

MINUTES
INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY
DECEMBER 10, 2014 - 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX - COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Agency: Block, Sutphen, Scott, Ashworth, Furlong, Williams (7:06)
Staff: Jones, Galetta

Chairman Scott called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letter from DEEP to Groton Utilities – Poquonnock Reservoir Dam
2. Letter from DEEP to Groton Utilities – Billings Avery Dam
3. Letter from DEEP to Groton Utilities – Ledyard Reservoir Dam

Staff noted that the Agency is just being copied on these letters. DEEP has jurisdiction over the Inland Wetlands because the activity involves dam repair.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF November 12, 2014 and November 17, 2014

MOTION: To approve the minutes of November 12, 2014 and November 17, 2014, as written.

Motion made by Sutphen, seconded by Ashworth, 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention (Block). Motion passed.

IV. NEW APPLICATIONS

1. Fields of Fire, 715 Noank Ledyard Road, Expansion

Tom Vignato, owner of Fields of Fire, presented his expansion plans to the Agency. The plan is to move the parking area further into the property and expand the access driveway to allow for two-way traffic. During the Agency's site walk the idea of a system of traffic lights was discussed. Vignato has determined that it would not be cost effective to use this option. Instead, he is proposing to extend an existing culvert 10' and place fieldstone and gravel fill in the wetlands. The access driveway will be widened to 24' in order to accommodate incoming and outgoing traffic. All of the fill will be on the north side of the driveway. Fieldstone that is already on site will be used. There will be 6" of crushed stone on the top. In addition, he is proposing to repurpose an additional footpath as a permanent road to get supplies, employees and emergency vehicles back and forth to the recreational areas. He noted the footpath area is wetlands and that his original permit allowed for the placement of fieldstone on the path.

Vignato explained the additional activity that will take place if the expansion on the site is approved. He would like to install a ropes course where all the activity will take place in the air above the site. He also plans a mountain bike trail that will be used primarily for practice. He does not plan to host any large events. Additionally, he would like to install a remote control car course.

The plan that the Agency reviewed showed the activity taking place approximately 20' from the wetlands. The Agency suggested the activity area be a minimum of 50' from the wetlands.

Staff noted that the applicant has a civil engineer designing the project and that the application has just been received. Staff review will be held before the next meeting.

MOTION: To classify the application as minor.

Motion made by Sutphen, seconded by Williams. Motion passed unanimously.

V. PENDING APPLICATIONS

1. Weber-Zamzes Residence, 117 Buddington Road

MOTION: To approve the Weber-Zamzes Storage Building application for the following reasons:

1. There will be no loss of wetland or watercourse as a result of this project.
2. The construction of the storage building will have no impact on the wetlands provided the erosion controls are properly installed and maintained.

This permit is subject to the four standard conditions.

Motion made by Sutphen, seconded by Williams. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Walmart, 150 Gold Star Highway – Permit Extension

Staff noted that by state statute this is a nine year permit. However, the permit was approved prior to the change in statute and the approval letter sets a five year expiration date. This request is coming before the Agency due to an abundance of caution on the part of the applicant. As far as staff is concerned this is a nine year permit.

Attorney John Knuff, representing Wal-Mart Real Estate Business Trust owner of the property, stated that they just received a start of construction extension from the Planning Commission to the year 2017; however, they expect the construction to begin long before then. The delay is due to the nature of Wal-Mart budgeting and the appeal by Stop and Shop.

MOTION: To grant an extension of Permit No. 10-10, Wal-Mart Expansion, 150 Gold Star Highway to September 8, 2019.

Motion made by Sutphen, seconded by Block. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Report of Chair – None
3. Report of Staff – None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Barbara Block, Secretary
Inland Wetland Agency

Prepared by Lynda Galetta
Office Assistant II