

May 26, 2025

Ms. Dew,

I have had an opportunity to review and consider your response to my P & Z complaints and find it incomplete and illogical. In both 2004 and 2007 Pickle ball simply did not exist in Connecticut. I have pointed this out to you in the past perhaps you did not read my correspondence. It is illogical to think that a zoning law can protect something that did not exist and would not exist for another decade. Claiming that Pickle ball and tennis are similar is in my view an uneducated and inappropriate assumption. Silver Spring even notes on their own site plan that the courts in question are tennis courts.

There are known and documented negative health impacts that accompany the sound created by Pickle ball that do not exist with tennis and other racket sports. I have sent you correspondence asking you to research the issue as I have done. Have you done this? The literature is very clear. I believe Pickle ball creates a dangerous and unhealthy condition for those of us forced to hear the constant banging of the hard ball and racket. Therefore, I want to confirm that it is the official position of the Ridgefield Planning and Zoning department that what I believe to be an ongoing health risk triumphs a sport that caters to a hand full of people. Please confirm.

I also want to remind you that Silver Spring operates under a special use permit that states the Club must operate in harmony with the surrounding neighborhood. A Pickle ball court is simply not in harmony with the surrounding neighborhood. To be clear NO surrounding neighbor has a Pickle ball court.

Given the admitted ambiguity in the laws you are required to instruct the ZEO to immediately issue a stop play order. As I see it, Town P & Z must insist that Pickle ball be played on a portion of the Club property that will not affect the neighbor's health and well-being. In my view, failure to do this allows a known dangerous and unhealthy condition to continue. It is remarkable to me that the Town I live in refuses to protect my family and me from an unhealthy and dangerous situation.

In terms of your opinion on the use of the Pickle Ball court. I am confirming that your opinion is a legally binding opinion designed to bind the Town of Ridgefield in a court of law. Please confirm.

As for land use council, Mr. Hendricks promised me a meeting with him more than a year ago. I provided you with a number of dates when I was available and you ignored me refusing to set a meeting. He and I need to discuss the situation professional to professional. I again request a meeting be set between land use counsel and me ASAP. It is not at all clear to me he has all the facts in hand. Please confirm you will provide dates in which I can meet one on one with land use counsel.

The use of the Silver Spring Paddle Tennis facility followed the exact fact pattern in 2019. The then P & Z recognized the unhealthy issues with the Paddle Tennis Facility and forced the courts to be moved to a remote portion of the Silver Spring property. As I have mentioned that P & Z committee mandated that all future work at Silver Spring required notification of adjoining neighbors before work could proceed. I recently confirmed this with the former Chair. Your office refused to follow this mandate. Please confirm that it is the current policy of the sitting P & Z to ignore past mandates and ignore continuity in planning.

As for the lighting violations. I asked you to provide a simple chart that measures the allowed light and the current lighting. You provided no chart and no specific evidence that the lights were in conformity with any approved lighting plan. I am confirming that with respect to this lighting you simply asked the manager if they were ok. Based on your statements please confirm that it is the official position of the Ridgefield P & Z to simply observe a potential zoning violation and ask questions, as opposed to gathering evidential support. Let me provide a simple example you should understand. If a complaint

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came to the P & Z about a lot line violation, based on your response can I confirm that you would simply ask the potential violator and not actually measure to determine if a violation exists? Please confirm this will be your approach.

As for illegally parked cars this was documented in pictures and emails to the P & Z last summer. If this continues this summer I would expect that a summons by the ZEO would be issued immediately. As noted in the original complaint there is NO approved parking in the area boarding 55 Country Club Road. Please confirm.

In terms of dead trees cut by my neighbors, these trees we cut to protect the health and safety of their family. I personally observed dead trees that threatened their house. Please confirm that it is the official position of the Ridgefield P & Z that dead trees take priority over individual residents' health and safety. This I how I read you petty complaints and your letter. (Parenthetically, a senior Ridgefield official admitted to me that no permit is required to cut dead trees).

I also would like to state for the record that both meetings you attended, I observed that fact that you were unprepared and refused to answer questions that were sent to you in advance. Please confirm that you do not prepare for meetings with Town residents and make a practice of avoiding timely and relevant questions.

I am officially re-filing my zoning complaints against Silver Spring Country Club for the use of their Pickle Ball courts and their out of compliance lighting surrounding their club house.

Just last week I noted a noise violation at Silver Spring and documented that violation, with calls to the police and emails to you and the First Selectman. You have refused to communicate with me and as far as I can tell refused to hold Silver Spring accountable. Please confirm you do not hold people accountable for zoning and code violations. Please confirm.

Ms. Dew I believe you have shown extreme discrimination and prejudice to the neighbors surrounding Silver Spring. I also believe you have threatened our health and well-being. I urge you ameliorate these serious conditions immediately.

When we met last December you made rude and disparaging remarks to my wife. In addition, you allowed your associate Ms. Paranjape to raise her voice to us. These actions in my view are totally unacceptable. An apology from both of you is required and expected.

I want to state for the record that I have always approached all Town employees in a professional, courteous, and respectful manner. I did the same for seven years as an elected official and I expect the same in response.

Given your past responses and lack thereof, I must insist that you respond to me in seven calendar days. This unhealthy and dangerous situation has gone on for too long. If you do not respond within seven days I will take that to understand you agree with all that I have asked you to confirm and I will proceed accordingly.

This letter should be sent to all P & Z members and I will ask the First Selectman to circulate to the entire BOS and the Town Attorney.

Richard Steinhart
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