

INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY  
DECEMBER 14, 2005 - 7:30 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX - COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Agency: Scott, Block, Keeler, Williams, Sutphen (7:40 p.m.) Alternates Ashworth and Furlong  
Staff: Jones, Discordia

Scott appointed Ashworth to vote for Sutphen.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS - None

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF November 9, 2005 Regular Meeting, November 9, 2005 Special Meeting, November 1, 2005 Site Walk

Furlong noted that on page 1 of November 9, 2005 regular meeting minutes, under PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS, that “new commissioner” should be changed to “attorneys for the Department of Environmental Protection”.

Furlong also noted that on page 3, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph of November 9, 2005 regular meeting minutes, it should read “Furlong asked how far the clearing limit was from the brook and Mr. Brown stated 70 feet at the closest point...”

MOTION: To approve the minutes of November 9, 2005 Regular Meeting as amended, November 9, 2005 Special Meeting and November 1, 2005 Site Walk.

Motion by Block, seconded by Williams so voted unanimously.

Sutphen was appointed a voting member after her arrival.

IV. NEW APPLICATIONS

1. North East Academy, 115 Oslo Street

Greg Smolley, of Jeter, Cook & Jepson Architects, Inc. presented the plans for the new school. The old Freeman Hathaway school building will be demolished and a new elementary school built. The proposed building would be approximately 55,000 square feet and house about 450 children. There will be a 2-story wing coming out the front of the school. The whole site is approximately 22 acres and the existing building is less than 33,000 square feet.

Mr. Smolley stated that approximately 4,000 square feet would need to be disturbed inside the 100 foot buffer for wetlands. The Board of Education would like the steep drop at the edge of the playground to be graded slightly. There is a fence now at the bottom of this ridge to prevent objects from going into the wetlands.

The Agency and applicants discussed reasons for play areas being situated as they were.

The Agency agreed that a site walk would be necessary and scheduled it for January 9<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.

MOTION: To classify North East Academy as a minor application.

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

2. Catherine Kolnaski Elementary School, 500 Poquonnock Road

Greg Smolley, of Jeter, Cook & Jepson Architects, Inc. presented the design of the new school. They would like to build a new elementary school on a site that is approximately 124 acres. The proposed school will be 63,000 square feet and would be situated on a knoll at the top of a natural hill. The proposed school is out of any regulated areas. Mr. Smolley stated the wetland disturbance occurs near the access road to the school. The driveway winds through and around the ledges and outcroppings. The total disturbance of wetland would be about 8/10's of an acre or 32,000 square feet. Mr. Smalley pointed out on the plan how there are power lines making it difficult to totally avoid the wetlands and regulated areas. The new school has been sited to allow the construction of a middle school on the property in the future.

Mr. Smolley noted that the wetlands at the beginning of the new access road would be impacted where the driveway intersects Poquonnock Road. Chairman Scott stated they need to know the approximate amount of fill to properly classify this application.

The Agency scheduled a site walk for January 9<sup>th</sup> after the walk of the Northeast Academy site.

3. Candy Lane Subdivision, 0 Bonnie Circle

Staff stated that this subdivision was approved by the Wetland Agency and the Planning Commission in 2004. The Planning Commission decision was appealed and is in court. The applicant has filed a new inland wetland application to modify the plan and possibly settle the appeal of the Planning Commission decision.

The road has been shifted closer to I-95 and the original 15 lots has been reduced to 12. The stormwater discharge point has moved and a retaining wall rather than grading is proposed in the regulated area. The Agency noted that they have walked the site and tabled action to the next meeting.

4. Watrous Resubdivision, 113 Fishtown Road

Block recused herself from this discussion as she has a personal interest in this property.

Sutphen stated that she owns property in the area but does not have a personal or financial interest in the project.

James Bernardo, licensed surveyor, presented for the owner, Philip Watrous. Mr. Bernardo noted that this lot was created by the Barber Subdivision in 1994. He stated they would like to divide the lot into 2 residential lots. One lot would be over 4 acres and the other over 2 acres. Mr. Bernardo stated that a new septic system would have to encroach into the 100 foot regulated area. It is north of the existing driveway. Ledge Light Health District determined that this was the only area suitable for a septic system. Mr. Bernardo stated that an area approximately 500 square feet will be cleared of trees for construction of the new house. The applicant is requesting a waiver from the Planning Commission requirement for connection to public water and sewer as it would disturb Eccleston Brook to do so. The proposed house will be approximately 300 feet from the brook.

