



TOWN OF LEDYARD
 CONNECTICUT
 TOWN COUNCIL
 HYBRID FORMAT

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
 Ledyard, CT 06339

860 464-3203
 Roxanne Maher
 Administrative Assistant

Chairman Gary St. Vil

MINUTES
LAND USE/PLANNING/PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE –
REGULAR MEETING

Monday, May 4, 2026

6:00 PM

Annex Meeting Room, Town Hall Annex

DRAFT

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Councilor Thompson at 6:02 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex Building.

Councilor Thompson welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting noting for the Town Council Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee and members of the Public who were participating via video conference that the remote meeting information was available on the Agenda that was posted on the Town’s Website – Granicus-Legistar Meeting Portal.

- II. **ROLL CALL** –

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location	Arrived	Departed
Jessica Buhle	Town Councilor	Present	Remote	6:02 pm	6:41 pm
Ty (Earl) Lamb	Town Councilor	Present	Remote	6:02 pm	6:41 pm
James Thompson	Committee Chairman	Present	In-Person	6:02 pm	6:41 pm
Karen Parkinson	Historic District Commission Chairman	Present	In-Person	6:02 pm	6:41 pm
Doug Kelley	Historic District Commission Vice Chairman	Present	In-Person	6:02 pm	6:41 pm
Brandon Graber	Board of Education	Present	In-Person	6:02 pm	6:41 pm
Roxanne Maher	Administrative Assistant	Present	Remote	6:02 pm	6:41 pm

- III. **CITIZENS' PETITIONS** –

- IV. **PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS** – None.

- V. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION to approve the and Use/Planning/Public Works Minutes of April 6, 2026
 Moved by Councilor Buhle seconded by Councilor Lamb

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared

- IV. **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Process to designate the Spicer Homestead Ruins, within the Clark Farm property, as a Registered Historical Site.

Mrs. Karen Parkinson, 55 Rose Hill Road, Ledyard, Historic District Commission Chairman, provided an update regarding the status of the Commission’s Report work, noting the following:

- Aerial drone pictures of the site were taken before the leaves came. Mr. A.J. Sarrol who volunteered his time to take the pictures with the drone.
- Pencil drawing of what the *Spicer Mansion* would have looked like.

- Dr. Ammie Chittum, Registered Archeologist, and Historic District Commission Member has been defining the area by looking at things such as how the chimney fell by the location of bricks that have been found and the granite from the cellar.

Mrs. Parkinson noted that Councilor Garcia-Irizarry provided her with a copy of the A2 Survey that was conducted by Dieter & Gardner in December, 2024. However, she stated the print out was very large; and that she needed a digital copy of the A2 Survey Map to print on an 8.5x11 piece of paper to include in the Report. Mrs. Parkinson provided a map of the Commission's proposed 4.3-acres, and she suggested another Site Walk of the property be conducted to consider expanding the site from the current A2 Survey outlining 0.7 acres to 4.3 acres. She noted that Preservation Connecticut Mr. Stefon Danczuk participated in two site walks of the Spicer Homestead Ruins, and he thought that the Homestead should be preserved. She noted about three-weeks ago a number of volunteers that included Mr. Doug Kelley, Dr. Ammie Chittum, Registered Archeologist, Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, Mr. AJ Sarrol, and herself visited the site to conduct some additional research.

Mrs. Parkinson provided some background noting the Spicer Homestead had gardens, wells, small out buildings for small animals, and orchards. She noted because there has been no development up there the stonewalls have not been disturbed. She provided some background noting that Spicer Homestead dates back to approximately 1670. She noted that Peter and Mary Spicer, first settlers, are the ancestors of many Mystic whaling captains (Spicer Marina), founders of Spicer Oil, "Parke" Spicer (Preston's long-serving selectman) and many Town of Ledyard and Preston early leaders. The Homestead was occupied for five generations and grew to over 200 acres. John and Cyrus each inherited half the farm in 1769; Cyrus sold the east half of the property to Isaac Geer in 1788; John and his successors farmed the west half of the property for another hundred years. The original dwelling was referenced as "*The Mansion*" in the 1769 Will of John Spicer. She stated that they do not know when the Spicer Home went away, noting that it would require a land search of other land deeds, which they planned to do. She stated there were forty-five homes in Ledyard that were standing since the American Revolution, and that she was still counting, noting that Ledyard is a historic town.

