



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD Inland Wetlands Board

APPROVED/REVISED MINUTES

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

June 22, 2023

Members present: Susan Baker, chair; Alan Pilch, secretary; Carson Fincham Tim Bishop, vice chair; Tracey Miller, Chris Phelps, David Smith

Members absent:

Also present: Caleb Johnson, IW Agent; Aarti Paranjape, Recording Secretary; Dianus Virbickas, Jason Williams, Dr. Lipton, Todd Ritchie, Jim McManus, Ed Pawlak, Connecticut Ecosystems LLC; Jason Klein, Brian Carey, Andy Soumeleidis, P.E.; Robert Jewell, Kate Throckmorton, Abby Fuller, Steve Sullivan P.E CCA; Robert Vuotto.

I. Call to order:

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

II. Public Hearing(s)

1. **(Contd.) IW-23-6, 0 Ethan Allen Highway, G10-0057**, Plenary Ruling Application for construction of thirteen multi-family residential buildings, one community meeting house, outdoor pool amenity space, stormwater management system, vehicular access using existing entrance which crosses onto this site via newly constructed stream channel crossing, associated site work within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner/Applicant: Ridgefield Professional Office Complex LLC.*
<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/90987>

Mr. Virbickas, PE, Artel Engineering, Peer review for engineering plans. He gave an overview of the determinations and read his comments and concerns regarding the proposed project, including but not limited to sewer lines placement and its potential freezing, stormwater management systems, water quality basins, location and construction of retaining walls and suggested installation of geogrid. He added that the applicant has made adjustments and improvements to the concerns raised by both members and him.

Ms. Miller inquired about the northeast basin and whether additional soil and infiltration should be explored. Mr. Virbickas said that additional deep hole test can be recommended.

Mr. Williams addressed the comments and concerns raised by the peer review engineer. He added that the applicant has improved the plans and have the infiltration analysis.

Mr. Richie addressed the infiltration in the soil in the northeast as raised by Ms. Miller.

Members expressed concerns with the stormwater system and not meeting the standards of the Town's requirements.

Mr. Pawlak peer review for the biological evaluation stated that the applicant has addressed some of his questions. He said that hydrology of the resources will be impacted by the proposed development.

Mr. Fincham inquired how a natural buffer differs than the planted buffer.

Mr. Pawlak commented that soils are compacted and altered in the planted buffer. The mature trees in the natural buffer adjacent to the wetlands are good source for the healthy wetlands. He added that the applicant should look into the LID. Peer review for engineering and biological evaluation will review the suggested improvements and send comments to the applicant.

Applicant will grant extension to continue the public hearing until next regular meeting. The applicant will submit the revisions to the members a week prior to the meeting so that the members have enough time to review.

The Public Hearing continued to July 13, 2023.

2. **IW-23-18; 27 Abbott Avenue.** Plenary ruling application for construction of apartment complex, associated parking and drainage infrastructure within the upland review area of the wetlands. *Owner: Alimi Veton. Applicant: Brian Carey.*
<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91085>

Mr. Carey gave an overview of the property and the proposed revisions since the last public hearing. He added that the buildings and drive are flipped; in the new plan the building is now on the south side and driveway to north which gives better site lines. A conservative buffer planting of twenty feet is proposed with riparian native plantings and conservation wildlife mixes.

The roof leaders are directed to the underground chambers and then the level spreader before discharging into the buffer and then into the wetlands.

Mr. Soumelidis presented the engineering plans addressing the concerns raised by the members and the neighbor's group engineer. He provided details about the level spreader. He added that the plan meets the water quality criteria of the Connecticut Manual for Stormwater Quality. The separation between the bottom of the stormwater system is now proposed at thirty six inches above groundwater. The water quality volume is addressing the 1-½ inch of rainfall requirement. The erosion and sediment controls measures are as per the town requirements.

Public Hearing continued to July 13, 2023. The peer review for engineering and biological review will be presented at the next regular meeting.

