



TOWN OF LEDYARD CONNECTICUT

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339

America 250 Planning Committee ~ AGENDA ~

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

1:00 PM

Town Hall Annex

REMOTE MEETING INFORMATION

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84224432009?pwd=me6aGuuaCOQlFB89vaFfwr73JqbNq2.1>

Meeting ID: 842 2443 2009 Passcode: 902005

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. MOTION to approve the America 250 Planning Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2025.

Attachments: America 250 Draft Minutes 311.2025

V. PLANNING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. America 250 Planning Committee Discussion

Attachments: [America 250 Letter_Denise Merrill 9.3.2024](#)

[America 250 Planning Resources](#)

[America-250-CT-Planning-Guide](#)

2. Grant Opportunities

VI. ADJOURNMENT

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



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 25-1745

Agenda Date: 4/8/2025

Agenda #: 1.

MINUTES

Minutes:

MOTION to approve the America 250 Planning Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2025.



TOWN OF LEDYARD

America 250 Planning Committee

Meeting Minutes - Draft Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

1:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Hybrid Format

REMOTE MEETING INFORMATION

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82438201586?pwd=3F0QfOJSDOQ1fRXjxVkzpVf7LHYz3n.1>

Meeting ID: 824 3820 1586 Passcode: 188119

Dial by your location • +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fred B. Allyn III called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Scott Johnson Jr.
Patricia Riley
Peter Hary
Douglas Kelley

Absent Mathew Novosad

In addition, the following were present:

Kristen Chapman, Mayoral Assistant

Kate Khors, Beautification Committee

Naomi Rodriguez, Town Council Chairman

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

None

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. MOTION to approve the America 250 Planning Committee Special Meeting minutes of February 25, 2025.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Patricia Riley

SECONDER: Douglas Kelley

AYE 4 Johnson, Jr. Riley Hary Kelley

ABSENT 1 Novasad

V. PLANNING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. America 250 Planning Committee Discussion

The meeting focused on planning events and activities for the America 250 Celebrations including discussions about historical exhibits, reenactments and community involvement. Various ideas were added to the list of potential events/initiatives with an emphasis on incorporating local history and engaging all age groups. The Committee discussed creating year-round celebrations with a Kick-Off event, possibly with a July 4, 2025 Celebration at the Nathan Lester House. The group also discussed inviting other community groups/organizations to create America 250 themed events that could be registered with the Town and displayed on the Town Website. The Committee addressed logistical aspects including budgets, grant applications, and the creation of promotional materials and social media pages. The Committee would also like to reach out to the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation for potential involvement.

Ledyard Celebrates America 250 Events/Initiatives

The Committee added potential ideas/events to the working list:

- Clam Chowder & Strawberry Shortcake on the Town Green
- Sawmill Demonstrations / Activities at Sawmill Park
- Nathan Lester House - Museum Tours/Picnic/Events
- Red, White & Blue 5K Color Run
- Historic Movie on the Town Green
- Ledyard Music - Band/Chorus Involvement
- Beatification Committee - Red, White & Blue Flowers
- Banner Signs in Front of Town Hall
- Storytelling
- Reenactments
- Historical Document on display Bill Library (possibly a traveling display)
- Music/Concert at UMCGF (Ron Miller contact)
- Special Summer Camp Programming
- Special Voting Stickers for Elections
- Partner with local businesses to offer America 250 Anniversary deals and specials (create a special window sticker for participants)
- Time Capsule
- Period Specific Crafts
- Historic Play
- Town Historian - speaking/storytelling opportunities (Elementary Schools?)

- Distribute pocket Constitutions (Elementary Schools)
- Memorial Day Parade Float
- “Fog of War” movie screening @ Nathan Lester House
- Haunted Graveyard Tours
- Ledyard 250 Mural featuring Ledyard Landmarks
- Virtual Tour Series of Historical Sites
- Celebrate America 250 Challenges (ex: 250 acts of community service, memorize the Declaration of Independence, cooking contest)
- Commemorative Bell (opportunity to purchase a commemorative bell and sell sponsorships)

Marketing & Communications

The Committee discussed the following Marketing & Communications initiatives to support the America 250 events:

- Create “Ledyard Celebrates America 250” Logo
- Town Webpage/Calendar dedicated to America 250 Events (potential to raise funds through sponsorships)
- Yard Signs (opportunity for sponsorship)
- Dedicated Facebook Page
- Printed Flyers
- Ledyard Events Magazine (Run a “save the dates” in the summer Edition)
- Digital Signs

Grant Opportunities

Mayor Allyn will share information regarding America 250 grant opportunities through the State. Ms. Khors volunteered to assist with the Grant process.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Without objection the meeting adjourned at 1:59 p.m.