Mr. Doug Kelley, 40 Pinelock Drive, Gales Ferry, Historic District Commission Vice-Chairman, noted the on-site archeological work has shown that "*The Mansion*" was a 17th Century Massachusetts House Plan and he explained that it was common during that time to start with a small house and to continue to add on to the house as families expanded. He stated the large colonel house had a rectangular floor plan, with a huge center chimney noting the fireplace was made of brick, noting that it was similar to the Nathan Lester House. He stated the rooms were 15 square foot, which was large, noting during that period most rooms were about 12 square feet. He stated the house foundation was made of large granite stones of which some can be seen; however, they would need to be excavated; and the cellar was made with granite rubble. He provided a pencil rendering that he drew showing what the Spicer Homestead would have looked like. He stated that the Spicer Homestead was not only a home, but it was a farm.

Mr. Kelley went on to state so far they have only used rakes to move away some debris; however, he stated that it was going to require some on-site archeological work to do any excavation work. He stated once all of this work has been done and they could relate their findings to anything similar in period that he believed they would find a large residential house like the Nathan Lester House. He stated it would have been similar to the historic Ebenezer Avery House, which was a 1750 Colonial-style home of local significance in Groton on Poquonnock Road. He stated the house was no longer standing there but that it was widely remembered as a refuge for wounded American soldiers following the Revolutionary War's Battle of Groton.

Councilor Lamb questioned whether the Historic District Commission had their Spicer Homestead Ruins Package ready to submit to the Planning & Zoning Commission and to the State. He also questioned whether they were planning to give a Preliminary Report to the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee or to the Town Council before they submit their Report to the State; and whether the Land Use/Planning/Public Work Committee could remove this item from their future Agendas.

Mrs. Parkinson stated before the Historic District Commission could assemble their Study/Report the following was needed:

- Conduct another site walk with the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee.
- Town Council letter assigning the Historic District Commission as the Spicer Homestead Ruins Study Committee.
- Digital A2 Survey Map.
- Present enough evidence to the Town Council to obtain authorization to expand the study to the 4.3-ares. This authorization was needed before they could complete the Study/Report. If they cannot expand the site then the Historic District Commission would need to go back and prepare their Study/Report in a different way.
- Having the Study/Report ready to simultaneously submit to the local Planning & Zoning Commission and to the State of Economic & Development was still a ways out.

Mrs. Parkinson stated that she would leave it to the LUPPW Committee as to whether they wanted to keep the Spicer Homestead Ruins on their Agenda. She went on to note that the Tri-Town Trail would like to cut down the saplings that were less than four-inches along the trail and in the area in the 0.7-acre area for the Spicer Homestead Ruins.

Councilor Lamb questioned who had Administrative Control of the Clark Farm Property. Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher stated the Town Council had Administrative Control of the Clark Farm Property; however, the Mayor has been working with the Tri-Town Trail on their initiatives.

Councilor Lamb questioned whether the LUPPW Committee felt they needed to keep the Spicer Homestead Ruins on their Agenda, noting that they could always add the item back when it was time for the property owners to approve the request for the Historic Designation and other related actions.

Councilor Thompson questioned the timeline for the Historic District Commission to present their Preliminary Study/Report to the Town Council. Mrs. Parkinson stated that she would like to present their Preliminary Study/Report to the Town Council before the fourth of July.

Mr. Brandon Graber, 42 Church Hill Road, Ledyard, stated that he frequently runs the following trails in town: the Blonders Trail, Nathan Lester House Trail, and the Tri-Town Trail/Spicer Homestead Trail. He stated this past weekend he chose to run all of the trails, and he noted the Spicer Homestead Trail was by far the most diverse run. He stated it was challenging, it had rolling hills, it had beauty, the most contiguous length with 4.3 miles running through the woods, so that runners did not have to go over the same path. He stated having this area available for public access promotes both personal health and environmental health. He stated preserving this diverse public access tract was worth the Town Council's consideration.

