



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD
Inland Wetlands Board
WEB BASED MEETING VIA ZOOM

APPROVED/REVISED MINUTES

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not a verbatim transcription.

December 28, 2023

Members present: Susan Baker, chair; Carson Fincham (left at 9:10 PM) Tim Bishop, vice chair; Ben Nissim, Alan Pilch, secretary; David Smith

Members absent: Chris Phelps

Also present: Caleb Johnson, IW Agent; Aarti Paranjape; Recording Secretary, Steven Trinkaus, Joseph Fossi, Robert Jewell, Joseph Canas, Dainius Virbickas, Walter Suin Chin, Conservation members-Eric Keller, Jean Linville.

I. Call to order:

Ms. Baker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

II. Discussion

1. **IW-23-42: 0 Ives Ct.** Subdivision application for 2 lots within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner: Wolf Pond Run LLC. Applicant: Michelle Morris Mucoli.*

<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/94170>

Mr. Virbickas presented the two lot subdivision application. He commented that the wetlands are in the south west portion of the property running parallel to Ives Court along the stream.

No improvements are proposed to the accessway. One home is already under construction. Lot 3 was built in 1990s. The new house will be at the far west end of the property. The construction entrance is on the existing accessway. Septic and well are located on eastern portion of the parcel.

Mr. Pilch noticed a tree growing on top of culvert and suggested to address it.

Mr. Virbickas noted that the tree could be dangerous and will look into if removal of the tree will be best plan.

Mr. Bishop inquired where the wetlands flags are and how far is the disturbance from the wetlands.

Mr. Virbickas confirmed that the earth disturbance is far away from the mapped wetlands flagged.

Mr. Pilch said that the plan should show the upland review line on the accessway. He added that at the sitewalk Ms. Micoli has commented that no grading or improvements are proposed at the accessway.

Following special conditions were stated:

- Plan should show a 100 foot upland review area line.
- Carefully deal with the tree growing on the culvert.

Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the subdivision application with special and standard conditions. Mr. Fincham seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Publication date is January 11 and effective date is January 12, 2024.

2. **IW-23-43: 54 Ketcham Rd.** Subdivision application for 4 lots within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner: Joe and Diane Fossi. Applicant: Steven Trinkaus.*

<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/94407>

Mr. Trinkaus gave an overview of the application for a 4 lot subdivision. He mentioned that they previously got an approval for the wetland crossing and at that time didn't realize that the subdivision application had to be submitted as well. However, at the prior meeting at the suggestion of the Board members, applicant revised the lot lines and the dwellings and associated work are now outside of the upland review area.

The lot lines are the final lot lines which will also prevent the owners from future subdivision.

Mr. Bishop inquired if the septic location is away from the upland review area and if the driveway will be paved.

Mr. Trinkaus confirmed that septic tank and fields for both parcels 1 and 2 are outside the upland review area. He said the accessway will be asphalt as its easy for maintenance.

Mr. Pilch appreciated that the applicant had proposed all the work away from upland review area which will be beneficial to keep the wetlands undisturbed. He added however it will be good to clearly demarcate the limit of lawn with two-man boulders. He inquired about the runoff from the driveway and if it's directed in to the wetlands.

Mr. Trinkaus stated that the driveway runoff is directed towards the existing wooded area on both sides of the driveway/accessway.

Mr. Fossi agreed to the two-man boulder demarcation for limit of lawn and to keep the houses and associated work away from upland review area. He added that he might increase the open space area by changing the lines on his lot, in order to be sure that no further subdivision is possible.

Mr. Smith motioned to approve the subdivision application with the conditions of limit of lawn demarcation. Mr. Nissim seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Publication date is January 11 and effective date is January 12, 2024.

