

MINUTES
INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY
SEPTEMBER 13, 2017 - 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – 134 GROTON LONG POINT ROAD
COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Agency: Sutphen, Beglau, Williams, Ashworth, Block
Staff: Jones, Allen, Galetta

Vice Chairperson Sutphen called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and sat Beglau for Scott.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

1. Notice of Application Filed with Stonington Inland Wetlands Commission

The Town Clerk has received notification that an application has been submitted to the Town of Stonington for the reconstruction of North Stonington Road Bridge as the work is within 500 feet of the municipal boundary. Staff noted that an application for the bridge reconstruction also appears on the Agency's Agenda and suggested deferring discussion until then.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

1. August 9, 2017

MOTION: To approve the minutes of August 9, 2017, as amended

Motion made by Block, seconded by Williams, so voted unanimously.

IV. NEW APPLICATIONS

1. IWA 17-06, Morano Residence, 43 Starr Lane

Architect Peter Springsteel introduced the application to the Agency and explained that the Morano Residence was recently purchased by his clients the Schmidt's.

The proposal is to build a 1.5 story addition and deck on the eastern side of an existing house. Although a watercourse runs through the property to the west of the existing house, virtually the entire property is within the regulated area. The addition will be built on slab or crawlspace, and approximately 10 yards of material will be excavated and temporarily stockpiled on site. Footing drains will not be required for the proposed addition due to the presence of ledge; however, a foundation drain will be installed along the east side of the existing house. The proposed foundation drain will discharge via pump onto the yard, but significant erosion is not expected. Erosion controls of hay bales and silt fence will encompass the work area including the stock pile, and a 10 foot setback will be maintained from an existing wellhead per Ledge Light Health District Code.

Staff noted that the watercourse runs under Starr Lane – which is a private road – through a culvert directly to the south of the subject property. It was urged that this culvert be monitored and cleared as needed to avoid flooding.

Sutphen disclosed that she is on the Board of Trustees for the Peace Sanctuary Trust, which owns a neighboring property.

MOTION: To classify the application as minor.

Motion made by Block, seconded by Williams, so voted unanimously.

2. IWA 17-07, Bridge Reconstruction at Whitford Brook, North Stonington Road

Staff noted that the Town Engineer is on vacation, but will be at the next meeting to present the application. In summary, there is a bridge over Whitford Brook in Old Mystic that was washed out in a 2010 storm event and requires complete reconstruction. This will be a joint project with the Town of Stonington and now that funding has been approved the plans are ready to move forward. The proposal consists of excavating the existing abutments and putting in new concrete abutments in a disturbed area. New catch basins will discharge into existing rip rap.

Staff review is scheduled for October 3 so there will be plenty of time to allow for a site walk if the Agency requires one.

3. IWA 17-08, Mumford Cove Association, Maintenance Dredging and Beach Sand Replenishment, 3 Neptune Drive

Staff presented the application to the Agency. Essentially, the channel from Mumford Cove out to open water is too shallow and needs to be dredged. The plan is to take some of the dredged sediment and move it to an area that is used as a playground and boat storage. Another area will be used for dewatering after which the material will be spread out on the beach on Neptune Drive. This is not the regulated zone and this is done periodically by the Association.

At issue is whether or not the dewatering sump pile is in the regulated area. There is something amiss with the plan that was submitted with the application. It has no symbol for wetland flags and no delineation. Staff noted that there is a wetland pocket close to where houses are located; however, the closest wetland flag is curiously located on black top. Staff is waiting for a plan revision that has wetland flags and delineation in order to scale the project location and definitively tell if it is within the 100' regulated area. The area was originally flagged by Rich Snarsky approximately 10 to 12 years ago. He did turn up some wetlands but they are not shown on the plan. Although staff expects to find no evidence of wetlands on the revised plans, the dewatering project will require a special permit and will be regulated by DEEP. There is a tight window for dewatering in the month of January in order to protect the flounder population.

To recap, there are technical issues with the plan that need to be clarified. Staff does not expect the project to require a wetlands permit; however, if it is determined that a permit is needed this presentation will get the process started.

