



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Chairman Karen
Parkinson

Regular Meeting

Monday, June 15, 2026

7:00 PM

Town Hall Annex -Hybrid Format

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Parkinson at 7:00 p.m.

Chairperson Parkinson explained that the agenda needed to be completed earlier than usual and items will need to be added under Any Other Old Business and Any Other New Business.

II. ROLL CALL

Chairperson Parkinson welcomed new members Anne Roberts-Pierson and Kim Millar. She also stated that she will not be cancelling any of the Commission's summer meetings.

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

Also in attendance:

Ty Lamb, Town Council, serving as the Commission's Liaison.

Erik Treaster, Resident.

Dave Schroeder, Resident.

LeAnn Barry, Resident.

Chairperson Parkinson congratulated LeAnn Barry for being recognized as the "Linda Davis Woman of the Year".

III. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

Mr. Godino was appointed as a voting member.

IV. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

Mr. Shroeder, Mr. Treaster and Ms. Barry will hold their discussions under Old Business.

V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to APPROVE the Regular Meeting Minutes from May 18, 2026, as written.

Approved as amended to add Kelly Lamb to roll call.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Karen Parkinson

SECONDER: Douglas Kelley

AYE 4 Kelley Parkinson Watford Roberts-Pierson

EXCUSED 2 Chittim Geer

VI. TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

1. Town Council Liaison - Councilor Ty Lamb.

Councilor Lamb started his report by stating that he was the only Councilor that objected to canceling the Town Council summer meetings.

Councilor Lamb mentioned that he had a great meeting with the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe. The Tribe presented some possible ideas for the Commission to take on (or as a collaboration);

- Securing the Great Oak Tree Gathering Area.
- Identifying important sights such as Spicer and Rogerdine and some of their cultural sights.
- Joint archeological projects.
- Education initiatives.
- Curiosity in artifact collections. Mr. Kelley said he wanted to mention that technically the artifacts found at the Nathan Lester House belong to the Historical Society.
- Joint research.
- One of the Tribes projects are "witness stones".
- Quarterly Historical Conversations (Talk History).
- Conservation Project. Reintroducing herring fish.

Councilor Lamb suggested that the Commission decides which project are of interest and he could report back to the Tribe.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

VII. CHAIRPERSON REPORT

1. General Report.

Chairperson Parkinson said the Commission prepared for the parade, but it was cancelled.

Chairperson Parkinson reported that she nominated Alan Gonang as the Rotary "Citizen of the Year" for his dedication to the Sawmill. She shared the nomination with the Commissioners:

"For the past 25 years Alan has been a volunteer at the Ledyard Water Powered Up Down Sawmill. In this capacity he has been in charge of all aspects of operating and maintaining the Mill. With the three or four volunteers he has recruited he has opened the Mill to public on Saturdays during the month of April, May, September and October. Visitors are treated to live presentations of water powered as it was done at this site 150 years ago. Alan narrates these demonstrations in a very professional manor and with knowledge gained over 25 years of hands-on experience. On Saturday when not open to the public Alan and his crew could be found at the Mill doing maintenance of 150-year-old equipment and building. If the Town had to contract for this work the cost would run into the thousands. He loves historical technology; Alan has developed an instructional website showing how the Sawmill operates. This site has brought visitors from as far away as Canada, it has drawn groups who are building replicas of mills such as ours and are seeking firsthand information on how they were built. The Ledyard Mill is on the National list of Historic Places and to our knowledge it is the only mill of that period and working with the original equipment and located on the original site. Through Alan and his team's efforts preservation of this Historic site in Ledyard is assured. Alan and his wife Nancy have lived in Ledyard for the past 40 years. Their daughter Sara graduated from the Ledyard School system. Alan has a PHD in biology. Nancy and Alan are active members of the Gales Ferry United Methodist Church as a representative of their church Alan has served as Treasurer of the Ledyard Emergency Assistance Fund. He is active with Avalonia Land Conservatory and volunteers for Habitat of Humanity and is an avid hiker, fisherman, photographer and woodworker. Alan Ganong is a volunteer extraordinaire".

Chairperson Parkinson added that Mr. Ganong will be recognized at the President's dinner at Lake of Isles on June 23, 2026.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

2. Financial Report.

Mr. Godino said there is not much of the budget left at the end of the 2026 fiscal year.

- There is \$1,060 remaining in maintenance and \$686 in operating. The Sawmill has a purchase order for John Kelly to repair rotted posts on the north end of the building (next to the raceway).
- The Sawmill account will have \$330 remaining, which is mainly set aside for Holdridge. Mr. Godino explained that it is helpful to have an open Holdridge purchase order for when they are working on Saturdays and need something immediately.
- Preservation has \$138 remaining. The Sawmill donation account has \$8,000 (no change).
- The Capital account has \$46,000 remaining.
- The Nathan Lester House donation account has a balance of \$9,400.

Mr. Godino presented an invoice from 2025 from Integrated Security for an emergency at the Sawmill. A purchase order was never written for the invoice. The Sawmill has enough to cover the invoice. Mr. Godino will ask to have a PO created.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Correspondence.

None.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Sawmill Committee.

Mr. Godino shared Mr. Gonang's report. The spring season just finished, and everything went well. There was enough water for a successful operation. Only a couple of Saturdays had rainy weather. The headgate is 20-25 years old and is leaking. The headgate will need to be replaced; Alan and his crew will rebuild it. More signs are needed at the Sawmill. There is new volunteer, Anthony Vino who started recently. Mr. Vino used to be a blacksmith at the Mystic Seaport and is interested in running the Blacksmith shop. Mr. Ganong mentioned that the cell service at the Sawmill is not great and the coverage is useless inside the building.