3. **IW-23-44: 25 Seymour Lane.** Summary Ruling application to correct a violation for a clear cutting and grubbing within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner/Applicant: Jason Ferrandino.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/94573>

Mr. Jewell presented the application stating the property is 1.016 acre in RAA zone. He added that property owner is aware of the violation and has proposed a planting plan to address the clear cutting and grubbing as part of violation.

Mr. Pilch noted that the wetlands boundary shows discrepancy on two maps that were presented.

Mr. Jewell confirmed the wetlands boundary on the planting plan is the correct one.

Members expressed concerns with the clear cutting and removal of the tree canopy. The proposed planting plan did not meet the robust requirement of mitigating the violation.

Concerns were raised that with the proposed patio very close to the upland review area there could be disturbance during construction which would require a wetlands permit.

The applicant will update the planting plan with a more robust buffer and present to the board at next meeting.

Discussion continued to January 11, 2024.

4. **IW-23-46: 439 Silver Spring Road.** Summary Ruling application for maintenance and modification to two holes on an existing golf course within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner: Flat Rock Corp. Applicant: Robert Jewell.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/94732>

Mr. Jewell gave an overview of the project work at holes 6 and 7. The work at hole 6 itself is away from upland review area. The wetlands flagging was done by Jim McManus.

Mr. Canas, P.E. at Tighe and Bond gave details about the work. He said the work involves reshaping greens, fairways, bunkers and tees. There is no encroaching into wooded areas.

The reshaping of hole 7 is within the upland review area. The new bunker is proposed within review area. There are no substantive changes to fairways. The cart path will stay. Proper erosion measures will be installed which includes straw wattles. The site will be stabilized quickly which is in best interest of the Country Club as well.

Mr Pilch said that the fairway adjacent to the wetland boundary is very close and he suggested that a no mow zone would be beneficial between the fairway and the wetlands.

Mr. Bishop agreed to Mr. Pilch's suggestion of the no mow area near the fairway and said this will be a good time to make the improvements. He inquired the timing of the work to be done.

Mr. Canas said the work would be performed during fall of 2024 although nothing is definitive yet.

The following special condition was stated:

- No mow zone of width no less than twenty (20) feet between wetlands flags 37 to 48.

Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the Summary Ruling Application with special conditions and standard conditions. Mr. Pilch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Publication date is January 11 and effective date is January 12, 2024.

III. Application(s) for receipt:
None

IV: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

1. 150 Barrack Hill Rd.

Mr. Johnson updated members regarding the violation, where the property owner Mr. Chin previously cleared and grubbed and more recently did grading and deposition of material in the upland review area.

Mr. Chin stated he cleared the trees for installing a parking space and retaining wall. He realizes that the activity of clearing was done without taking any approvals from the Board and now will cooperate to bring the property in compliance.

The Board will walk the site on Sunday January 07, 2024. The discussion will be continued on January 11, 2024.

V: Other Business:

1. NRI Presentation

Members of Conservation Commission Mr. Keller and Ms. Linville presented the updated Natural Resource Inventory and reviewed its creation, which took almost two years. Mr. Keller stated it was a collaborative effort of the conversation members along with partnership of Woodcock Nature, Weir Farm, Pace University, etc.

This inventory is a live document where conservation will keep working and keep adding periodically. The resource list is digitized hence more accessible to public.

Wetlands Board commended the efforts of the Conservation Commission for updating the Natural Resource Inventory and will seek ways to implement the recommended next steps.

VI: Approval of Minute(s)

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting: December 14, 2023**

Mr. Pilch motioned to approve the minutes with edits. Mr. Bishop seconded. Mr. Bishop abstained. Motion carried 4-0-1.

- **Sitewalk Minutes: April 02, November 05 and December 17, 2023**

Staff explained that the April 02 minutes were not put back on Agenda for approval on prior meetings.

Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Pilch seconded. Mr. Smith and Mr. Nissim abstained. Motion carried 3-0-2.

VII: Adjourn

Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 9:39 PM.

Submitted by

Aarti Paranjape
Recording Secretary