

RIDGEFIELD AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday January 24, 2024 at 7:00pm

Town Hall Small Conference Room
400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut

Please note: these minutes are not verbatim.

ATTENDEES: Present: Debra Franceschini-Gatje (Chair), Kevin Brown, Sharon Coleman, Sheryl Knapp, Kent Rohrer, and Krista Willett

Absent: Jennifer Brakenwagen and Lori Mazzola (Vice Chair)

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM.

AGENDA

1. Public comment (3 mins per speaker, up to 30 minutes)
2. Action Items:
 - a. Required use of town email
 - b. Annual Review of Board, Commission, Committee Guidelines
 - c. Review status on Affordable Housing plan action items
 - d. Individual Projects/Town Relationship Growth
 - e. Fair Rent Commission Law
 - f. Workforce Housing Research Check-in
 - g. CHFA Zoom session for first-time buyers
 - h. Housing Trust Fund Research Check-in
 - i. Upcoming Legislative Housing Bills
3. Approve Previous Minutes
4. Adjourn

1. Public Comment:

- a) Tim Vilinskis: Expressed interest in joining the Committee. Provided a brief summary of his exposure to construction and real estate development, and interest in affordable housing.
- b) Sandy Lussy: Discussed her connection to the greater Ridgefield area, and interest in joining the Committee.

2. Current Business:

- a) **Review status on Affordable Housing plan action items.** See Report Card Status.
- b) **Individual Projects/Town Relationship Growth.** See Report Card Status.
- c) **Workforce Housing Research Check-in.** Planning and Zoning had a study done to develop a plan Branchville development in 2017. The plan is on the town website. A large focus is gaining sewer capacity, which is a constraining factor. Committee members also discussed the more limited public transportation to the area as a second obstacle to address.
- d) **CHFA Zoom session for first-time home buyers.** Brian Boyaji, a CHFA Senior Business Development Officer, agreed to do an evening presentation in Ridgefield on CHFA programs for first-time home buyers. Debra is coordinating.
- e) **Housing Trust Fund Research Check-in.** Debra and Jennifer have been investigating what other towns are doing, including with regard to workforce housing. The Committee also discussed the report prepared by other Committee members in September of 2021, which contained more preliminary but potentially helpful information. Sharon to help with research.

3. New Business:

- a) **Required use of town email.** The town is now requiring the use of town email addresses for all town Committee members.

- b) **Annual Review of Board, Commission, Committee Guidelines.** Debra will be distributing the Guidelines to Committee members.
- c) **Fair Rent Commission Law.** The Board of Selectman will now be handling landlord-tenant disputes.
- d) **Upcoming Legislative Housing Bills.** Debra proposed that Committee members be aware of ongoing legislation and report back to the Committee.
- e) **Other new business.** None.

4. Public Comment: none.

5. Minutes: Debra moved to accept the minutes; Kent seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.

6. Next meeting: The next Regular meeting is scheduled for February 28, 2024.

7. Adjournment: Kevin moved to adjourn; Krista seconded, and the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:07.

Prepared by Sheryl Knapp, Secretary