Mr. Godino reviewed concepts for the Sawmill dam. The first one is an auxiliary spillway and the second is to put material on top of the dam to protect it from an overflow situation. Mr. Godino shared a photo of the covering, one with grass growing over it and one without.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

2. Nathan Lester House - Mr. Kelley.

Mr. Kelley shared his report:

"Late May saw preparation for our open season, with some changes to plans. Some room restoration was put on hold due to our new concerns in using modern materials rather than breathable, traditional ones. We will resume after this year's open season with linseed oil-based paints and other traditional method as appropriate.

Open day was Saturday, May 23 for the Memorial Day weekend. While visitorship was light, the Historical Society was able to install an exhibit in the museum kitchen. This is the "Bicentennial Kitchen," and features items that would have been found in a 1976 kitchen, including all the harvest gold, orange, and avocado Tupperware a person could ask for.

Though we are now in the semiquincentennial celebration year, the Society does not have a collection heavy on items from the time of Independence. Other than the Keeping Room, some slight refreshes in the rest of the house show history as it moved on into the modern era.

Prospective Eagle Scout, Dylan Moody, has built two benches for our trails. He and other Scout volunteers placed the benches on the pink trail at the top of the steep path and on the blue trail

facing the Lester Cemetery on June 5.

In preparation for the Garden Club workshop, the Orchard Field was mowed, and sod removed on the site, which is immediately behind the stone wall behind the Ell. The shed with share an axis with the Ell and align its gable ends with those of the Ell. Gravel was also delivered in advance for the base.

On Saturday, June 13, our American Heritage Girl volunteer, Grace Ayers, held her first workshop for the Garden Club project. She oversaw members of her troop, parents, and members of the Northford Timber Framers in preparing the base of the shed. A bed of gravel/crushed stone measuring 12' x 16' was laid. 6"x 6" pressure treated timbers were shaped with both traditional and modern tools into the base frame. The 8' x 10' base has half-lap joints at the corners. Two cross beams on the long ends have dovetail joints to help keep the frame pulled tight. Corners are secured with Timber Locks. The next workshop will take place July 25.

Maintenance of the Lester House grounds by our partners at Ledyard Public Works has been exceptional, as always. We wish to thank their grounds crew for their dedication to the museum and the quality of their work. They always take particular care in the Great Oak Garden, which really is the jewel of our grounds, and it is very much noticed by daily visitors.

As we move into our open season, we also wish to recognize our long-term partners, the Ledyard Historical Society and Ledyard Garden Club. Without them, the house and barns would be interesting, but empty, shells - devoid of life and context - and the grounds would similarly lack the charm and grace which only an active and well-maintained garden can bestow".

RESULT: DISCUSSED

3. Research/Preservation - Ms. Chittim.

Chairperson Parkinson said the Spicer Ruins had 2-3 volunteers working for 3-4 weeks until the weather became too hot. The Town said to an area of .73 acres for the study, but the volunteers are looking at the site as a whole. Odd groupings were discovered, which may be survey markers before the advent of stone walls (which was 1725). Chairperson Parkinson will go back to the Town Council to ask for their consideration of the larger sized site area.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

4. Center School - Mr. Geer.

Ms. Watford reported that the Center School has opened for tours. The first opening day was during heavy rain, and no visitors came. The following weekend there were 8 visitors, including some schoolchildren. Ms. Watford is trying to generate more interest in the Schoolhouse, possibly with Library story times for children.

Ms. Watford confirmed that there is a definite issue with the front door which will need to be repaired or replaced. Mr. Godino suggested asking Mr. Kelly to evaluate the door.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

5. Social Media - Ms. Lamb.

Ms. Parkinson said currently no one is handling the Social Media portion. Mr. Kelley has access to the Historic Commission and the Nathan Lester House Facebook page; Mr. Ganong has access to the Sawmill page. Ms. Watford suggested asking the Town for an official Commission email.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

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 reiterated that there are certain qualifications that the State of Connecticut requires to be considered Village District status such as distinctive character or historical importance. Mr. Schroeder asked for guidance as to what qualifications the Commission has in the POCD. Ms. Millar mentioned several important examples such as the Harvard compound, the Historic schoolhouse on Long Cove Road, the Bill Perkins house which has been restored, the Stoddard house (referred to as the "Tenement House"), a couple of Craftsman style houses, an Old Victorian Cottage, Charles Stoddard house, and the Asa Perkins House. Ms. Millar believes there are plenty of homes and in a variety of styles to qualify.

Motion to ESTABLISH a working subcommittee to research and document the historic properties and nature of the community in Gales Ferry south of the two recognized historic districts.

Mr. Kelley and Ms. Millar would be on the Committee along with community members.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Douglas Kelley

SECONDER: Rebecca Watford

AYE 4 Kelley Parkinson Watford Roberts-Pierson

EXCUSED 2 Chittim Geer

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

No discussion.

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

Confirmation of parade attendance.

Buntings for America 250. Letters will be sent requesting Historic homes have buntings on display for a historic drive through.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

XI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Any Other New Business to Come Before the Commission.
None.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to ADJOURN the Regular Meeting at 8:38 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Karen Parkinson

SECONDER: Douglas Kelley

AYE 4 Kelley Parkinson Watford Roberts-Pierson

EXCUSED 2 Chittim Geer

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