Councilor Thompson thanked the residents for their time and comments.

2. Status update regarding potential blight on Mill Cove Road.

Councilor Thompson noted Blight Enforcement Officer Hannah Gienau's May 4, 2026 letter in which she reported that she conducted a site inspection and would be sending a letter to the property owner regarding the Blight Violation at 2 Mill Cove Road.

Councilor Buhle addressed blighted properties, and she encouraged residents to submit their Blight Complaints early on. She stated that residents often say that a property has had blight issues for years, and they need it taken care of it. However, she stated if the Town was not notified; or made aware of a situation that needed to address, they might not know about it. She stated just because the matter has been there for years that they could not fast-track enforcement, explaining that there was a process and they had specific steps they had to follow, noting it could take some time. She stated whether there was a Blight Issue for six-months, one-year; or two-years that they had to provide the property owner the opportunity to mitigate the blight issue on their own. She encouraged residents who were frustrated with blighted properties to submit their Blight Complaint with the understanding that the mitigation does not happen within a couple of weeks. She stated depending on the severity of the situation that it could take some time.

Councilor Buhle continued by noting that she thought a deterrent of submitting a Blight Complaint was that Form required the person to disclose their name and address. She stated that she understands that it was to deter people from submitting false complaints; or malicious complaints. However, she stated that having to include their name on the Complaint Form was also a deterrent when it comes to filing a complaint against neighbor or someone they know. Therefore, she questioned whether the LUPPW Committee could work with the Land Use Department to suggest a way for Blight Complaints to be submitted anonymously. She stated that perhaps if residents filed the complaint in-person the Land Use Department would see that it was a valid complaint, explaining that this would prevent the property owner from becoming upset that a neighbor filed the complaint.

Councilor Thompson stated Councilor Buhle had a good point about being able to file complaints anonymously. He noted at work he had a situation where someone wanted to file a complaint about the condition of a neighbor's property, but because they were in fear of retaliation they have not. He stated the situation has been progressively getting worse over the last several weeks. He stated for the person filing the complaint to be required to disclose their name and address was a deterrent.

Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher provided clarification explaining that Blight Complaints need to be filed with the Land Use Department at the Town Hall; not with the Town Council's Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee. She explained the Town Council's LUPPW Committee does not have any authority regarding Blight matters.

Councilor Buhle stated she would be happy to talk with the Land Use Department about a potential solution to modify the Blight Complaint Form; or the procedure to file a complaint. She stated they wanted to make sure the complaints were coming from a place of truth and were not something that was not going to waste the time of town officials and employees. She stated that they also wanted to make sure that those who want to file a complaint felt comfortable to do so. She stated that she would report back at the June 1, 2026 LUPPW Committee.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting: 6/1/2026 6:00 p.m.

3. Continued discussion regarding the establishment of a Long-Term Town-Wide Capital Plan for all of the town-owned facilities.

Councilor Lamb stated since he began this discussion that he was pleased with the progress, noting when School Superintendent Jason Hartling presented the Board of Education's Capital Needs Plan at the Town Council's February 11, 2026 meeting he stated that the Board of Education authorized the use of \$75,000 to conduct a High School Facilities Needs Assessment Study. He stated that he thought people were realizing that a Long-Term Strategic Plan was good for the town.

Councilor Lamb concluded his comments by noting that he has set up meeting with town leadership and that he would be prepared to present boiler plate for a Long-Term Capital Plan at the LUPPW Committee's June 1, 2026 meeting for the Committee to review.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting: 6/1/2026 6:00 p.m.

4. Any other Old Business proper to come before the Committee.- None.
- V. NEW BUSINESS
1. Any New Business proper to come before the Committee.- None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT-

Councilor Buhle moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Lamb
3- 0 Approved and so declared, the meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

VOTE:

Respectfully submitted,

James Thompson
Committee Chairman
Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee