



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD Inland Wetlands Board

APPROVED/REVISED MINUTES

January 13, 2022

Members present: Patricia Sesto, chair; Susan Baker, vice chair; Alan Pilch, secretary; Chris Phelps, Tracey Miller

Members absent: Tim Bishop, David Smith

Also present: Andrew P. Hally, wetland agent; Aarti Paranjape, office administrator; Ralph Gallagher P.E., Candice Germain, Michael Mazzucco P.E., Mr. Andrew Berkeley, Steven Trinkaus, Dainius Virbickas, P.E., Steven Sullivan P.E., Mr. Lohan.

I: Call to order

Ms. Sesto called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

II: Public Hearing:

1. IW-21-54, 9 Rita Road, Plenary Ruling application for a construction of single family home within the upland review area of the wetlands. *Owner: Candice Germain. Applicant: James Casali.*

<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/83178>

Mr. Hally read the list of documents submitted to office.

Mr. Gallagher gave an overview of the application for a 2-bedroom room home, septic system, and associated sitework. The driveway with parking is north of septic system and no garage is proposed. Footing drains will discharge to a splash pad adjacent to the wetland and leader drains discharge at the four corners of the house. The project does not encroach on the wetlands. Mr. Gallagher added the erosion and sediment measures are up to the town's standard. The stockpile is between the septic and house.

Mr. Phelps inquired about reserve septic fields and what happens to the septic pump if power is lost. Mr. Gallagher stated there is an alarm associated with the pump chamber and it has storage capacity for three days. Discussion ensued regarding the town's propensity for long outages, to which Mr. Gallagher agreed to add a generator to the plan.

Mr. Pilch expressed concerns with following:

- Lack of information regarding the driveway and the parking area
- The groundwater table is very high area, creating issues with buoyancy for the pump chamber and stability of system



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- No mitigation was submitted despite the proximity of wetlands to the building.

Mr. Gallagher acknowledged the driveway is not fully mapped and commented that the driveway goes around the septic to the front of the house. Pump stations are designed to prevent water leaks. He added that the planting survey will be provided.

Mr. Gallagher confirmed the septic system for the adjoining property 7 Rita Road runs on the property of 9 Rita Road. A new leaching system would be needed for 7 Rita Road. Given the new septic would likely be in an upland review area, members conveyed this aspect of the project needs to be shown.

Ms. Sesto stated that the stockpile area is not shown on the site plan. She conveyed her observation that the leaching field is proposed in what appears to be existing fill and questioned if this meets the health code. She said the trees to be removed are not shown on the plan. This is needed to understand impacts to the existing canopy. She said that the biological study provided is not robust as it doesn't give details of the impact of the project on the lake and no mitigation is proposed. She added that it will be better if the biological expert who provided the report was present at the meeting.

Ms. Sesto asked if the applicant proposes to do more activity like deck and patio at the property. Mr. Gallagher mentioned the intent is not to have any deck or patio now, but if they decide they will come back in front of the board. Ms. Sesto responded the board should to see the project in its entirety and not in pieces. She stressed that bringing in subsequent projects will be contradictory to the applicant's statement that the proposed project is prudent and feasible as presented.

Board expressed concern with the stormwater management system where the discharge is not far from the wetlands boundary and the pollutants commonly associated with residential development like the chemicals, pesticides, and pet feces.

Ms Sesto and Mr. Pilch conveyed their credentials: Ms. Sesto as a professional wetland scientist and Mr. Pilch a civil engineer and landscape architect. Their resumes were added to record.

Mr. Pilch suggested the proposed building be moved further away from wetland boundary. He added the runoff from the driveway should be addressed and would be more effective if the runoff is discharged to a naturally vegetated riparian buffer.

Board asked for the following documents and information to be addressed at the next meeting-

- Stormwater management plan- roof leaders/runoff
- Depict the stockpile area
- Expand the biological study to show the tree removal and effects on water quality



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- Show 7 Rita Road septic system and replacement, if needed
- Revise survey to show existing trees and proposed removals and the full driveway
- Provide a mitigation plan
- Provide an impervious surface calculation per Zoning regulation-7.15

Ms. Miller requested a peer review of the septic design.

Ms. Sesto asked for public comments.

Following public expressed concerns regarding the septic system, biological evaluation, effect of the lake, zoning issues.

