



## Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency

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### REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

Thursday, April 10, 2025, at 7:00 PM

This meeting was held remotely via ZOOM.

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Chairman P. Bassermann
- 2) **ROLL CALL:** Chairman P. Bassermann, Commissioners D. Goclowski, M. Ormrod, R. Mirsky
- 3) **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**
  - a) March 27, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
- 4) **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**
  - a) IW#25.01.01 | 19-37 Gould Lane | Proposed Subdivision for 3 Residential Lots  
The public hearing was opened and continued to April 24 at the request of the Applicant. There was no further discussion.
- 5) **APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW:**
  - a) BRIW#25.03.01 | 45-81 Short Rocks Rd (Supply Ponds) | Construct a 530' hiking trail along North Chestnut Street to Lower Supply Pond- Parks and Open Space Authority Chairman Richard Shanahan presented the plan to the commission. The plan calls for the construction of a walkway along Chestnut Street for the Loop Trail around the Lower Pond. People are currently forced to walk on the road, and the commission is looking to make some safety improvements. There will be no cutting of shrubs to construct the trail, which will consist of a skim coat of topsoil and crushed gravel, with 4x4 posts delineating the trail. 40-50 ft of the proposed trail crosses an area that has wetland vegetation, and for that section of trail, a small boardwalk is proposed. Commissioner R. Mirsky requested information on the types of wetland vegetation that is currently present. IW Agent J. Frederick stated that she had been out to the site and observed the plants in that area, and unfortunately because it is early in the winter, she was not able to tell what species of plants they were. Agent J. Frederick mentioned to the commission that the A2 survey requirement is generally waived for these types of projects (town projects and passive recreational uses). Commissioner M. Ormrod made a motion to approve the application with the following conditions: 1) That a preconstruction meeting be held on site with a representative from public works or engineering and the IW Agent, 2) ensure the proper size gravel is used which is non-floatable in nature to avoid the potential migration of gravel into the ponds, 3) activity is conducted during a dry period and 4) a final inspection is performed by the IW Agent. Commissioner R. Mirsky seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
  - b) IW#25.03.02 | 101 Hotchkiss Grove Road (AKA 1-18 The Ponds) | Remove and Replace Failing Timber Retaining Wall-Markus Puttock, PE who was representing the applicant indicated the application was to remove and replace an existing timber retaining wall between the driveway and the wetland on site. IW Agent J. Frederick

informed the commission that there is no wetland delineation on file, however, it is assumed that the wetland begins at the toe of the slope where the wall is being replaced. The timber wall will be replaced by a gabion wall (wire filled with various size rocks), which ensures greater longevity than the current timber wall. No machinery will enter the wetland, and all machine work will be conducted from the driveway. There is a small area at one end of the wall that will not be replaced and instead will be regraded and armored with vegetation. Plantings are proposed in the area between the wall and the driveway and on the regraded slope. Chairman P. Bassermann requested that as a condition of approval, language about the monitoring of plantings should be added. Commission also requested that if the catch basin pipe becomes exposed during construction, then outlet protection be added. Chairman P. Bassermann made a motion to approve the application with the proposed conditions as outlined in the staff report dated 04/10/2025, along with standard conditions and general provisions of all permits. Commissioner D. Goclowski seconded the motion. Chairman P. Bassermann made a friendly amendment to add the conditions 10 and 11, which were discussed at the evening's meeting (re plant monitoring and outlet protection for the pipe). Commissioner D. Goclowski accepted the amendment. Vote carried unanimously.

**6) ENFORCEMENT:**

- a) CC#24.09.03 | 20 Huntington Dr | grading and vegetation removal (understory) within 100' of a wetland
  - i) Continuation of show cause hearing-Tabled to May 8
- b) Notice of Violation & CC#22.06.01 | 20 Huntington Drive | regulated activities without a permit
  - i) Site status update-Tabled to May 8

Commission took a brief recess from 8:17-8:22 pm at the request of the Inland Wetland Director J. Frederick.

- c) CC#24.09.02 | 170-182 Leetes Island Rd | clearing and earth disturbance without a permit
  - i) Continuation of Show cause hearing-Property owner Rick Onofrio and Soil Scientist James Sipperly were present for the meeting. Mr. Onofrio indicated that the land was farmland before he purchased it. He intends to use the property to produce maple syrup. He believes that clearing out the drainage pipe between his property and the neighboring property greatly changed the drainage pattern and does not feel the previously delineated wetland area is "as wet" as it was before. The trees he cleared out were dead and/or dying trees, and the gravel he placed down was to allow access to the land for equipment and future expansion of the farming operations. Soil Scientist James Sipperly stated his credentials for the record. He visited the site on January 28<sup>th</sup>; however, the ground was too frozen to perform a wetland delineation. The owner had access to a small backhoe, so they opted to use the backhoe to dig approximately 20 inches down to view the soil. Mr. Sipperly stated that when he spoke with the previous soil scientist George Logan, Mr. Logan stated that he too was not able to dig as many test pits and instead used

the wetland delineation from 2016 to place the majority of his flags. There were some areas where the crushed stone was placed that was in the wetland area, however Mr. Sipperly indicated that it would be easy to remove, and the resulting disturbance can be planted with a wetland soil mix. He also stated that the majority of the brush that was removed on site was invasives, notably Japanese honeysuckle, Asiatic bittersweet, and Japanese Knotweed. Commission requested additional information from the applicant in order to determine the jurisdictional ruling request, including how his maple/honey farm will be executed and how/why the activities are essential to the farming operation in order to determine an agricultural exemption. The meeting will continue to May 8<sup>th</sup> to provide enough time for the property owner to get the requested information together.

**7) APPLICATIONS FOR RECEIPT:** none

**8) OTHER BUSINESS:**

- a) IW#19.11.01 | 1151 West Main St | construction of bank and grocery store & associated site improvements
  - i) Status on permit compliance-IW Agent J. Frederick stated that she has been in communication with the property owner, and monitoring needs to be completed for the spring. The property owner is going to work on finding a wetland scientist to do the monitoring.
  - ii) Bond return Request -Giordano Construction has requested their bond funds be returned. IW Agent J. Frederick recommends the sediment and erosion control portion of the bond be returned; however, the Commission should determine whether the return will be in the form of cash or surety. After commission discussion, it was determined that the refund will be 50% cash and 50% surety. Chairman P. Bassermann made a motion to approve the return of the sedimentation and erosion control portion of the bond. Commissioner R. Mirsky seconded. IW Agent asked if they would like to clarify that \$15,213.69 would be released from each form of bond, cash and surety. Chairman P. Bassermann made it a friendly amendment. Commissioner R. Mirsky accepted the amendment. Motion carried unanimously.

**9) AGENT APPROVALS:** none

**10) CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** none

**11) ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting was adjourned at 9:24 pm by Chairman P. Bassermann.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katy Blanchette