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TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 25-1504

Agenda Date: 4/8/2025

Agenda #: 1.

AGENDA REQUEST
GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

America 250 Planning Committee Discussion

Background:

(type text here)

Department Comment/Recommendation:

(type text here)

AMERICA 250

CONNECTICUT

Hon. Denise W. Merrill
Chair

Jason R. Mancini, Ph.D.
Vice Chair

Membership

Nicolas Angeli
Connecticut's Old State House –
Youth Leader

Stephen Armstrong
Connecticut State Department of
Education *

Anthony Champalimaud
Member of the Public

Kathryn D'Amato
Office of the Governor *

Melvette Hill
Commission on Women,
Children, Seniors, Equity &
Opportunity*

Andrew Horowitz, Ph.D.
Connecticut State Historian

Michael Johnson
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal
Nation *

Robert Kret
Connecticut Museum of Culture
and History

Catherine Labadia
State Historic Preservation Office

Margaret Khan
Connecticut Library Association

Merle McGee
Member of the Public

Deborah Schander, MLIS, JD
Connecticut State Librarian

Elizabeth Shapiro
Department of Economic and
Community Development *

Jonathan Slifka
Department of Aging and
Disability Services

Joe Smith
Mohegan Tribe *

Hon. Stephanie Thomas
Secretary of the State

Maisa Tisdale
Mary and Eliza Freeman Center
for History and Community

Sally Whipple
Connecticut Democracy Center

Amrys O. Williams, Ph.D.
Connecticut League of Museums

September 3, 2024

Fred Allyn, III
Mayor
741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339

Dear Mayor Allyn,

On July 4, 2026, the United States of America will mark the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence! In anticipation of this event, Governor Lamont established the America 250 | CT Commission, which has been charged to provide assistance to municipalities for the development of programs, projects, and activities pertaining to the American Revolution.

We are reaching out today with an update on how Ledyard may participate. *Many cities and towns have created local committees to begin the work of planning commemorative activities. We encourage Ledyard to consider doing so as well!* The most comprehensive committees will bring together various perspectives—librarians, historians, economic development leaders, business owners, town clerks, representatives of social justice, environmental, and/or DEI groups, etc. Once completed, please let us know who the best point of contact is – we will continue to share information about programs, funding opportunities, and promotional guidelines as we move forward.

In addition to any independent work your local committee may do, we invite you to participate in two state-wide activities over the next two years. First, the Commission will develop a resolution recommitting to the ideals of the Declaration of Independence, which we hope all of Connecticut's municipalities will adopt on or around July 4, 2025. Then, on July 4, 2026, we will host a recommitment ceremony at Connecticut's Old State House in Hartford, where representatives from all 169 municipalities will be invited to come together, like the nation did 250 years ago, and sign a copy of this resolution. Further information will be shared about these activities in the coming months.

You can learn more at our website: www.ct250.org/local. If you have further questions, please contact us at info@ct250.org.

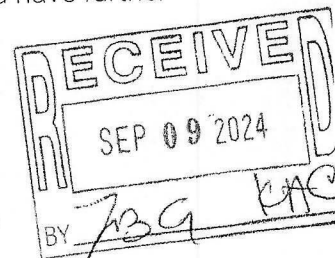
Sincerely,



Hon. Denise Merrill
Chair, America 250 | CT Commission
Former Secretary of the State



Jason R. Mancini, Ph.D.
Vice Chair, America 250 | CT
Executive Director, CT Humanities



* designee

America 250 Planning Committee Resources

[America 250 | CT](#)

[250th Planning Workshop – America 250 | CT](#)

[Community Calendar – America 250 | CT](#)



AMERICA 250 | CT PLANNING GUIDE



In 2026, the United States will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the founding of the country. It is an opportunity for reflection on the ideals of the nation's founders and a time to consider the path forward in expanding our realization of those ideals today.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Hon. Denise W. Merrill

Chair

Jason R. Mancini, Ph.D.

Vice Chair

Nicolas Angeli

Connecticut's Old State House –
Youth Leader

Stephen Armstrong

Connecticut State Dept. of
Education

Michael Johnson

Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation
Designee

Anthony Champalimaud

Member of the Public

Kathryn D'Amato

Governor's Designee

Steven Hernández, Esq.

Commission on Women, Children,
Seniors, Equity & Opportunity

Andrew Horowitz, Ph.D.