1. Ellen Burns
2. Meri Hopkinson
3. Sarah Patterson
4. Krenere Osmani
5. Dawn Vergilis
6. Manny Silva

The public hearing was continued to January 27, 2022.

2. IW-21-56, 187 Rippowam Road, Plenary Ruling application to construct a bridge over a stream within the upland review area of the wetlands. *Owner: Nguyen, Vi. Applicant: Steven Trinkaus.*

<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/84238>

Mr. Hally read the list of documents into the record.

Mr. Trinkaus gave a brief history of the property and an overview of the project. The project includes construction of house, septic system, stormwater management system, driveway with a new stream crossing and rebuilding an existing bridge.

The regulated activities include-

- Construction of bridge over the stream - The bridge will impact approx. 518 sq.ft. of wetlands. It will have steel beams and a concrete deck.
- The improvement of existing timber bridge. New abutments are needed. It will have steel beams and concrete decks. The wood road which passes through the property has an easement for pedestrian's access.

Construction of the new bridge involves excavation that will stockpiled outside of the upland review area. Concrete abutments are poured via pouring trucks from the road.



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Mr. Trinkaus stated that this proposed crossing is a feasible and prudent alternative to the previously approved box culvert. Other locations for evaluated for access were steep and would have required more disturbance.

The existing wood crossing is being upgraded now as the wood will eventually rot and would be dangerous.

The stormwater system meets the zoning standards. The erosion measures are meet the town's requirements.

Ms. Miller inquired about the bridge and stream channel and asked what the separating distance between the bank and the abutment is and if the natural vegetation on the banks will be maintained. She expressed concern for the wildlife habitat which could be negatively impacted. She also asked if the DEEP had been contacted regarding the Natural Diversity Database (NDDDB), since the property lies in that area.

Mr. Trinkaus said the gap between the stream and abutment on the western side is 7 ft. and eastern is 5 ft. The existing herbaceous vegetation is not native but agreed to maintain the natural native plantings at the southern side of driveway where there is sparse vegetation. He added that a planting plan will be provided which will show the existing tree canopy.

Mr. Pilch noted grading at the bridge was not shown accurately. He expressed concern for the excessive erosion around the bridge in an event of high volume and storm. He also suggested a new stockpile area closer to the excavation of the bridge to avoid carrying the material farther away, which he deemed impractical.

Mr. Trinkaus agreed riprap can be placed at the crossing to avoid erosion. The channel will be free flowing during bridge construction, thus there is no need to sand bags. Erosion control socks will be used on both the sides of the stream, running parallel to the abutments.

Mr. Trinkaus assured that the concrete for the bridge will be poured from the road. The abutments will be dug from the back side the access for which is from the back side. He will add the new second small stockpile area.

Ms. Sesto inquired about the access to the bridge. She stated that Mr. McManus's report lacks detail regarding watercourse health and doesn't speak to feasible and prudent alternatives. She provided her credentials as a professional wetland scientist.

In response to comments, Mr. Trinkaus will provide details of the discharges from the driveway, detail of the crossings, tree protection plan, and contractor parking area. Alternatives that utilize the existing crossing to access the rear lot were also requested,



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with guidance that the current location of the proposed house should not be considered fixed.

Ms. Sesto asked for public comments.

Mr. Salomone stated that his client has a view easement on the lot where the work is proposed, and he said that no work should be proposed to infringe on this.

The public hearing was continued to January 27, 2022.

3. IW-21-57, 0 Ives Court, Plenary Ruling Application for Drainage, grading and road improvements to Ives Court to meet Town roadway standards within the upland review area of wetlands. *Owner: Robert Cioffoletti. Applicant: Michele Micoli; Artel Engineering.*

<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/84217>

Mr. Hally read the list of documents into the record.

Mr. Virbickus gave an overview of the application which involves improvements and repairs to the existing Ives Court located at southern end of Pine Mountain Road. The existing road was associated with the subdivision approved in 1980's and reapproved in 1990's. The first 350 ft. of the road is regularly utilized to serve one single family home. The improved road will serve two more preapproved lots of subdivision. The road is 22 ft. wide and has some storm drainage and catch basins, which are not in functioning well. The existing catch basins discharge into the wetlands located into the north of the road. The driveway serving to the lot is constructed over a box culvert which is in good shape. Towards the east end of the road another box culvert exists. A set of catch basins up near the cul-de-sac discharge to the wetlands.