V. PENDING APPLICATIONS

1. IWA 17-03, Advantage Personal Training, 2906 Gold Star Highway

Engineer Frank Borawski, of PDS Engineering & Construction, Inc. presented the application to the Agency. This is a request for an addition to the existing Advanced Personal Training building in the regulated area. Additionally, a proposal to allow existing unauthorized pervious parking to remain within the upland review area has been added to the application. The work taking place in the regulated area involves minor excavation and construction of the addition. Any fill removed will be stock piled

on site and reused after the foundation is poured. This is a request is to enclose an outdoor space that is currently being used as an exterior workout area.

MOTION: To approve the Advantage Personal Training application for the following reasons:

1. There will be no loss of wetland or watercourse as a result of this project.
2. The sediment and erosion control plan will adequately protect the wetland during construction.

This permit is subject to the four standard conditions.

Motion made by Block, seconded by Ashworth, so voted unanimously.

2. IWA 17-05, WPCF Effluent Pump Station Upgrade, 170 Gary Court

Staff noted the Town Engineer is not available but will be at the next meeting to present the application and answer any questions.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Hull Forest Products, Inc. Timber Harvest, 327-449 Hazelnut Hill Road – Jurisdictional Ruling

Staff noted that the information regarding the timber harvest was included in the agenda packet.

Chris Casadei, of Hull Forest Products, Inc., introduced himself to the Agency and noted that he is a State of Connecticut Certified Forester. He is before the Agency to seek a jurisdictional ruling that the proposed timber harvest at 327-449 Hazelnut Hill Road is permitted as of right. He explained that there will be no new disturbance to the wetlands. Aside from a proposed crossing at the northwest corner of the harvest area, all crossings have been used in the past and will be stabilized as needed during the operation.

Casadei noted that this is a selective timber harvest that will strictly adhere to all Best Management Practices adopted by CT DEEP. The objective is to conservatively liquidate the timber asset from the property. The operation is a whole tree harvest where the trees have been preselected and marked. The bulk of the property will be mechanically harvested and transported to holding areas. Very few trees will be harvested from the wetland area. Additionally, ground conditions will dictate the timing of the operation.

The Agency had concerns about regeneration of the trees and where the holding areas are located. Casadei noted that in New England artificial regeneration is not a common practice and natural regeneration will occur as long as seed trees are left. The two landing areas are a motorcycle riding area on Hazelnut Hill Road and a natural sand gravel area on Flanders Road.

Staff noted that this is considered an agricultural activity. While this is not a farm, the timber is a crop that is being harvested.

MOTION: To find that the Hull Forest Products Timber Harvest, 327-449 Hazelnut Hill Road as described in the August 11, 2017 narrative is an operation permitted in inland wetlands and watercourses as of right per Section 4.1a of the Groton Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations

Motion made by Block, seconded by Williams, so voted unanimously.

2. Report of Chair

The Agency noted that the East Farm Subdivision on Elm Street has removed more vegetation around the pond than expected via the approved permit. Staff noted that during the presentation the applicant indicated he was keeping Cedar trees and not much else. The sand was dredged from the pond and placed on site. Currently, the owners are working with Staff relative to replanting. The equipment used was put on the ledge of the pond. Primarily undergrowth was taken out but Staff was not aware of mature trees being taken. The dredge was quickly used. Staff visited the site and the improvement was dramatic. It was also noted that the owners have respected the setbacks and planting will occur when the house is built.

The Agency requested that staff follow up to determine what will be planted and to remind the owners not to spray.

The Agency had concerns about a location on Marsh Road where the swale was covered in brush. At one point, the Town cleaned it up because it was causing ponding. Now the house next door has been putting brush in the swale. Staff noted they will inspect.

The Agency has also observed PVC pipes that are accumulating on Fishtown Road. Staff will investigate.

3. Report of Staff – None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Barbara Block, Secretary
Inland Wetland Agency

Prepared by Lynda Galetta
Office Assistant II