



Town of Groton, Connecticut
Inland Wetlands Agency
Regular Meeting Minutes

Office of Planning and
 Development Services
 Town Hall Annex
 134 Groton Long Point
 Road
 Groton, CT 06340
 860-446-5970

Wednesday, August 08, 2018

7:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 2

I. ROLL CALL

- I.1. Roll Call
 - Chair**
David Scott
 - Vice Chair**
Eunice Sutphen
 - Members**
Robert L. Ashworth
Barbara Block
Barbara Williams
 - Staff**
Lynda Galetta
Deb Jones

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS – None

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

- III.1. Public Communications – None

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- IV.1. June 27, 2018

MOTION: To approve the minutes of June 27, 2018, as written.

Moved by: Sutphen, Eunice		Seconded by: Ashworth, Robert L.		
Committee Members	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Robert L. Ashworth	X			
Barbara Block	X			
David Scott	X			
Eunice Sutphen	X			
Barbara Williams	X			
APPROVED				

- IV.2. July 9, 2018

MOTION: To approve the minutes of July 9, 2018 Special Meeting, as written.

Moved by: Sutphen, Eunice	Seconded by: Ashworth, Robert L.
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Committee Members	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Robert L. Ashworth	X			
Barbara Block	X			
David Scott	X			
Eunice Sutphen	X			
Barbara Williams	X			
APPROVED				

V. NEW APPLICATIONS

V.1. IWA 18-07 Electric Boat R & D Annex Parking Lot, 456 Poquonnock Road

Engineer Frank Borawski and Stephen Roberts, of Electric Boat, introduced the application to the Agency, which is a proposal to build a new parking lot at 456 Poquonnock Road. The Agency originally heard an application for the demolition of the building at this location. That building has been torn down. Additionally, a dam that was overflowing has been removed by permission from DEEP. As a result, Trails Pond to the north has become just an intermittent water way. The stream goes into an underground culvert and pipes back into the same catch basin system, ultimately discharging to Birch Plain Creek.

The parking area will have less impervious lot coverage than the original and will be used as a temporary storage lot to support a building project in the City. The plan is to store connex boxes, vendor trailers, heavy equipment and building materials at this location. The building project will last approximately 3 – 5 years. A Storm Tech separator unit will be used. Minor grading will be required.

MOTION: To classify the application as minor.

Moved by: Sutphen, Eunice		Seconded by: Block, Barbara		
Committee Members	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Robert L. Ashworth	X			
Barbara Block	X			
David Scott	X			
Eunice Sutphen	X			
Barbara Williams	X			
PASSED				

V.2. IWA 18-08 Mystic Hollow Subdivision, 0 Sandy Hollow Road

Greg Fedus, Fedus Engineering, explained to the agency that this is a proposed 6-lot subdivision on over 8 acres of land. It has frontage along Sandy Hollow Road, Route 95, and Cow Hill Road. The wetlands are all located in the open space with the exception of a sliver sized area on Lot #6.

Staff noted the monuments and pins are to be set in the open space in the regulated area. The Agency has previously seen an application for a proposed daycare and reviewed a timber harvest plan for this location. The Agency agreed that they were all very familiar with this parcel.

MOTION: To classify the application as minor.

Moved by: Sutphen, Eunice		Seconded by: Block, Barbara		
Committee Members	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Robert L. Ashworth	X			
Barbara Block	X			
David Scott	X			
Eunice Sutphen	X			
Barbara Williams	X			
PASSED				

V.3. Receipt of New Applications

VI. PENDING APPLICATIONS

VI.1. IWA 18-06 Groton Bible Chapel Expansion, 66 Toll Gate Road

Norm Thibeault, Killingly Engineering, along with Jeff Sidel of Groton Bible Chapel presented their application seeking permission to construct a new worship center and parking area on church property at 66 Toll Gate Road. It will be located in the same place as a previously approved youth center that was not constructed. There will be some activity with 100 feet of the wetlands. The bulk of the property is wetlands and the remainder is mostly developed. The plan includes enlarging the water quality basin, the enlargement of the existing gravel parking area, and the construction of a gravel parking area where there is currently a grass parking area. In order to construct the building, two residential structures will be demolished and two curb cuts removed. The existing pavement will be removed. The new paved area will be smaller and impervious to help alleviate below grade infiltration of the detention system. Overflow will discharge into the drainage system and ultimately discharge to the wetlands.