Kate Throckmorton and Matthew Popp of Environmental Land Solutions have been hired and will submit the environmental study. Since the site is located in the Natural Diversity Data Base, paperwork has been submitted to DEEP. The report received from DEEP stated Eastern box turtles in the vicinity and proper protection management will be practiced.

Ms. Throckmorton recommended cutting the existing discharge pipes back to eliminate the direct wetland discharge, and instead discharge runoff into a plunge pool or scour hole to help in sediment removal.

Erosion control measures consist of a single row of silt fence overall but will include double row closer to the wetlands. The north side of the road involves fill and will be stabilized with the fabric and seeds.



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Ms. Miller noted the site falls within the Housatonic Valley River watershed and may qualify for funding to install new fish-friendly culverts. She requested Ms. Throckmorton and Mr. Popp pursue the potential opportunity.

Mr. Pilch reiterated the need to treat stormwater runoff before it discharges to the wetlands and watercourse. Sediments will be especially pronounced given the slope of the road and anticipated winter sanding. More robust vegetation is needed between the road and wetlands as new impervious surface are being created.

Ms. Sesto inquired if the roadway could be reduced to 20 feet from the proposed 22 ft. She expressed concerns that the stream has not been depicted on the plans and the upland review area is incorrectly depicted. A pollutant renovation analysis and site specific construction sequence should be submitted. She observed the E&S plan is inadequate and a more protective plan is required, including the catch basin inserts and check dams associated with the road. She expressed concern with the extent of fill and suggested retaining walls as a means to reduce the disturbance area. Further, the vegetation mats as proposed by applicant would not thrive given the northern exposure and proximity to the steep wooded cliff. Sediment originating from the roughed-in driveways needs to be dealt with.

The drainage report is needed to address the increased runoff in the wetlands area and the plan should include LID practices.

Ms. Sesto asked for public comments.

Mr. Campbell and Mrs. Priscilla expressed concerns with protection of the wildlife. Most of the runoff of silt and sediments is up from the cul-de-sac and drainage improvements should address the area. They urged the applicant provide access for emergency vehicles passed the cul-de-sac.

The public hearing is continued to January 27, 2022.

III: Applications for Discussion:

1. IW-21-58, 66 Keeler Drive, Summary Ruling application for corrective action for potential violation, to fill the area adjacent to stream and pond within the upland review area of the wetlands. Owner: Alexandre Suter. Applicant: Mike Mazzucco. <https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/84841>

Mr. Mazzucco gave an overview of the work which was a violation. The area adjacent to the pond was filled in and a wall built with the boulders at the edge of stream. The intent of the fill and wall is unknown.



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Mr. Pilch indicated the boulder wall will have a notable impact the adjacent stream and pond.

Ms. Sesto asked if the wetland was flagged. She inquired if the homeowner intends to remove the fill and expressed concerns that the trees won't survive. She added that it looks like some vegetation was removed near the depression.

Mr. Hally commented that the homeowner brought the fill from the upper north side of property and filled in the depression. Building the wall has more impact on the stream and pond.

It was the consensus of the board that the fill be removed and the boulder wall to be displaced. The wetlands flag should be submitted.

Applicant will work with homeowner to consider removing the fill, submit a wetlands survey, and determine if vegetation was removed.

Discussion of the application was continued to January 27, 2022.

2. IW-21-59, 63 Canterbury Lane, Summary Ruling application for constructing a barn, pool and patio, deck, septic system replacement and grading of lawn within the upland review area of the wetlands. Owner: Andrew & Anni Berkeley. Applicant: Steve Sullivan. <https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/84830>.

Mr. Sullivan presented an application. The proposed pool and associated patio are in the back of the property, largely in the existing lawn. A barn for keeping horses is proposed in front yard. The septic system will be relocated. Two rain gardens are intended to compensate for new impervious surfaces.

Mr. Berkeley described his expected use of the barn to rehabilitate horses. Muck from the barn will be deposited into a covered container.

Ms. Sesto informed Board that per Sec 4, the barn is an as of right activity. She also questioned clearing of woodland and creating a rain garden at close proximity to the wetland and this was not justified for a luxury use, such as a pool.

