



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD Inland Wetlands Board

APPROVED/REVISED MINUTES

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

September 24, 2020

Members present: Patricia Sesto; Chair, Susan Baker; Vice Chair, Tim Bishop, Tracey Miller, Alan Pilch, David Tatge

Members absent: Kory Salomone

Also present: Beth Peyser, Inland Wetlands Agent; Aarti Paranjape, Office Administrator, James Scesa, John Casey, Wesley Gifford.

I: Call to order

Chair Ms. Sesto called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

II: Discussions:

1. (Contd.) #2020-038-SR: Summary Ruling application per Section 7.5 of the Town of Ridgefield Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations to remedy an existing violation (File # 2020-017-WV) which includes regulated activity in wetlands and the upland review area of wetlands without the appropriate permits for a property located at 9 Maplewood Road. Statutorily received on July 23, 2020. Sitewalk on August 23, 2020. Owner/Applicant: James & Danielle Scesa.

Ms. Sesto acknowledged the submission of new planting plans by the applicant.

Mr. Scesa stated the type of plantings around the pond. He added due to the financial constraints, he is proposing one-gallon sized shrubs, quart-sized containers for the herbaceous plants, and the red maple would be three to five feet tall.

Ms. Sesto questioned the size of the red maple and deferred to the landscape experts on Board to comment on the recommendation of the size of tree.

Ms. Miller and Mr. Pilch suggested a 1.5-inch caliper tree, which is typically 10 feet high.



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Ms. Miller informed the cattails listed are an Asian variety and should be replaced by blue iris or soft rush.

Mr. Pilch suggested sections of rocks lining the pond should be removed where the soft rush is proposed, noting soft rush along the pond edge will survive better. Mr. Scesa confirmed he is keeping mulch between the plantings for now and expects those plants to fill in the buffer over time.

Discussion ensued and Ms. Sesto stated following conditions of approval:

- Submit a revised planting plan indicating shrubs will be gallon-sized plants and herbaceous plants will be quart-sized.
- The non-native cattails will be substituted with native plants.
- Red maple tree shall be at least 1 ½ inch caliper.
- Stones lining the pond edge shall be removed to create gaps, sized at a ratio of 3:1 i.e. 15 feet of rocks and a 5-foot gap. The gaps shall coincide with the soft rush plantings.
- The revised planting plan shall include the area east of the house and shall have a density, size and composition of plantings similar to the pond buffer. The plan shall be subject to staff approval.
- Fill shall be removed to the original grade.
- The deadline for the fill removal and planting is October 30, 2020.
- A bond to be posted for fifty percent of the cost of plantings and shall be posted by October 30, 2020.

Mr. Pilch motioned to approve the Summary Ruling application 2020-038 with special conditions of approval, as stated. Mr. Tatge seconded. Motion carried 6-0-0. The publication date is October 01, 2020 and the effective date is October 02, 2020.

2. (Contd.) #2020-046-SR: Summary Ruling application per Section 7.5 of the Town of Ridgefield Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations for installation of an in-ground swimming pool and associated site work within the upland review area of wetlands at a property located at 13 Golf Court. Statutorily received on August 27, 2020. Sitewalk on September 06, 2020. Owner/Applicant: Kaile Rudy Ferreira.

Ms. Peyser informed the Board members the applicant has requested to continue the discussion on October 08, 2020.



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3. #2020-047-SR: Summary Ruling Application per Section 7.5 of the Town of Ridgefield Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations to remedy an existing violation (File # 2020-044-WV) which includes regulated activity in wetlands and the upland review area of wetlands for property located at 155 Silver Spring Lane. Statutorily received on August 27, 2020. Sitewalk on September 06, 2020. Owner/Applicant: John Casey.

Ms. Peyser stated she shared the Google images of the property with the Board as new documents.

Mr. Casey presented the application to the Board giving an overview of the present state of the property and the invasive plant growth. He asked the Board for the recommendations to mitigate and control the invasive plants. He added he is mowing the overgrown invasive bamboo to control its spread. He informed the Board he wants to maintain the ecosystem by planting meadow species. He said mitigation is still in the phase I. The removal of the bamboo is not yet complete and is seeking advice from the Board regarding methods to control the invasive growth, before he plants the meadow.

Mr. Casey assured the Board he is not in favor of using any chemicals on his property. He added he is hand pulling the root system to remove the invasive bamboo. Ms. Sesto asked the applicant to provide a five-year restoration plan. She described a typical five-year plan in these situations as including a first year with removing the controlling invasive species by mowing and weed whacking heavily, the second year could have nursery crop but still continue the mowing, third year seed crop and hand pulling, and year fourth and fifth continue hand pulling. Connecticut has a website, CIPWG (Connecticut Invasive Plant working Group), describing protocols to manage invasive species.

The Board continued the discussion to October 22, 2020, so the applicant can prepare a five-year mitigation plan.

4. #2020-051-SR: Summary Ruling application per Section 7.5 of the Town of Ridgefield Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations for expansion of patio within the upland review area of wetlands at a property located at 45 Old Washington Road. Statutorily received on September 10, 2020. Sitewalk on September 20, 2020. Owner/Applicant: Wesley Gifford.

Ms. Sesto stated Board members Tatge, Baker, Salomone, Pilch, and herself visited the site. Mr. Gifford presented the application, providing an overview of the existing and proposed patio.

Ms. Sesto suggested planting an area at a ratio of 2:1 at the edge of the watercourse in the wetland to compensate for the loss of additional wetland buffer.



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Mr. Gifford agreed to the planting and presented a sketch of proposed areas. He is intending to plant ferns and pink turtleheads.

The plantings will be helpful for the sustainability of wetlands.

In response to a question, Mr. Gifford stated a stone dust or layer of sand is proposed underneath the pavers. The patio will also be sloped for better drainage. He added that the work will commence sometime next year.

Following conditions of approvals were stated:

- The mitigation plan shall be submitted to office. The area of mitigation plantings should reflect the ratio of 2:1 of plantings to patio size.
- The patio will have pavers placed on the layer of stone dust.
- Planting shall be implemented within the six months of patio expansion.
- The bond will be posted prior to the inspection of erosion and sediment control measures and commencement of patio construction.

Ms. Baker motioned to approve the Summary Ruling application 20-51 with special conditions of approvals as articulated, and Mr. Bishop seconded. Motion carried 6-0-0. The publication date is October 01,2020 and the effective date is October 02, 2020.

5. Email discussion. % IWA

Ms. Peyser said the Town has suggested Town email addresses be issued for Board members. This will avoid personal emails be accessed in the event of an FOIA request.

Town emails can be shared with the public and will be useful when the Board starts accepting applications digitally via a new permitting system. The application related documents would be accessed via the Viewpermit platform in future.

Board members supported the idea of having the Town emails and some would like to also use a secondary email.

III: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

None



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IV: Administrative Approvals:

- 56 Ivy Hill Road: Administrative wetlands approval issued for the installation of an inground pool within the upland review area of wetlands. (XR #2020-045-SR).

V: Approval of Minutes:

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting** – September 10, 2020 **Sitewalk Meeting-** September 20

Ms. Baker motioned to approve the inland wetlands meeting minutes as amended, and sitewalk minutes as amended. Mr. Pilch seconded. Motion carried 6-0-0.

VI: Adjourn:

Hearing no further Chair Ms. Sesto adjourned the meeting at 8:26 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Aarti Paranjape

Recording Secretary