State Historian

Robert Kret

Connecticut Museum of Culture &
History

Catherine Labadia

State Historic Preservation Office
Designee

Douglas Lord

Connecticut Library Association

Merle McGee

Member of the Public

Deborah Schander, MLIS, JD

State Librarian

Elizabeth Shapiro

Dept. of Economic & Community
Development Designee

Jonathan Slifka

Dept. of Aging & Disability Services

Joe Smith

Mohegan Tribe Designee

Stephanie Thomas

Secretary of the State

Maisa Tisdale

Mary & Eliza Freeman Center for
History & Community

Sally Whipple

Connecticut Democracy Center

Amrys O. Williams, Ph.D.

Connecticut League of Museums



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USING THIS GUIDE

2026 will mark the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the foundational document of the revolution that occurred in the late 18th century and resulted in the creation of the United States of America.

Planning for such an important commemoration in a comprehensive way can be a daunting task. Because of this, the America 250 | CT Commission has produced this planning guide to provide suggested commemorative themes, ideas, and information.


The Commission encourages partnerships between various organizations within your community—museums, libraries, community centers, schools, municipal offices and commissions, and others who contribute to creating vibrant local spaces—in order to develop a commemoration that includes a variety of voices and perspectives.

GUIDING VALUES



Events surrounding the commemoration of the 250th will take a variety of forms, from celebratory to analytical to commemorative, and will involve people with a variety of backgrounds and beliefs. Regardless of what form their participation takes, we ask organizations to work to align their initiatives with inclusive themes and values, to make welcome as many people from across Connecticut's communities as possible, and to encourage people to consider the future repercussions of today's actions. To do so, all projects, events, and programs should call for mutual respect and empathy. All activities should be accessible to as many people as possible; please bear in mind and attempt to accommodate socioeconomic, physical limitations, language, and other potential barriers to access. We ask, too, that organizations support one another in our collective efforts, including by sharing knowledge and resources whenever possible. Center relationships and the process of developing trust, and be honest and candid with all involved in the process.

BEYOND 1776



The founding legislation for the National Endowment for the Humanities states, “Democracy demands wisdom and vision in its citizens.” We recognize this as the foundation for reinvigorating our democracy. By recognizing this moment in our history, the nation has the opportunity to lay the groundwork for a reawakening of civic engagement by encouraging the participation of all residents.

By thinking about this commemoration beyond the events and actions of 1776, we are able to consider the ever-evolving history of our state and nation. Expanding the scope of the commemoration allows us to reach new audiences that in the past have not seen themselves in commemorations of the American Revolution, while at the same time ensuring that every community in the state can engage with at least one theme, whether that community was the scene of an event directly related to the American Revolution or not.

There are many ways for local government, historians, historical societies, civics groups, and museums to begin this process. In several towns across the state there are commissions and committees being formed to coordinate and facilitate 250th-related planning and programming.

If you choose to do so, please send your information to Cyndi Tolosa, Project Manager for the America 250 | CT Commission, at ctolosa@ct250.org. Your information will be added to the website and shared with people who may be looking to get involved.



CONNECTICUT THEMES

Many of the America 250 | CT themes are drawn from Governor Ned Lamont's Executive Order 22-2 and align with themes established by the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) in their *Making History at 250: The Field Guide for the Semiquincentennial*.

Each community or organization may choose to use one or all of the themes in this planning guide as inspiration to begin to think about commemorating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Each local community has its own unique story to tell and unique role in the history, culture, and civics of Connecticut.

TELL INCLUSIVE STORIES

The 250th serves as inspiration for CTH, its grantees, and the people of Connecticut to deal with and share stories that represent all of its people, past and present. For much of our history, the United States has excluded people—women, free and enslaved African Americans, Indigenous people, immigrants, people with disabilities, the poor, and many others—from full participation and representation in the nation’s political, economic, and cultural life. This commemoration is an opportunity to continue the nation’s reckoning with the past, both its glory and its missteps and flaws. By telling previously untold stories we will enable everyone to find a place in our nation’s narrative.

What stories remain untold in your community?

Whose voice has been heard in the past? How is this an opportunity to lift other voices?



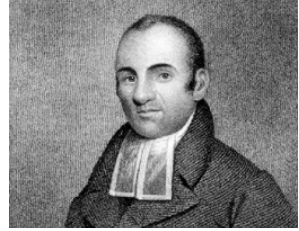
Electric Boat submarine

Ideas

- How has **education** played a role in inclusion and exclusion?
- How can **industry** open avenues to untold stories?