Mr. Berkeley and Mr. Sullivan both confirmed that the pool is proposed at the existing limit of lawn. The rain garden is situated in an area of scattered trees and scrub and no trees need to be removed.

Mr. Sullivan will look into the stormwater management options that would avoid the need for the rain garden.



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The application for the pool was tabled to next regular meeting.

Ms. Miller motioned to determine the barn to be an as of right activity. Ms. Baker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

3. IW-21-60, 276 Old Sib Road, Summary Ruling application for reconstructing the existing garage with the addition above, within the upland review area. Owner: Bobby Grenier. Applicant: Doug MacMillan.

<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/84416>

No one was present to represent the application.

At the board's directive, Mr. Hally will convey to applicant to submit a clear construction plan showing the stockpile area, erosion measures, construction entrance, mitigation etc. before the next meeting.

IV: Applications for Receipt:

Ms. Sesto motioned to add below application IW-22-1 to agenda. Ms. Baker seconded. Motion carried unanimously 5-0-0.

1. IW-22-1, 20 Ridgebury Road, Summary Ruling application for construction of detached garage and associated work of revised driveway within the upland review area of the wetlands. *Owner: Peter Soos. Applicant: Kate Throckmorton.*

2. IW-21-62, 799 North Salem Road, Summary Ruling application for corrective action for potential violation, to restore the planting within the upland review areas of the wetlands. *Owner: Peter Morritz. Applicant: Chris Sullivan, SWCD.*

<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/85126>

Ms. Baker motioned to receive the above two applications, Ms. Sesto seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Site walk is scheduled for January 23, 2021 and discussion on January 27, 2021.

Ms. Sesto added the following two properties to the site walk meetings: 276 Old Sib Rd and 63 Canterbury Lane.

V: Administrative Approvals:

None



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Ms. Sesto announced that the Municipal Inland Wetlands Agency Comprehensive Training program offered by DEEP is now available online. Mr. Hally will send the info to the new members.

VI: Status of Corrective Action Application-Completion of work

1. 21 Bryon Avenue

Mr. Hally informed that office has received FOIA request from Mr. Mason. He will check to see who is responsible for providing the information.

2. 148 Ledges Road.

Mr. Lohan said he wants Board to review and revise the planting plan. He debated that the Board asked to do planting for 1500+sq ft when the property already has planting in the back. He contends the Board should subtract that amount of square feet from its calculation.

Ms. Sesto responded two members of the Board will assist Mr. Lohan to determine what kind of planting should be incorporated. She reiterated the Board will not reduce the planting plan of 1500+ sq. ft. as it had stated in the adopted resolution.

VII. Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

- **33 Beaver Brook Road** - Cease and Correct Order – *Michael & Christine Caramadre.*

Mr. Hally will check with Mr. Beecher for the update.

- **34 Rustic Road;** Felicia Clem.

Town Counsel, Mr. Grogins, contacted the office to get the handle of the situation. Mr. Hally sent all the necessary correspondence and documents pertaining to the violation to him.

- **56 Shadow Lake Road;** David & Christine Dicamillo
Mary Jaehnig, soil scientist is assisting the homeowner with the mitigation plan. Homeowner will submit the application soon.

Ms. Sesto suggested a deadline for the submission of the application be issued.

- **40 Mountain Road;** Robert Deroma
Mr. Deroma intended to attend the meeting to discuss the status of his violation. Mr. Hally stated the violation was sent with the deadline to submit an application. Mr. Deroma missed that deadline.



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Ms. Sesto directed staff to contact Mr. Deroma and to ask him to attend the next regular meeting with the update.

VIII: Other Business:

1. Release of Bond- **20 Regan Road**; #2020-012-PR, release bond posted for \$6,000.00 for erosion and sediment control.

Mr. Hally inspected the property and found it stable.

Ms. Miller conveyed her observation that the riprap was not installed per the Board's requirement or intent.

Mr. Hally will update the Board with the status at the next meeting.

IX: Approval of Minutes:

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting: December 09, 2021**
Ms. Miller motioned to approve the meeting minutes. Ms. Baker seconded.
Motion carried unanimously 5-0-0.

X. Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Ms. Sesto adjourned the meeting at 10:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

Aarti Paranjape
Recording Secretary