



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Chairman Karen
Parkinson

Regular Meeting

Monday, April 20, 2026

7:00 PM

Town Hall Annex -Hybrid Format

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Parkinson called the Regular Meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Commissioner Douglas Kelley
Commissioner Kelly Lamb
Commissioner Ammie Chittim
Chairman Karen Parkinson
Commissioner Rebecca Watford
Alternate Alternate Member Vincent Godino
Alternate Member Kenneth Geer
Alternate Member Anne Roberts-Pierson

Also in attendance:

Grace Ayers, Jennifer Ayers, & Jennifer Finlayson (American Heritage Girls Stars and Stripes)
Corey Watford
Kim Millar, Dave Schroeder

Ms. Chittim was present via Zoom

III. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

Not needed.

IV. RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNER'S COMMENTS

Will be discussed under Old Business #1.

V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to APPROVE the Special Meeting Minutes from March 2, 2026, as written.

Amend to change

"Ms. Roberts-Pearson" to "Ms. Roberts-Pierson"

email from "Alice-lhdc@att.net" to "Ann-lhdc@att.net"

"Historic District Boundaries" to "Gales Ferry District Boundaries"

2. Motion to APPROVE the Regular Meeting Minutes from March 16, 2026, as written.

Amend to change

"Chairperson Robinson" to "Chairperson Parkinson".

Change "1976" to "1974".

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Karen Parkinson

SECONDER: Douglas Kelley

AYE 5 Kelley Lamb Chittim Parkinson Watford

VI. TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS

1. Town Council Liaison - Councilor Ty Lamb.

No report.

VII. CHAIRPERSON REPORT

1. General Report.

Chairperson Parkinson and Mr. Kelley went to the Spicer ruins for a cleanup party. Mr. Kelley added that he has wanted to visit the Spicer Ruins and said it was an amazing and beautiful visit. He said that he now understands why Chairperson Parkinson is so passionate about the Spicer Ruins and encouraged the Commissioners to visit the site.

Chairperson Parkinson and Mr. Schroeder attended the Economic and Conservation Commissions meetings this past month. Chairperson Parkinson feels that these Commissions are supportive of the Gales Ferry Project.

2. Financial Report.

Chairperson Parkinson asked if there is money that must be spent by the end of the fiscal year, Mr. Kelley added that everything should be submitted by the beginning of June. Ms. Chittim will send the cost estimates for archeological dig equipment.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Correspondence.

The Commission will review the correspondence that Ms. Watford presented regarding the CT house Bill #5508 *an Act concerning Historic Districts and Historic Preservation*.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Sawmill Committee.

- There are four people in the volunteer group and may be adding more.

- Mr. Ganong is working on a frame for the head gate which Mr. Godino explained is needed to let the water into the turbine for operation of the saw.

- Mr. Godino was working with Mr. Ganong to get the Sawmill open for the season. The opening day on April 4, 2026, went well.
- Mr. Geer delivered some white oak logs taken from Mr. Godino's property.
- Mr. Godino found a company that can custom make the saws. The cost is \$2,150 including shipping for two saws.
- Mr. Godino received the cost report for the two concepts from the engineering firm. The estimates are approximately 100K less than the original estimate.
- Mr. Geer and Mr. Godino will get an approximate cost estimate for dredging the pond.

2. Nathan Lester House - Mr. Kelley.

Mr. Kelley's report:

"In late March we were able to have the worrying large oak at the right of the entrance drive down. We'd needed to save a good part of our budget to handle it, but the effort was very worth it. At the same time, a new danger was discovered in another tree which had a large section mostly broken off, and hanging over the drive, power lines, and entrance to the trails. Since it could not be delayed, H&H handled the unscheduled danger as well. We were lucky to handle everything at once, but there is a hit to our budget. I will be asking for a vote to use the Donations account to cover this.

On the 22nd, Jack Desormier conducted an interview with Councilor William Barnes at the house. The interview will be part of his documentary film tracing the history of the Ledyard Sawmill, and especially its restoration in the 1970s.

Jack returned on April 4 to interview Andrea Buka of the Ledyard Historical Society for additional remembrances.