People

- John Anderson, Black governor
- Lemuel Haynes, minister
- Hannah Bunce Watson, publisher
- Toney, Black Loyalist refugee
- Capt. John T. Gonsalves, captain of the Charles W. Morgan



Lemuel Haynes

Places

- Amistad Schooner, New Haven
- Mary & Eliza Freeman Center, Bridgeport
- Foreign Mission School, Cornwall
- Windham Textile Mill
- Old New-Gate Prison and Viets Tavern



New-Gate Prison Yard

Events

- Robert Jacklyn and Land Ownership for People of Color - 1719
- Amistad Trial - 1839
- Opening of the American School for the Deaf - April 15, 1917
- Passing of the Gay-Rights Bill - May 1, 1991



American School
for the Deaf

POWER OF PLACE

Connecticut is comprised of eight counties, 169 towns and cities, five recognized tribes, and countless communities with unique identities and contributions. The creation of a community-based structure will allow each of Connecticut's towns and cities to define their own programs and ideas about how they can engage their citizens. The building of an understanding of our American past will begin in the public spaces dedicated to learning: libraries, community centers, local museums, and historic sites. CTH will ensure the alignment between Connecticut's 250th activities and those of the greater region and nation, building relevance and aligning the state with other areas.

What makes your community unique?

What places and stories are typically preserved and valued? What other places exist?



Keney Park, Hartford

Ideas

- Who was a part of your **community** historically and how did that change?
- How did the **natural environment** shape your community?

People

- Abigail Hinman, New London
- Gladys Tantaquidgeon, Uncasville
- Igor Sikorsky, Stratford
- Hannah Occuish, New London
- William Lanson, New Haven



Igor Sikorsky

Places

- Fort Griswold, Groton
- Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route
- Mashantucket
- Prudence Crandall House, Canterbury
- Naval Submarine Base, New London



Prudence Crandall House

Events

- The Sons of Liberty topple statue of King George III - July 9, 1776
- British burn Danbury - April 26, 1777
- British burn Fairfield - July 7, 1779
- Washington & Rochambeau meet in Wethersfield - May 21-22, 1781



Toppling statue of King George III

DOING HISTORY

To renew public engagement with history, the public must be invited to participate in the process of doing history. CTH will work with organizations in the cultural sector to drive collaborative and innovative approaches to celebrating the nation's 250th. Using avenues such as the digital humanities, cross-sector convenings, and engagement with social studies teachers, we will build a collaborative environment and provide access for all state residents to cultural experiences. Inviting audiences to engage with the historical method can help them become more comfortable with the ambiguous, contested, and always-evolving nature of history. The commission's work will focus on the role of Connecticut, its people, sites, and historic context of the time. It can boost tourism in the state by amplifying the story at historic sites, trails, and buildings, and by constructing programs around notable events.

What is history? How is it different from "the past"?

Connecticut Archives Online
Promoting access to Connecticut's archival resources

Full text Author Title Subject
all repositories Advanced Search

Number of hits: 30 Displaying records 1-20

Othniel Charles Marsh papers
Date: 1817-1899

Creator: Marsh, Othniel Charles, 1831-1899.
Abstract: The papers consist of correspondence, diaries, notebooks, school notes, and other papers of O.C. Marsh, scientist and first professor of paleontology at Yale and in the United States. Of special interest is the rather extensive correspondence Marsh carried on with many prominent scientists of his time; included are letters from Charles Darwin, Leonard and Thomas Huxley, Simon Newcomb, and Benjamin

CAO website

Ideas

- What **primary sources** are available? How do they allow us to make sense of the past?
- Where do we find sources for **previously untold stories**?
- Who holds **knowledge** in different communities? How is it shared?

People

- Amos Doolittle, engraver
- Henry Barnard, education reformer
- Wallace Nutting, antiquarian
- Theodate Pope Riddle, architect
- Joshua Hempstead, diary 1711–58



Theodate Pope Riddle

Places

- Connecticut Museum of Culture & History, Hartford
- Connecticut State Library, Hartford
- Hempstead Houses, New London
- Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame
- Hartford History Center



Joshua Hempstead
Diary

Events

- Annual burning of Benedict Arnold effigy
- Black Lives Matter protests, June 2020
- Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board, est. 1976
- Lafayette's Farewell Tour, 1824–25



Burning Benedict
Arnold's effigy

FOR THE COMMON GOOD

As we reckon with what the nation's 250th means in Connecticut, we will encourage civic engagement to continue to build our communities, state, and nation using the democratic ideals outlined in our founding documents. The 250th anniversary offers an opportunity to reconsider the origins of our government, democratic institutions, and broader civic life, and a chance to reflect on the ways we have changed them over time. Discussions about our democracy and civic intuitions can help strengthen understanding, inspire action, and reveal ways that all of us can participate in and shape our democracy.

