

MINUTES  
INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY  
FEBRUARY 25, 2015 - 7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX - COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Agency: Sutphen, Ashworth, Block  
Staff: Jones, Galetta

Vice Chairperson Sutphen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

1. Referral for April 1, 2015 Public Hearing

Staff noted that the application encompasses assorted zoning regulation amendments and the referral is for information purposes.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF February 11, 2015

MOTION: To approve the minutes of February 11, 2015, as written.

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

IV. NEW APPLICATIONS

1. McCracken Residence, 119 Fishtown Road

Explaining that she had a conflict of interest, Block recused herself for this application.

Architects Christopher Vernott and Bill Bertsche presented the application to the Agency regarding the removal of hardwood canopy trees in the 100' upland review area and in the adjacent wetlands. Their client is proposing to build a "net zero" single family dwelling on the property. Solar collector cells will be placed on the house to absorb the sun's energy. The goal is to use "net zero" energy at the end of each year. A solar energy contractor has provided a chart to show how the collectors will absorb sun energy most efficiently. This will impact how tall the surrounding tree canopy can be. Tree shadows on the collectors can reduce the efficiency by 50%. The applicants reviewed a plan with the Agency showing the wetland edge flagged by Richard Snarski. It is mostly grassy field up to the wetland flags. Trees have been selected for removal based on a field inventory to determine which ones might impact the solar collectors. Three trees in the upland review area, adjacent to the garage, will be taken down and the stumps removed. In the wetland area and in the upland review area the plan is to remove trees but leave the stumps. There will be no disturbance of soil or vegetation. Most of the selected trees will be accessible by bucket truck. Interior trees will be climbed and limbed. Logs will be removed by zip line. There is no plan to use heavy machinery for the harvest. Most of the tall growth trees seem to be oak. Undergrowth trees are birch and smaller growth trees. The total number marked for removal is 21, of which, 10 are inside the wetland.

The Agency will schedule a site walk of the property. They also requested details on how the trees will be removed and the definitive impact on energy efficiency if trees are not

removed. The Agency would like to confirm the species that will be removed and what ones will be left.

Staff noted that the applicants should provide detailed information about what species of trees they plan to remove, have an arborist detail how trees will be removed, as well as, how future growth of any reserved trees will impact the solar panels, and submit information from the solar company about the energy efficiency reduction from tree shadows.

A site walk was scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, 2015 at 2:00 p.m.

## V. PENDING APPLICATIONS

### 1. Groton Utilities Water Filtration Plant Improvements, 1268 Poquonnock Road

Staff noted a revision to the erosion control plan to address de-watering issues, and stated that the applicants have decided not to add a sidewalk along the Route 1 frontage. They will, instead, ask the Planning Commission to waive the requirement.

Project Manager Chris Nichols of Fay, Spofford & Thorndike presented the revised plans to the Agency for Groton Utilities. He noted that this is a project with oversight from the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH). It is being funded through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund which is administered by CT DPH. The State has been involved with the project since its inception in 2009.

Nichols explained the phasing of the project which will have a duration of 3 years overall. Phase I comprises work on the piping, storage tank area, and demolition of existing buildings. Phase II will include excavation for the new building and the final phase is site restoration and paving. There will be heavy traffic throughout and the Town has requested the contractor to be available for staff preconstruction meetings and for erosion controls inspections. The standard construction erosion control plan will be used but the contractor will determine what means and method to use. There will be monthly inspections and inspections after any sizeable rainstorm. Since the site will be disturbed in varying capacities throughout the project most of the controls will remain in place throughout the project.

Staff noted that this differs from the usual erosion controls that are shown on plans. The Agency will be copied on all erosion control inspections. In case of a catastrophic event there is a weir to stop soil from eroding beyond the work area.

The improved water filtration will provide a more robust treatment process and take out more of the contaminants to a required lower level. A major upgrade has not been undertaken since 1960.

**MOTION:** To approve the Groton Utilities Water Filtration Improvements application for the following reasons:

1. There are no wetlands or watercourses lost as a result of this project.
2. The storm water discharge is treated through a series of bio swales prior to discharge.

This permit is subject to the four standard conditions.

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

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Report of Chair – None

2. Report of Staff – None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

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Barbara Block, Secretary  
Inland Wetland Agency

Prepared by Lynda Galetta  
Office Assistant II