Thibeault noted that the property is in the Water Resource Protection District (WRPD) and he has focused on water quality and addressed it in the stormwater management plan and grid. In his opinion, the onsite wetlands are high quality and are doing a good job of filtering stormwater.

Thibeault explained that Staff suggested a level infiltration swale in the parking area to help collect run off. A natural berm exists off the parking areas. There will be mostly sheet flow to the wetlands. A low level outlet in the stormwater basin functions for smaller storms. For overflow they will devise a rip rap area. It is his opinion that all pavement and storm treatment that was put in with the previous approval are very well functioning. They are balancing impervious surfaces between pre and post construction and have met the requirements of the WRPD Regulations.

The Agency expressed concerned about snow removal and disposal. They had questions about the amount of gravel needed for the parking area and concerns about such large areas required for parking.

Thibeault discussed the soil types at the location relative to water infiltration, as well as the impervious area, building coverage and total lot coverage. He further noted that during construction they will have a staging area and the stock pile will be located outside the regulated area for the duration or until needed.

Staff noted that Groton Utilities has reviewed the plan and is comfortable with the water

treatment. Staff also explained that the WRPD Regulations allow 70% maximum impervious surface and this plan is using only 13%.

MOTION: To approve the Groton Bible Chapel Expansion 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 provide adequate protection for the wetlands during construction.

This permit is subject to the four standard conditions and the following modifications:

1. The design engineer shall certify that the water quality basin is constructed as approved by the Inland Wetland Agency prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Site Plan Compliance.
2. Any additional work in the upland review area, including any work necessary to meet the requirements of the Section 6.12 of the Zoning Regulations, shall be reviewed by the Inland Wetland Agency to determine the need for a wetland permit.

Moved by: Block, Barbara		Seconded by: Williams, Barbara		
Committee Members	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Robert L. Ashworth			X	
Barbara Block	X			
David Scott	X			
Eunice Sutphen	X			
Barbara Williams	X			
APPROVED				

VII. OLD BUSINESS

VII.1. Old Business – None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

VIII.1. IWA 07-02 Groton Village Condominiums, 10 Fort Hill Road

Engineer Ed Wenke, of The Winthrop Group, addressed the Agency regarding Groton Village Condominiums, which are currently under construction at 10 Fort Hill Road. Wenke noted that Building #1 is being framed but prior to the start of Building #2 they would like to make a field design change. He explained that the condominiums were originally designed and approved with walk-out basements. The units have been redesigned without walk foundations leaving the back walls exposed approximately 7 – 8 feet. The developers are seeking to submit a regrading plan that lifts the grade from Elevation 10 to Elevation 16. Permission has been obtained from the abutting property owner to flatten out the grades between the two properties and grade onto the abutting property.

Wenke stated that currently 2,000 sq. ft. of roof drains are approved to discharge into the

pond in the regulated area in front. Raising the grades allows re-piping and eliminates piped drainage into pond. The new overall design will reduce runoff into the pond. The slope remains the same and there is no encroachment any closer to the pond. There will be an additional area of disturbance in the upland review area in order to change the grade; however, Wenke is of the opinion that it works better for drainage and hydrologically it will work.

Staff noted that originally the swale was deep and all the water drained into the pond. Now the swale is shallower so it is only draining rainwater from yards. Staff explained that the developer is asking if a permit modification is required or whether the Agency would require an additional permit. The Agency came to consensus that because of the amount of fill in the upland review area it will change the original approval and a permit modification is appropriate.

