



## MINUTES

### Ridgefield Conservation Commission

Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street

Ridgefield, CT 06877

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**Meeting November 03, 2025 at 7PM**

Present: Roberta Barbieri    James Coyle    Jana Hogan    Jack Kace  
             Erik Keller         Jean Linville    Anthony Markert    Pete Nichols  
             Matt Sharp         Allan Welby

Absent: Jim Liptack

### 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**UPON** motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Nichols) and carried, it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of October 20, 2025 be approved and filed in Town Hall. Hogan abstained.

### 2. Final Presentation Eagle Project Hemlock Hills\_(Asher Pereyra)

Mr. Pereya presented his final report on the completed Hemlock Hills Campsite project, which includes replacing the former campsite with one fire pit and three tent sites. The RCC had previously suggested several modifications, including coordination with the Fire Chief, addition of emergency QR code signage, designation of a single trail entrance, and alignment with Parks and Recreation reservation criteria and process. The project received Fire Marshal approval in early September, and firewood has been left on-site for camper use. The RCC will add information about the campsite, including rules and reservation details, to the RCC website once finalized.

### 3. Final Presentation Eagle Project Hemlock Hills Bog Bridges\_(Eli Scheer)

Mr. Scheer presented his final report on the completed project to install bog bridges along existing trails in Hemlock Hills at locations prone to flooding and erosion. The bridges help prevent trail damage and discourage bikers from riding off designated paths. The project was completed over the course of three work sessions and involved more than 200 volunteer hours.

### 4. McKeon Follow Up

Mr. Keller, Mr. Sharp and Mr. Coyle presented a draft of the McKeon Farm Master Plan, outlining both necessary maintenance (mowing, trail upkeep, and stone wall clearing) and discretionary activities (chestnut tree program, purple martin colony, pollinator gardens, potential meadows, and reintroduction of farm animals). The plan details maintenance costs, resource needs, and commissioner responsibilities, noting that current upkeep is not financially sustainable under the existing budget.

Next steps include RCC members reviewing the draft plan and providing comments or edits. At the next meeting, the RCC will discuss required maintenance/compliance items and discretionary/enhancement projects and determine strategies for their management and funding.

Dr. Linville also reported that a preliminary review found soil conditions at the Ridgebury 2 Pasture to be excellent. There are plenty of micro-aggregates that hold moisture and nutrients and bacteria, as well as fungal strands in the soil.

## **5. NOV for OS Violation at Palmer Court**

**UPON** motion duly made (Welby), seconded (Barbieri), and carried, the following motion was **made**:

In order to resolve the open space violations at 6 Palmer Court, the Conservation Commission approves of the swap of approximately 0.3 acres (designated as Parcel X on the survey) of Town open space property adjacent to 6 Palmer Court (Figure 1) for approximately 12 acres of privately owned land at Pound Street (Parcel E14-0001) (Figure 2). The Pound Street property shall be kept in its natural state in perpetuity under the management of the Ridgefield Conservation Commission except as may be necessary for the Town to maintain the on-site dam and pond.

## **6. Annual Appeal and Meeting**

The RCC has begun its annual appeal process, including updating the brochure and preparing donation requests for mailing and email distribution. Plans are underway for the annual meeting to be held in the Spring. The Commission is awaiting confirmation from a venue regarding the event date and will need to identify potential speakers.

## **7. Expense and Capital Budgets**

Mr. Coyle noted that the capital expense budget is due December 1, with the operating expense budget due two weeks later. He reported that while expenses typically increase by about 5% year over year, additional maintenance needs for open space properties will likely require a higher budget allocation this year. The only item identified to date for the capital budget is a new riding mower. Mr. Nichols will provide details for the submission.

## **8. Forest Management Studies**

Dr. Markert walked with Mr. Beers and shared photos and findings of the walks at the John Soluri Preserve and Ivy Hill. The reports were distributed on October 29th and should now be posted to the website. The next walks will not occur until late December/January.

## **9. New Business**

Mr. Sharp noted the possible need for an additional beaver deceiver at Shadow Lake. Dr. Markert explained that to determine the effectiveness of the current installation, it would need to be monitored over the course of a full year before making any further decisions. RCC will revisit in the Spring.

Mr. Keller mentioned library talks this Thursday.

## **10. MEETINGS FOR ATTENDANCE**

### **P&Z**

November 5 – Nichols

November 18 – Sharp

### **IWB**

November 13 – Welby

December 11 – Kace

## **10. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Mr. Coyle indicated four members are up for renewal February 1, 2026: Dr. Linville, Ms. Hogan, Dr. Markert and Mr. Sharp. As Dr. Linville has chosen not to renew her appointment, the RCC will advertise for an open alternate position. (Ms. Hogan will fill the Linville slot). Two Tree Committee members are also up for renewal: Ms. Snow and Mr. Shotten.

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**ADJOURNMENT UPON** motion duly made, and carried, it was RESOLVED that the meeting adjourn at 8:48 PM.