How can understanding the origins of our government inform civic engagement today?

How do we determine who is an American?



Signing of the
Constitution

Ideas

- How have ideas of **citizenship** changed since 1776?
- What is a **representative democracy**? How do we encourage or discourage participation and representation?
- How have our **founding documents** changed in the last 250 years? Why?

People

- Thomas J. Dodd, state senator
- Ella Grasso, governor
- Isabella Beecher Hooker, suffragist
- Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., civil rights leader
- Maria Colón Sánchez, activist



Martin Luther King

Places

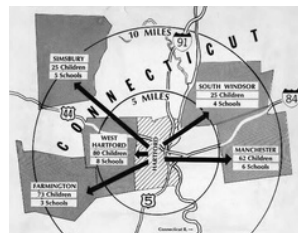
- Legislative Office Building, Hartford
- Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center, Mashantucket
- Old State House, Hartford
- Peace Center of Connecticut, Hartford
- Litchfield Law School, Litchfield



Litchfield Law School

Events

- Adoption of the Fundamental Orders - January 14, 1639
- CT General Assembly Approves the Declaration of Independence - October 10, 1776
- Sheff v. O'Neill - March 3, 1999
- Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation granted federal recognition - October 18, 1983



Map of school bussing
(Sheff v. O'Neill)

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The **Connecticut Council for the Social Studies** will be hosting conferences for students and teachers focused on the themes of the 250th.

Teachers and students are encouraged to participate in **Connecticut History Day** and develop projects related to the 250th and the themes for this commemoration.

ConnecticutHistory.org is a state public history resource that provides engaging, well-researched stories about Connecticut history that link to reliable primary and interpretive resources.

Connecticut's **Kid Governor** immerses 5th graders in a real election for the CT Kid Governor, a fellow 5th grader who will represent them during a one-year term of active leadership. The program teaches about state government, voting, elections, and civic participation.

The Museum of the American Revolution has put together a **Summer Reading List** for 2023 young readers, covering books appropriate for ages 7-14.

TeachIt provides inquiry-based activities that reinforce the principles found in the state social studies frameworks to help Connecticut's teachers bring Connecticut history into the classroom. Additional lessons will also be created.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Connecticut Archives Online (CAO) was undertaken by the Western Connecticut State University Archives in 2008 and is a project that facilitates searching archival holdings in our state.

Connecticut Collections (CTCo) is a resource for teachers and students, researchers, other organizations looking to learn more about their own collections, and history and art lovers. It brings together resources from museums and archives throughout the state in one place.

The **Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA)** is part of the Digital Preservation Repository Program at the University of Connecticut. It is dedicated to the maintenance, delivery, and preservation of a wide range of digital resources for educational and cultural institutions and State Agencies in Connecticut.

Connecticut Explored is the nonprofit magazine of Connecticut history. Anyone with an interest in the untold stories of Connecticut's past can satisfy their curiosity with each issue of *Connecticut Explored*. The magazine offers a variety and range of stories that connect our past to our present and future.



administered by cThumanities

CT Humanities (CTH) is the non-profit organization recognized by the State of Connecticut to coordinate and lead the plans for commemorative, educational, and civics-based initiatives leading up to and during 2026. CTH will serve as the administrative agent and act as the nonprofit fiduciary on behalf of any activities undertaken by the America 250 | CT Commission.

As the principal grantmaking organization for history, cultural, and civics organizations in Connecticut, CTH will bring together communities and cultural resources throughout our state and lead the sector in developing a meaningful commemoration.

ABOUT THE COMMISSION



In order to recognize this moment in our history, Governor Ned Lamont established the America 250 | CT Commission with Executive Order 22-2. The mission of the commission is to plan and coordinate activities commemorating the 250th anniversary of the nation's founding; and enhance tourism, economic development, historic education and preservation, and outdoor recreation within the state; and coordinate, engage, and liaise with the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission, and other local, county, and state commissions, as well as private and public organizations and partners. The Commission will develop, encourage, and execute an inclusive celebration, commemoration, and observance of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence through civic, cultural, and historical education events and programming; and will promote the documentation, identification, and preservation of cultural and historic resources, including archives, buildings, landscapes, objects, and sites related to the semiquincentennial period.

To learn more about the America 250 | CT Commission, including upcoming meetings and to read the Executive order, visit CT250.org.

STAY CONNECTED

info@ct250.org

www.ct250.org



LOGO



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 25-1744

Agenda Date: 4/8/2025

Agenda #: 2.

AGENDA REQUEST
GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

Grant Opportunities

Background:

(type text here)

Department Comment/Recommendation:

(type text here)