

INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY
MARCH 14, 2007 - 7:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX - COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Agency: Sutphen, Keeler and Block
Alternates Ashworth and Furlong
Staff: Jones, Discordia

Acting Chairman Sutphen appointed Ashworth and Furlong as voting members.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Staff distributed Department of Environmental Protection publications to the Agency.

Joellen Anderson lives in the City of Groton and is a steward of the Avalonia Land Conservancy. She stated that Avalonia has been receiving a lot of ATV traffic on their land off of Dartmouth Drive. The ATVs are running through two watercourses. She stated there doesn't seem to be any means of enforcement as ATVs are not registered through the State. She believes it is one or more of the abutting neighbors who are riding their ATVs on Avalonia property. She reported that she has sent letters to the abutters asking them to use the land passively and not to use motorized vehicles on the land conservancy property.

The Inland Wetland Agency will write a letter to a state representative in support of registering ATVs with the State of Connecticut.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of February 28, 2007

MOTION: To approve the minutes of February 28, 2007.

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

IV. NEW APPLICATIONS

1. Receipt of New Applications - None

V. PENDING APPLICATIONS

1. Marine Science Magnet School, 155 Thomas Road

Block and Keeler stated they had listened to the tape of the last meeting.

The Agency discussed each of the regulated activities. They agreed that the wetland finger adjacent to Sparkle Lake was of minimal value.

The Agency discussed the concrete "Water Street" in front of the school. They felt that concrete would be the best material given that the dock will be structurally attached to it. They felt that the dock and pilings are necessary for the school.

Staff stated that the grading along the back of the school near the wetlands has been eliminated as the fire marshal has agreed that he doesn't need to drive a vehicle in back. The Agency supported the removal of debris from the wetland pocket.

MOTION: To approve the Marine Science Magnet High School application for the following reasons:

1. The Agency finds that there is no prudent or feasible alternative to the proposed regulated activities in that the applicant has provided convincing evidence that no change in the location of the building footprint or parking area will result in less wetland impact.
2. The Agency finds that the wetland finger proposed to be filled has been disturbed by the cultivation of Christmas trees on the property and that it does not provide high biological and hydrological functions.
3. The Agency finds that the removal of fill and debris from the wetlands will improve its function

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

1. The construction detail for the rain garden shall be modified to address the compacted soils found on the site.
2. A detail of the green roof construction shall be placed on the plan. The roof shall be labeled on the drainage plan.

Motion made by Block, seconded by Keeler, four in favor, one abstention (Furlong).

2. Groton Village Condominiums, 10 Fort Hill Road

Ed Wenke, project engineer, presented the plan to the Agency. He stated the site is 5.9 acres with 2.2 acres of wetlands. The front of the lot is zoned commercial and the back is zoned residential. The pond is man made from excavation many years ago. They will extend the existing driveway north into the site. Mr. Wenke stated this project involves the upland area only. He noted that the soil scientist confirmed that the plans accurately reflect the wetlands. There is no drainage system in Fort Hill Road to tie the stormwater

system into; therefore the discharge will go towards the manmade pond. Mr. Wenke stated the soil scientist does not consider the pond a vernal pool as it always has water in it. He stated that the drainage system will carry up to a 100 year storm and the pond has enough storage for a 100 year storm. Groton Utilities was satisfied with the drainage system as the condos will have peaked roofs and no HVAC units on top that could contaminate the pond. Mr. Wenke noted that the pond is in the Water Resource Protection District (WRPD) and the developed area is not. Mr. Wenke stated they are filling the site and it will be raised between 2 and 4 feet.

Staff stated she had received revised plans and has asked the Town engineer to confirm Mr. Wenke's conclusions regarding the storage capacity of the pond. Staff stated she would like to see Groton Utilities comments as well.

Furlong asked how many condominium units there are and Mr. Wenke replied 3 buildings with 19 units.

MOTION: To classify Groton Village Condominiums as a minor application.

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

3. Southeastern CT Business Complex, 195 Leonard Drive

Pat Lafayette presented his application to the Agency. He is proposing two new buildings. They will be small business type operations. Mr. Lafayette moved his gravel turnaround so it wouldn't be in the 100 foot buffer of the wetlands and proposed a rain garden for roof drainage.

MOTION: To approve the Southeastern Connecticut Business Complex application for the following reasons:

1. There is no loss of wetland or watercourses as a result of this project.
2. The applicant has eliminated parking area in the upland review area

This permit is subject to the five standard conditions and the following additional conditions:

1. An emergency overflow shall be provided for the rain gardens.
2. A construction detail for the rain gardens shall be placed on the plan.

