

Inland Wetlands Agency

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APPROVED MINUTES

Canoe Brook Senior Center, 11 Cherry Hill Road, Branford, CT
Thursday, March 9, 2017 7:30 PM

RECEIVED
2017 APR 20 P 3 51
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT

Present: Chairman Peter Bassermann, John Rusatsky, Jim Goggin, Merle Berke-Schlessel, James Sette and Sandra Kraus (arrived late ~7:34)

Absent: Suzanne Botta, Richard Greenalch, Eric Rose and Rick Ross

Staff Present: Enforcement Officer Diana Ross and Inland Wetland Assistant Jayme Federick

Chairman Bassermann called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. All Commissioners were seated.

Chairman Bassermann stated that he would like to add administrative updates after agent approvals.

Comm. Berke-Schlessel motioned to add the item to the agenda, Comm. Goggin seconded. Motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

Comm. Kraus arrived around 7:34

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Comm. Sette motioned to approve the January 12, 2017 regular meeting minutes. Comm. Goggin seconded. Motion passed (3-0-3); Comm. Berke-Schlessel, Rusatsky & Kraus abstained (absent).

Comm. Rusatsky motioned to approve the January 19, 2017 special meeting minutes. Comm. Sette seconded. Motion passed (5-0-1); Comm. Berke-Schlessel abstained (absent).

Comm. Goggin motioned to approve the February 22, 2017 special meeting minutes. Comm. Kraus seconded. Motion passed (3-0-3); Comm. Berke-Schlessel, Rusatsky & Sette abstained (absent).

PENDING APPLICATIONS:

IW#17.02.01 – Red Hill Rd Rear – bog walk over Chestnut Branch floodplain

Bill Horne, speaking on behalf of the Land Trust, stated that they previously received approval to fix a crossing on the site. Photos were submitted with this application of the existing bog walk from this previous approval. The variety of wetlands on the property make it a great educational asset. They are seeking permission to add a boardwalk through the wetlands to make the area available in a controlled way. They've already added hiking trails and removed a significant amount of trash from the site. Site map is basically the same as existing. The proposed board walk is about 900-1200 linear feet with two stream crossings. They have submitted construction drawings; preferred crossing is figure 3. It is a flood plain so they will try to keep the walk in higher areas so it is not as wet as often. Red x's indicate existing trail that may get wet to the point that they look to redirect that section of trail.

Matt Reed, with the Land Trust, stated a correction on the drawings. Hemlock will be used in place of spruce and it will be milled locally at Zuwalick's. Stated that neighbor to the east is the Guilford Land Trust Westwoods. Their bog walk system uses pressure treated wood which gets really slippery, thinks the spruce will provide a much better walking surface.

B. Horne stated that because this is on the border with Guilford and Guilford doesn't like bikes on their trail, no bikes signage will likely be posted. Thinks this would be respected as there are better places in town for such activities.

Comm. Goggin motioned to approve IW#17.02.01, bog walk; Comm. Sette seconded. No discussion, motion passed unanimously (6-0-0).

APPLICATIONS FOR RECIEPT:

IW#17.03.01 – 4 Hickory Hill Ln – drainage alterations

EO Ross stated that she received a complaint from the neighbor at 82 Mill Plain Rd about activities being conducted on the property. There has been work on the site to install a drainage pipe and a large amount of gravel. The property owner submitted an application with some sketches. EO thinks the Commission will want more information. She told the owner to just stabilize the site for now as the Commission might approve the activity and she didn't want any more disturbance than necessary.

Michael Daddio, owner, stated that he noticed that the ground was very wet when he got back from being away. Recently he ran over and crushed a pipe. Realized it was a drainage pipe, dug around the pipe where most of the ground was saturated, found another break and fixed it. Dug a trench looking for the broken pipe, would like to continue to lay gravel or have a swale to take care of the broken pipe flow. Even when it is not raining he has water run through his property. He is looking to protect his driveway from erosion. Since he has fixed the pipe he has noticed a huge decrease in water. He did bring gravel in, didn't remove topsoil. He's owned the house since December of last year; family owned it previously. Conditions definitely got worse this summer. All of the neighbors ran pipes that drain through his property to the creek. When he dug to fix the pipes he went to the Town to ask about digging and water pipes, he didn't realize he needed permits.

EO Ross showed the Commission the watershed and where the water is coming from. She has been out previously with the previous owner; there is a problem at the site.

Comm. Sette asked if EO has a problem with the applicant's approach.

EO Ross stated the reason she didn't tell him to take it out is that it might be appropriate for the site but he needs to apply for a permit. Don't know how it will impact neighbor's property or the stream.

M. Daddio stated that the water already drains to the stream. There was a drainage pipe before. Right now it pours off the left side of the property into the stream.

Commission stated they need current existing conditions, including what has been done so far, and what the correction is/what he wants to do.

Commission set site walk for Monday 13th at 5pm. Meet at 4 Hickory Hill Lane.

SIGN OFF REQUEST:

39 Rose Hill Rd – proposed farming use and barn with truck storage area

EO Ross stated there are two activities, crop growth and a barn that will not be solely utilized for agricultural purposes. There is what appears to be a watercourse off site. There has been an investigation on site and there is no watercourse on site. The agricultural field is possibly within the upland review area but the barn is outside of the upland review area.

Commission determined that activities do not require an application for permit.

AGENT APPROVALS:

IW#17.01.01 – 55 Midwood Rd – placement of shed within upland review area

EO Ross stated that it was a small shed in the lawn area.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS: (added at beginning of meeting)

Chairman Bassermann stated that likely the only live training this year will be legal updates. Looks like the online workshop will be available in July for free; this is a self-paced online training.

Chairman Bassermann stated that DEEP continues to struggle with budget cuts. Nothing the Commission can do about it but be aware.

Chairman Bassermann stated he has heard back from Counsel about the use of consultants document and there is concern about ambiguity. It was suggested that the info be split from a paper to the regulations and RFP document that would be sent out to prospective consultants. He will continue to work with Counsel on that. If this doesn't provide clarity then it is not worth pursuing.

CORRESPONDENCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

Comm. Berke-Schlessel motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:28p.m., Comm. Kraus seconded. Motion passed unanimously (6-0-0).

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jaymie Frederick', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jaymie Frederick, Inland Wetland Assistant