The Ledyard Garden Club held their spring cleanup at the Great Oak Garden on April 28. They were able to rethink portions of the rear shade garden which suffered from a tree falling into it during a late summer storm.

Tricia Marcek has pushed her Prehistoric Garden project forward with sod removal, additional tree planting, and the relocation of the dinosaur tracks from behind the house. We thank our partners at Public Works for their work in moving the tracks and obtaining large stones to help place the fossils. More work is imminent as Tricia completes another phase of her Master Gardener project.

Public Works has also recently assisted us by filling in a large pothole on the entrance drive. We appreciate the communication we have with that department and how it helps enhance the park.

Lastly, time supporting the Garden Shed project which our American Heritage Girl volunteer has

been working is moving toward plan completion. Grace Ayers is joining us this evening to present her project for your approval."

Mr. Kelley explained that when H&H was taking down the great Oak Tree a new danger was spotted. One of the leading great oak branches must have taken a hit during the blizzard and was hanging over the driveway, the power lines and over the entrance to the trails. This branch needed to be taken down immediately before it fell on its own. Although necessary it was an unscheduled hit to the NLH budget. After the Great Oak Tree removal there is only \$1,700 in the account, which will need to be saved for things such as the Port-a-John. Mr. Kelley would like to use the NLH donation account, which will require a vote to spend these funds.

Motion to AUTHORIZE taking \$1,200 from the Nathan Lester House Donation budget to pay H&H Landscaping for emergency tree removal.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Doug Kelley

SECONDER: Ammie Chittim

AYE 5 Kelley Lamb Chittim Parkinson Watford

Tricia Marcek and volunteers have made significant progress on the prehistoric garden project. Several trees were donated and planted by Sprigs and Twigs. Public Works moved the tracks from the chicken coop area to front garden. Ms. Marcek has taken this project on as her Master Gardiner project. Public Works has filled in a large pothole in the entrance drive. Mr. Kelley added that communication with Public Works has grown very strong and has helped enhance the park.

American Heritage Girl, Grace Ayers from St. Paul's in Bristol CT was in attendance to present her Junior Timber Framing project. After attending an American Heritage Girl camp out in which Miss Ayers built a large fire pit so future campers could enjoy she asked Mr. Kelley about other project possibilities. Mr. Kelley gave her a (large) list to choose from, and Miss Ayers picked the Garden Shed. The frame size will be 8' x 10', built using 7' x 7' logs. Miss Ayers shared some photos with the Commission. The cost is approximately \$1,500 and Miss Ayers has already received many donations to help offset the cost. On October 10, 2026, the American Heritage Girls Troop will be attending another NLH camp out, and plan to raise the shed that day. Chairperson Parkinson mentioned she has a timber barn to view if interested. Ms. Chittim made a request to be informed when the Timber Framing Project start date will occur. She added that it would be a great public outreach opportunity and would want to put it on social media and to get the Town involved. Chairperson Parkinson said she is in the Ledyard Rotary Club and this project would be a great one to present to the Club and possibly get funding. Mr. Kelley presented a few draft drawings of the project. Mr. Kelley explained that this project would just include the frame; a future project could be the enclosure of the shed. Ms. Roberts-Pierson asked if the shed would sit on a stone platform. Mr. Kelley answered no there will not be a true foundation but rather a bed of crushed gravel placed under the shed and spread 2' out. He further explained that at some point the shed may be moved. Mr. Kelly has already obtained a building permit from the Town. Eventually windows will be put in using reclaimed materials.

Motion to APPROVE Grace Ayer's Junior Timber Frame Garden Shed project behind the Nathan Lester House.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Douglas Kelley

SECONDER: Ammie Chittim

AYE 5 Kelley Lamb Chittim Parkinson Watford

3. Research/Preservation - Ms. Chittim.

Ms. Chittim said she has nothing to pass along. Chairperson Parkinson asked about dates for the archeological digs. Ms. Chittim replied that it is too cold right now and she is waiting for warmer weather to begin. Ms. Chittim is also waiting for the purchase orders to order new equipment. Ms. Chittim has been working on a digitizing map with the Historical Society.

