schedule for the 2027 calendar year. Commissioner Coyle MOTIONED to approve the schedule. This was SECONDED by Mr. Nichols, and all members APPROVED.

9. New business

Mr. Nichols shared pictures of a 1940 Farmall tractor that a local resident has offered to donate to McKeon Farm. The tractor would be put on display near the barn. The donor has offered to drain it of all fluids and repaint it. Commissioners debated, and decided that in order to maintain its antique appearance, the tractor should not be painted. Commissioners also questioned whether the tractor would pose a liability risk for the RCC; Mr. Keller will discuss potential liability in his upcoming meeting with the First Selectperson. Commissioners will vote on the acceptance of the tractor at the next meeting.

The Ridgefield Historical Society informed Mr. Nichols that they are applying for a National Parks Service grant for metal detecting on open space. If they are awarded the grant, they would like to do some

detecting in targeted areas at McKeon Farm. This work would be done by professional archaeologists. Mr. Nichols claims that any excavation done would be very minimally invasive (i.e. done only by small trowel, with no soil or turf being removed). Mr. Sharp asked that the Historical Society present its request to the RCC at the next meeting, and commissioners agreed. Mr. Nichols asked if any commissioners were interested in giving a talk to the Historical Society; Mr. Coyle offered to give a presentation on the history of the RCC. Dr. Kace noted that before the RCC agrees to any archaeological investigation, it must review the Town's open space ordinance, which places strict limits on removal of materials.

Mr. Sharp noted that the sign at Ridgebury Pasture 2 is broken, and that many of the signs at McKeon Farm need to be cleaned.

Mr. Coyle has received a request for data from Sustainable CT. The organization periodically collects municipal data on ecological practices and initiatives and issues rankings; Ridgefield currently has a "Silver" certification. Mr. Coyle will send them an updated dossier.

Commissioner Markert will be doing another forestry walk with Dave Beers on Tuesday, November 17 at 10 AM. They plan to visit Barrack Hill Refuge, Wittman Preserve, Lynch Brook Lane, and Round Pond Preserve.

10. Meetings for Attendance

P&Z	**IWB**
December 8—Welby	December 10—Sharp

11. Chairman's Remarks

The proposed ban on SGAR rodenticides is proceeding slowly. The policy draft is still being reviewed by the Highway Department.

He reminded commissioners to consider nominations for the Edith Meffley award. Candidates will be discussed at the next meeting.

He spoke with the resident on North Salem Rd who is considering making a land donation. The resident is evaluating his options with respect to property sale, donation, or granting the RCC an easement. Chairman Keller will follow up next week.

At the CACIWC conference, commissioners met representatives from an invasive species mitigation company called Swamp Yankee Earthcare. The company is looking for nursery space to propagate native plants, and interested in McKeon Farm as a possible site.

ADJOURNMENT UPON motion duly made (Sharp), and seconded (Nichols), it was RESOLVED that the meeting adjourn at 8:31 PM.