VIII.2. Groton Middle School Preliminary Discussion

Rick Norris, Project Manager for the Town of Groton Schools Project addressed the Agency and explained that preliminary plans have been developed and they are moving forward with designs for the new middle school on the so-called Merritt Property. The expectation is to submit land use applications next month. He introduced Darren Overton, Meghan Raymond, and Kemp Morhardt from Millone & McBroom who are the design team for the project.

Overton noted that there will be work in the upland review and some direct impact to the wetlands. They are in the process of going over the details and are before the Agency to get input. He explained that the location is bounded by St. Mary's Church, Fitch High School, and Ella Grasso Technical School. The property frontage is along Fort Hill Road and Groton Long Point Road. The remainder of the site is mostly wooded with three distinct wetlands on the property: Fort Hill Brook which abuts it, a pocket wetland on site and a small groundwater seep.

Raymond addressed the Agency in her capacity as a soil scientist. The wetlands were delineated in late fall/early winter 2017 and as previously noted three wetlands were located on site. The primary wetland is 1.78 acres which equals 6% of the site. It is forested swamp with red maple and a variety of hydrologic conditions. There is an area of standing water which has created a ponded area because of Route 1. It was evaluated for vernal pool activity and spotted salamanders were identified. There is also a variety of forested conditions.

Overton reviewed the design of the new middle school which will be built for 940 students with 195 parking spaces proposed. The 150,000 sq. ft., 4-story building is designed with a compact footprint. There will be two access points. Vehicle access for parent drop off will enter and exit from the Ella Grasso drive while bus access will enter and exit from Fitch High School. Three athletic fields are proposed. A multipurpose field will have under drainage, a football field will be located in an area that is already cleared and maintained, and a softball field located next to a bio-retention basin. The subject property is served by public water and public sewer systems and stormwater management areas. There will be little change in run off for the fields. Overflow will sheet flow into the wetlands. There is not much change in terms of ground water flow into the wetlands. It is meadow already and basins will provide retention. However, everything essentially leads to the west down the hill to Fort Hill Brook.

Raymond noted that there have been several iterations of the design to make it fit the topography best. The building has been located in the most appropriate place where it is not too sloped but they have maintained the wetlands. They have also tried to look at the site holistically and maintained amphibian access to the vernal pool. The species do not travel very far and the area of direct impact is 1,300 sq. ft. They will maintain the hydrology to the wetland corridor and maintain current function to lessen the impact to the wetlands. The small seep wetland will be covered with fill material. Standing water is only seasonal and it is not connected to a primary wetland.

The Agency had concerns about the grading activity and the disruption pushing into the 100' upland review. They were also concerned about the upper wetland and the wetland that will be eliminated. They noted concerns about the stormwater discharge and what will happen when it hits the wetlands. There was some discussion about what would be acceptable to the Agency relative to grading for the fields. The Agency noted that hand removal of invasive species would be acceptable. Raymond explained that they are trying to follow the natural contours of the property and balance the cut and fill on site. They are trying not to bring in fill. There will be a plunge pool to slow down the water before it hits the wetlands at Fort Hill Brook. The Agency also noted that a public hearing is probable when this application is submitted.

Staff suggested a site walk prior to application. The Agency will schedule a site walk for Thursday, August 16, 2018 at 3:30 p.m.

VIII.3. Report of Chairperson

The Agency discussed the remediation plan at East Farms Subdivision on Noank Road and the defoliation that occurred on Cedar Road. Staff noted that the East Farms restoration plan is not scheduled to begin yet. There is no status update at this time regarding Cedar Road; however, the Director of Public Works is demanding that the chemical company come up with a restoration plan that the company will finance.

VIII.4. Report of Staff

Staff noted that Matt Allen has left the Town for another job. The department has advertised for a new Planner I already and interviews will be conducted next week.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

IX.1. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Barbara Block, Secretary
Inland Wetland Agency

Prepared by Lynda Galetta
Office Assistant II