



Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency

TOWN HALL * PO BOX 150 * 1019 MAIN ST. * BRANFORD, CT 06405

203-315-0675 * FAX 203-889-3172 * inlandwetlands@branford-ct.gov



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission

Regulation Fee Revision Subcommittee

This meeting was held remotely, via ZOOM on Thursday, July 22nd, 2021 at 3:00 PM.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Bassermann called the meeting to order at 3:02pm.

ROLL CALL:

Subcommittee Members Present: Peter Bassermann and Eric Rose

Subcommittee Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Jaymie Frederick – IW Agent and Abby York – IW Associate

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a. May 20th, 2021 meeting minutes

Comm. Rose made a motion to approve the May 20th, 2021 meeting minutes.

Comm. Bassermann seconded the motion.

The motion carried. (Y-N-A : 2-0-0)

2. DISCUSSION:

a. Discuss possible fee revisions for recommendation to full Commission

- Staff shared draft revisions to the fees within Section 19 of the regulations with the subcommittee members. Staff noted the guidance document for the de minimis fee that could assist the applicant in the application process. Subcommittee members asked if there are other areas where a guidance document could be beneficial to the applicant. Staff highlighted some other potential opportunities where it could be used.
- Staff shared with the subcommittee other towns' definitions of de minimis. Discussion was had regarding de minimis activities and how the Agency could define them.
- The subcommittee reviewed materials drafted for previous meetings regarding different permitting requirements. Staff noted the table drafted by subcommittee members could likely be divided into activities that would require a permit, would be de minimis, and would not require a permit.
- Staff noted in the past, there has been an issue of applications not fitting in a clearly defined category. The subcommittee discussed how the project fees could be assessed using a menu format. Staff asked how an activity fee would be assessed if it didn't fit directly into the menu, noting that it can't be arbitrary.
- The purpose of the subcommittee was again reviewed, noting the goal is to make the fees easier to understand for applicants and make the process more clear overall.
- Staff noted the chart could be used, provided they outline what activities would be a regular permit and which would be a de minimis approval. The subcommittee requested staff draft an example chart to share at the next meeting and try to consolidate the

current chart into something that could be brought back to the Commission. Staff noted they can also prepare a draft bracket setup so that the subcommittee can compare the two fee assessment methods to see which they would prefer.

- The subcommittee recommended having a chart listing all de minimis activities as well as a chart containing all activities that would be assessed at a regular rate.
- Staff continued to go over the proposed changes to the fee section of the regulations, noting the changes to the legislature that have taken place regarding assessing fees for single and multi-family housing. Staff discussed their initial thoughts on how to process this change in the fees. Staff said a base fee for residential and commercial uses could be implemented in order to try to continue to assess the project types at a different rate. Subcommittee determined not to pursue the base rates for different project types at the current time. Staff then shared the document drafted with potential new brackets with these changes in mind. The subcommittee stated it may be beneficial to review this document after the other materials are drafted and review them at the same time.
- Subcommittee members shared concerns about bringing the fees down and wanted to reiterate they do not think the fees should be reduced.
- Staff shared thoughts on a new way of assessing the fees for a subdivision that have wetlands or watercourses, but wouldn't have any regulated activity. The subcommittee discussed how this would be different from the way it is assessed now.
- Staff then shared another item added to the draft regulations regarding permit renewals. The subcommittee determined they wanted to include it in the fee structure, so that staff can formally review the request, but that it would be listed as free.
- Subcommittee members asked about the timeline for the revisions. Staff noted the revisions need to be sent to DEEP 30 days before the public hearing will be held. Staff added that the statute changes regarding fees becomes effective on October 1st.

b. Schedule next meeting

- It was determined that the next subcommittee meeting would be held on August 5th at 3pm in person in a conference room in Town Hall.
- Staff said materials can be sent out to subcommittee members before the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Comm. Rose made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Comm. Bassermann seconded the motion

The meeting was adjourned at 4:14pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Abby York
Inland Wetlands Associate**