Mr. Kelley reported that he is making a bit of progress on getting wifi at the NLH and will keep the Commission updated.

4. Center School - Mr. Geer.

Ms. Watford said that she will be part of the opening of the schoolhouses for tours and will be able to work 1:00 - 3:00. Ms. Watford suggested having the School open for appointments only during the off season, similar to what the NLH does, Mr. Geer agreed. The Library may use the Schoolhouse for a program in the fall. Ms. Watford said she will get the Schoolhouse spring cleaning done.

5. Social Media - Ms. Lamb.

Ms. Lamb said with her recent resignation the Commission will need someone to take over the Social Media portion as well as writing the minutes.

Discussions regarding the ownership of the Commission's different Facebook pages. The Commission needs to have more control/ownership of the pages. It was suggested that all social media pages should have at least two Commissioners as Administrators. Presently there are the following social media pages: Facebook Ledyard Historic Commission District page (Doug, Kelly, and Missy Dyson are users), Nathan Lester House Facebook (Doug, Kelly and Victoria are users), Sawmill Pond Facebook (possibly Alan Gonang).

Next month will be Ms. Lamb's last month on the Commission.

X. OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion in response to Dave Schroeder's request for HDC assistance with Gales Ferry Historic District having local zoning recognition, continued.

Mr. Schroeder reported that he asked for and received a pre-application hearing with the Planning and Zoning Commission scheduled for May 14. During this informal discussion he will present then be asked questions and given feedback. Mr. Schroeder mentioned that a few Citizens group meetings have occurred. Mr. Schroeder added that overall, the public felt that the

Historic area approved by the Commission was too small. There was also feedback that the description of the Historic Village is too centered in the far past.

2. Sustainable CT Ad Hoc Committee Discussion: Action Item 5.5. continued.

Chairperson Parkinson reported that there is some Sustainable CT Community homework to be completed by the Commission. The Commissioners will need to put together an inventory of list of things that have been done, historical sites etc. Chairperson Parkinson suggested a committee of sort to compile the inventory. The deadline is sometime in the fall. Once the Town is recognized as a sustainable community, then points that can be acquired which will help with grants. Chairperson Parkinson asked for volunteers for the committee. Mr. Kelley, Ms. Watford, Roberts-Pierson and Ms. Chittim volunteered to assist with the inventory.

3. Any Other Old Business to Come Before the Commission.

None.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Any Other New Business to Come Before the Commission.

Chairperson Parkinson wanted to discuss America 250. Chairperson Parkinson reported that she went through the Town's website, to count which houses were built before the revolution. There are 62 still standing. Karen thought it would be festive to have the homeowners hang bunting for the 4th of July. This brought her to the question of what if there are owners who would want to but could not afford to or would not be able to physically hang the bunting? Could the Commission find money and volunteers to help?

Other America 250 ideas -

A drive-through with a map of all these pre-revolution houses. Possibly have a fun fact of each house or a scavenger hunt. Ms. Chittim said she may be able to work with Historical Society to digitalize the map and post it online.

Reenactment Colonel Ledyard for Memorial Day parade. Chairperson Parkinson is working on this.

Mr. Kelley said he is on the America 250 Committee and could possibly solicit contributions.

Since Ledyard contributed so many lives to the battle of Fort Griswold maybe identify these homes and have stars put outside of the houses which could be part of the scavenger hunt.

Mr. Kelley shared that he was asked to be part of an interview on the Ledyard Life podcast. The podcast aired this past Friday (April 17, 2026). The focus was on this Commission. Mr. Kelley said you could view the video by searching for "Ledyard Life" on YouTube.

Mr. Kelley said that Kim and Jim Millar live near the Yale houses; they found a weird little hole in the ground and asked Mr. Kelley to inspect it. They then showed Mr. Kelley the entire complex. Mr. Kelley said the complex was astonishing and said it is just another example of

how this community is unique.

Ms. Godino asked if the Commission needs a computer and said he could possibly donate one.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to ADJOURN the Regular Meeting at 8:26 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Douglas Kelley

SECONDER: Rebecca Watford

AYE 5 Kelley Lamb Chittim Parkinson Watford

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.