II. Discussion:

1. **IW-23-20, 258 Main Street;** Summary Ruling Application for installation of handicap accessible trail, improvements to sculpture garden, drainage and associated

work within the upland review area of the wetlands. *Owner: The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum Inc. Applicant: Robert Jewell, Esq.*
<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91821>

Ms. Miller recused herself from this application.

Mr. Jewell gave an overview of the project where the Aldrich museum is proposing handicap accessible trails in the sculpture garden in the upland review area. is the trail has no direct impact to the wetlands.

Ms. Fuller presented the biodiversity plan showing native plantings. Part of the existing lawn will be replaced by a meadow.

Ms. Throckmorton presented the planting plan which includes native trees and understory with deciduous and evergreens. A plunge pool is designed at the end of the parking area to better manage the velocity of the flow.

Mr. Bishop inquired if the invasive species in the swale area will be removed.

Ms. Throckmorton added that the nonnative thicket at the north end is not being removed. Regular pruning helps in its maintenance.

Mr. Sullivan presented the stormwater system. He said that a small amount of impervious surface is introduced due to the construction of walkway. He said that the post development peak flow is less than the predevelopment flow. There is an existing yard drain at the southeast corner which collects the runoff from the museum building and another at the northern end which discharges into an infiltration system. Two yard drains will connect to the existing drains. A level spreader is installed just past the sidewalk to collect any runoff. Stone check dams are proposed to dissipate any velocity runoff at the north.

Mr. Pilch inquired about the construction of the walkways and the grading involved. He suggested to use coir logs instead of the stone check dams.

Mr. Fuller stated that minimal grading is proposed the trails will have the stabilized pervious stone dust. It will be minimally invasive. There is proposed a mowed path. The boardwalk trail will be hovering above the existing grade.

Mr. Phelps inquired about the construction plan and when will it start.

Mr. Fuller confirmed that the work can be commenced during the minimal impact time during fall.

Members commended the proposal, which will be as asset to the town and for the people to enjoy the property and outdoor sculpture garden.

A special condition was stated to use the coir logs instead of the check dams. The plan will be amended to show this before work commences.

Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the Summary Ruling application with special condition. Mr. Phelps seconded. Motion carried 6-0-1

Ms. Miller rejoined the meeting at 11:01 PM.

2. IW-23-21, 40 Limestone Terrace; Summary Ruling Application addition to the house within the upland review area of the wetlands. *Owner/Applicant: Robert Vuotto.*
<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91736>

Mr. Pilch stated on record that he had worked with Mr. Vuotto's parent few years back but did not feel that he needed to recuse himself from this application.

Mr. Vuotto gave an overview of the proposed additions. The plans are for the addition to the back of the house. He added that the B100 was done as per the health department requirements.

Members expressed concern with the B100 and the placement of the septic system closer to the wetlands. The Board suggested contacting the Health department for alternatives.

Discussion ensued and members stated that the applicant should submit mitigation plantings and show the area of disturbance.

Discussion continued to July 13, 2023 meeting.

III. Application(s) for receipt:

- 1. IW-23-23, 37 Walnut Hill Rd;** Summary Ruling Application for the corrective violation for removal of trees and earth disturbance, planting new trees, removing old branches and landscaping within the upland review area. *Owner/Applicant: Antia Santiago. For receipt and scheduling a site walk and discussion.*
<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/92309>
- 2. IW-23-24, 234 Florida Rd.;** Summary Ruling Application for construction of detached garage with new septic within the upland review area of the wetlands. *Owner: Vincent Reppucci. Applicant: Kate Throckmorton. For receipt and scheduling a site walk and discussion.*
<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91883>

Mr. Bishop motioned to receive the above applications and Mr. Pilch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Site walk is scheduled for July 23, 2023 and discussion on July 27 2023.

IV: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

None

V: Other Business:

VI: Approval of Minutes:

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting:** June 08, 2023
- **Sitewalk Meeting:** June 18, 2023

The voting for minutes tabled to next meeting as it was getting late in the night.

VIII: Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 11:32 P.M.

Submitted by

Aarti Paranjape
Recording Secretary