Staff noted that the Agency had begun review last year of an application to repair the driveway culvert that would serve these two lots. That application was withdrawn and the repair was not done. She has asked that a structural engineer review the culvert to determine if the culvert under the driveway could support the additional traffic. If not, the repair should be included in this application.

The Agency agreed to wait for the engineer's report before classifying this application.

5. Kanor Property, 7 Haley Farm Lane

Gregg Fedus presented for the owners. This application is for the last house on the south side of Haley Farm Lane. Mr. Fedus stated they are proposing to add on to the garage. The owners would like to turn a 1-bay garage into a 2-bay garage. They are widening the existing driveway to accommodate a two-car garage. The driveway is currently 14 feet wide and they would add 8 feet of gravel and stone to the width. The activity is about 36 feet from the wetlands.

Staff stated that Richard Snarski, soil scientist, flagged the tidal wetlands versus the inland wetlands.

6. Receipt of New Applications

a. The Woodlands, Meridian Street

Staff stated the application involves the expansion of the Country Glen apartments to include an additional 60 units.

b. Landfill Fence, Flanders Road

The Town of Groton would like to extend the fence along a dirt road in the landfill off of Flanders Road in order to keep all terrain vehicles from damaging the landfill cap. The Agency determined that this activity does not require a wetland permit.

V. PENDING APPLICATIONS

1. Fitch High School Addition & Renovations, 101 Groton Long Point Rd.

Greg Smolly, of Jeter, Cook & Jepson Architects, Inc. presented revisions to the application for Fitch High School additions and renovations.

Staff stated that her concerns dealt with erosion control. The renovations include improvements to stormwater quality that will benefit the wetlands. She has asked the applicant for a phased erosion construction plan to be designed before the pre-construction meeting.

MOTION: To approve the Fitch High School application for the following reasons:

1. There is no loss of wetland or watercourse associated with this application.
2. This project will improve the quality of the stormwater currently discharged to wetlands and will repair several erosion problems.

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

1. The phased erosion control plan shall be placed on the plan. Any changes to this plan shall be reviewed with the Environmental Planner.

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

2. Hall Property, Fishtown Road

Staff stated that some changes have been made to the erosion control plan. She stated that the water used to drain down the neighboring property, out the driveway and out into the street. The Department of Public Works dug a gully along Fishtown Road to stop the runoff as the water was freezing on Fishtown Road and posed a safety risk. The neighbor will be regrading his property to direct the water off the Hall property.

Steve Marian, the applicant's surveyor, stated he put staked hay bales where the Agency had requested. He extended the silt fence as well and straightened out the driveway.

Scott suggested a pipe be installed under the driveway during construction.

MOTION: To approve the Hall property application for the following reasons:

1. There is no loss of wetlands or watercourses associated with this activity.
2. The applicant has designed the erosion control plan in accordance with the 2002 State guidelines in order to minimize the impact of construction on the wetlands.
3. There are no future regulated activities made inevitable by this project.

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

1. A stone check dam detail shall be placed on the plan
2. The area south of the new driveway, east of the stone check dam shall be planted with high bush blueberry bushes or other approved native shrub

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

3. Groton Highpoint Subdivision, 245 Hazelnut Hill Road (1-11-06 public hearing)

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Town-wide Minor Drainage Permit #01-04 – permit extension request

Staff stated that the Department of Public Works is asking for a 5-year extension of the permit to conduct minor activity for routine road maintenance.

MOTION: To approve the 5-year extension of permit #01-04.

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

2. Discussion of Regulation Amendment to Fund Expert Witnesses

Staff stated that she has researched into the funding of expert witnesses. She stated that some Towns have authorized it as a Town ordinance while others have amended their Wetland Regulations. The State Statute, under section 8-1, allows the Town to adopt an ordinance to set fees for land use commissions. Staff stated that if the Town adopts an

ordinance, it may supersede all Commission regulations. She stated that the Town Attorney is currently researching it.

The Agency asked staff to look into upgrading the current wetland application fee structure. The Agency agreed to move forward with applying for a wetland regulation amendment to allow the hiring of expert witnesses.

3. Report of Chairman - None
4. Report of Staff

Staff reported on the Eccleston Brook siltation issue. The Department of Public Works is talking with the State about clearing out the brook at the Route 1 and Fishtown Road intersection. She noted that this is a temporary solution. She has met with Brian Murphy, of the DEP, and he has recommended the brook be re-shaped from Route 1 to the driveway to 113 Fishtown Road. Sediment chambers should be installed up stream in the Bel-Aire subdivision. Staff has asked public works to include this project in the capital improvement program.

Staff reported that the owner of 135 Packer Road sent an email to her indicating that they had removed the driveway as ordered by the Agency. She stated she would confirm.

## VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.