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

4. Hickey Property, 349 Buddington Road

Pat Hickey presented his application to the Agency. He is proposing building a single family home within 50 feet of the wetlands. It is an existing rear lot. He stated public sewer is not available and a septic system has to be installed. He will need to do some grading at the foundation of the house but it wouldn't go beyond the 50 foot wetland buffer.

MOTION: To approve the Hickey Property application for the following reasons:

1. There are no wetlands or watercourses filled as a result of this application.
2. The lot is flat and currently maintained as a lawn. The erosion potential is very low.

This permit is subject to the five standard conditions and the following condition:

1. No activity within 50 feet of the wetlands.

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

5. JJMA Realty, 1280 Gold Star Highway

Nuria Stockman, landscape architect for DiCesare-Bentley Engineers, representing JJMA Realty, presented to the Agency. Her client is proposing to develop a Dunkin Donuts at 1280 Gold Star Highway. Half of the existing building would be a Dunkin Donuts with a drive-thru and the other half of the building would be retail. As the Agency strongly recommended, they are going to keep the pavement as is and apply for a variance for the drive-thru stacking. They have submitted their variance application. A wetland permit is still required for the sidewalk extension.

Staff noted that the existing drainage system uses oil/grit separators, an outdated technology which does not eliminate sediment deposition in the wetlands. She recommended upgrading the separators to a structure that would remove 80% total suspended solids. The Agency noted that the site is in the WRPD.

MOTION: To approve the JJMA Realty application for the following reasons:

1. There is no loss of wetlands or watercourses associated with this application.
2. The applicant has revised the plan to eliminate driveway construction beyond the existing curb line.
3. The stormwater system will be upgraded to trap sediment and to limit its discharge to the wetlands.

This permit is subject to the five standard conditions and the following additional conditions:

1. The stormwater management system shall be modified to replace the existing oil/grit separators with a system that removes 80% total suspended solids

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

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Activity at 97 Cedar Road

Staff stated that the owners could not attend this meeting but will attend the next regularly scheduled meeting.

2. Discussion of Activity at 115 Cedar Road

Staff stated that the Agency noted the installation of a drainage pipe under the driveway at 115 Cedar Road. The pipe appears to carry groundwater and outlets at a pond adjacent to Cedar Road. Acting Chairman Sutphen stated to the owner that the Agency has requested his presence to inquire about work being done at his house including the replacement of a drainage pipe.

Paul Biscuiti, the owner of 115 Cedar Road, apologized for any inconvenience as he misunderstood the Inland Wetland Regulations. He stated that an existing pipe in the same location had become clogged with sediment and he couldn't snake it and had water pooling and icing in his driveway. He replaced the existing drainage pipe with a similar pipe. He had assumed that this was regular maintenance and did not need a wetland permit.

Acting Chairman Sutphen stated that the drain pipe seems to be draining constantly and her concern was the increase in water flow. Acting Chairman Sutphen asked if Mr. Biscuiti thought land clearing on the adjacent property could have added to the water flow. Mr. Biscuiti stated that the water has always continuously flowed from that drainage pipe into the pond. He stated that the new pipe is a little longer and can be seen whereas the old one was hidden by grass.

Acting Chairman Sutphen stated she was concerned with the icing on the road. Mr. Biscuiti stated that when the road was repaved it stopped a sheet flow of drainage across the road. Now the water backs up and pools then goes across the road in one spot causing the dangerous icing.

Mr. Biscuiti reviewed other activity on his property. He stated he is building a 20 foot garage on the side of the house. He stated he had to have a rock split and removed to make room for the garage and he had repairs made to his old stone foundation. Mr.

Biscuiti showed the Agency his plans depicting the 50 and 100 foot buffer for the wetlands.

The Agency stressed that Mr. Biscuiti must apply for a wetlands permit for any future activity within 100 feet of the wetlands.

3. City of Groton Referral, 30 Bliven Street

Staff stated that this application is for an above ground pool and it is within 50 feet of a wetland boundary in the Town of Groton.

The Agency stated they appreciated being notified but had no comment.

4. Report of Chair - None

5. Report of Staff

Staff stated they have an application that has gone to the Siting Council for a new tower antenna on Pleasant Valley Road North. There are wetlands within 75 feet of the tower antenna.

Staff reported that a utility duct bank at the Fitch High School expansion has been relocated closer to the southern property line. It is an area previously permitted for disturbance.

Staff reported that a property owner at 31 Grove Avenue will be removing the top stones on an old bridge to allow for increased water flow from the property north of his. The land to the north has been disturbed without the proper approvals and the zoning official has issued a cease and desist order.

Staff distributed the ERT for Mystic Woods.

VII. OLD BUSINESS - None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Eunice Sutphen