

Redding Planning Commission

Redding Center, Connecticut 06875-1028

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Kimberly Keil, Assistant Redding Town Clerk
3 Pages*

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES January 24, 2023 - 7:30 P.M. Via Zoom

(The regular meeting of January 10, 2023 was cancelled)

Present: Daniel Barrett, Chair, Chuck Cilo, Steven Gagnon, Regina O'Brien, Roger Van Ausdal, James E Bacon, Toby Welles

Also Present: Julia Pemberton, First Selectman; Alice Smith; Assistant to the First Selectman; Aimee Pardee, Land Use Director; Sean McNamara, Tree Warden; Charles Hyatt, Tree Warden; Richard Wenning, Chairman, Redding Economic Development Committee.

Samuel Berg, Jenna Turner, TJ Magnoli: Eversource

Members of the public: Lauri Heiss, Raymond D'Angelo, Cecelia and Ed Staunton, Daniel Evangelakos, Sherry Karraker, Ruth Moran, Debbie Anon, Janet Rochstein, Garner Lester

Donna Christopher: Redding Sentinel.

Mr. Barrett called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

On motion by Mr. Gagnon and seconded by Mr. Cilo, the approval of the minutes of December 13, 2022 was added to the Agenda for the meeting by unanimous vote.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chairman indicated acceptance of the minutes of the meeting of December 13, 2022 with the following emendations. Under Administrative, point 3, line 11, emended as "Mr. Welles offered **to draft language to be added to the existing draft ordinance regarding when the Tree Warden should consult with the Redding Tree Committee.**" Under Administrative, point 3, line 18, emended as "the character and **aesthetics** of the road,"

The Chairman indicated acceptance of the minutes of the special meeting of December 19, 2022 as emended with the correction of the spelling of Roger Van **Ausdal**'s name and a period added at the end of the sentence approving of the site inspection of December 17.

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II. ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Referral from Board of Selectmen.

Discussion continued from December 13, 2022 on the proposed Tree Ordinance. Questions were raised about the wording of the proposed Tree ordinance. First Selectman Pemberton assured the commission that the language of the ordinance would not conflict with what the State required. In order that members of the commission have a chance to review the ordinance as proposed; the Chairman suggested that the members review and make comments by Monday next and forward them to him. He will edit the comments and then present the final edition to First Selectman Pemberton for consideration. Discussion to continue.

2. Request for alteration to Scenic Road. Discussion continued from December 13, 2022 on the removal of the trees on Cross Highway by Eversource. Mr. Hyatt, the new Tree Warden in conjunction with the former warden, Mr. McNamara, have surveyed some, but not all of, the 124 trees under consideration for removal. Once they have finished their survey, they are to meet with Mr. Berg from Eversource for a final consideration. Once agreed upon, each tree slated for removal will be posted with a sign noting its removal. There will be a ten-day period of public review. Ms. Pemberton said the town will provide a page on the town's website so photographs of these trees can be viewed on-line. As there is concern that some of the trees in question may actually be on private property, those trees under consideration will undergo a further review of its ownership. Mr. Van Ausdal wondered why a dead tree has to be further reviewed. Mr. McNamara stated that the notice would be stapled to each tree slated for removal. Mr. Hyatt stated that trees under 12 inches in diameter would not have a notice posted. Ms. Heiss, of 105 Cross Highway, was concerned that rows of the younger saplings would be lost because notices could not be posted on them. She said there were 54 trees under 12 inches diameter. It was noted that removing some of the saplings would allow the older trees to grow better. Mr. Lester, of 20 Cross Highway, reminded the commission that the trees along his property are difficult to access. Mr. Staunton, of 15 Cross Highway, stated that no one from Eversource had met with him and that he disputed the removal of the sugar maples that he said was on his property. Mr. Berg then said that Eversource had only met about 45% of the property owners involved and that Eversource intended to meet with each property owner. Eversource felt it prudent to discontinue meeting property owners when the public outcry erupted. The Chairman outlined the process going forward. Considering the necessary steps to be taken he felt a resolution would not be completed until the summer. Mr. Hyatt and Mr. McNamara would finish their survey of the 124-trees slated for removal. Mr. Hyatt and Mr. McNamara would consult with Mr. Berg from Eversource for a final resolution The survey would be posted for public review. A public site inspection would be conducted. Discussion to continue.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT/DISCUSSION

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Mr. Cilo suggested that some appreciation be made in honor of the late John Hayes, who died in December. Mr. Welles suggested that the Charley Couch award be presented posthumously. He also suggested that a proper motion in his honor be included in the minutes. Ms. Pemberton added that this could also be a town recognition.

With the business of the meeting concluded, The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

Submitted By,
Alexander Scott (Recording Secretary)