



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD INLAND WETLANDS BOARD

APPROVED/REVISED MINUTES

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

July 24, 2025

Members present: Susan Baker, Chair; Alan Pilch, Secretary; Tim Bishop, Vice Chair (left at 8:50PM); Keith Carlson, Noah Berkowicz, David Smith (joined 7:01)

Members Absent: Carson Fincham,

Also present, Caleb Johnson, Inland Wetlands Agent; Aarti Paranjape, Recording Secretary; Steven Bronfield, Joe Santarsiero, Brian Truskowski, James Kelly, Brian Hildebrand, Victoria Baird, Matthew Formica

Call to order:

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

II: Discussion:

1. **(Contd.) IW-25-25; 5 Palmer Court;** Summary Ruling application for installation of an 18'x36' inground swimming pool and stormwater management system within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner/Applicant: Steven Bronfield.
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101600>

Ms. Baker noted that the upland review area for the Norwalk River is 150 feet, which was not indicated on the project maps.

Mr. Bronfield gave an overview. The pool and stormwater management system are within the upland review area.

Plans include the location of the pool fence and a revised planting plan. Mr. Bronfield discussed the replacement and installation of various fences around the property:

Replacement of the existing split rail fence with a new split rail fence with 1-inch black mesh for pool safety.

Replacement of the existing 6-foot tongue-and-groove cedar fence with a new one.

Installation of either a 4-foot black aluminum fence or a white picket fence, depending on cost.

The fences are intended to ensure pool safety, contain dogs, and prevent snapping turtles from entering the yard.

Mr. Bishop raised the impact of the fences on the migration of reptiles and amphibians.

Discussion ensued about the mowing of the area outside the property line, which is Conservation Commission land.

Mr. Bronfield was informed that he should no longer maintain that land as per the Conservation Commission's preference.

Mr. Bronfield expressed a desire to keep a gate for fishing access, because the invasive plants are making other access points unusable.

Planting plan shows the location and list of two species Spicebush and Elderberry. Members agreed the plant choices are appropriate and will enhance ecological value.

Mr. Bronfield discussed the need for a gate for emergency access and fishing. Board members discussed the feasibility and impact of including a gate in the planting plan. It was agreed that a 4-foot gate could be included, with plants spaced accordingly.

Mr. Bronfield was asked to update the plan to show the gate and submit it to Mr. Johnson.

Following Special condition was stated:

- A revised buffer planting plan is to be provided showing the gate and separation of plantings.

Mr. Pilch motioned to approve the Summary Ruling with special and standard conditions. Mr. Berkowicz seconded. Mr. Smith abstained. Motion carried 5-0-1

Publication date is July 31 and effective date is August 01, 2025.

2. **(Contd.) IW-25-27; 321 Florida Hill Road;** Summary Ruling application for proposed pond dredging within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Brian Truskowski. Applicant: Joe Santarsiero. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101681>

Brian Truskowski presented the planting plan for the pond dredging project.

The plan includes a 15-foot buffer where possible, with a minimum buffer of 7 feet in some areas.

The planting list includes 32 species of perennial grasses, sedges, ferns, and one shrub (Sheep Laurel).

Discussion ensued on the need for visual demarcation to prevent future lawn encroachment.

Members inquired if there will be aeration device post-dredging.

Mr. Truskowski confirmed the intent to reinstall the existing aeration system.

Members discussed the management of dredged spoils.

Mr. Truskowski shared details regarding siltation fencing and boulders to manage soil in the wooded area.

Mr. Pilch emphasized the need for a stabilization method for the spoils area.

Brian Truskowski confirmed the provision of a dewatering area on the site plan.

The board discussed the need for a detailed plan if the spoils are to be used on-site.

Mr. Pilch suggested moving the silt fence to a more effective location to prevent sediment from flowing back into the pond.

Mr. Truskowski and Mr. Santarsiero agreed to extend the silt fence to a larger grass area for better sediment control.

Members further discussed the volume of material to be removed and the staging area for debris.

Mr. Truskowski decided to haul the debris off-site, eliminating concerns about on-site deposition.

The following special conditions were stated:

- Final planting list and price to be supplied to IW Agent Mr. Johnson.
- Aeration system to be noted on the final plan.
- Staging area and silt fence to be moved further east.
- Spoils to be removed from the site, except for use in planting beds, not to exceed one foot in height.

Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the Summary ruling with special and standard conditions. Mr. Carlson seconded. Mr. Smith abstained. Motion carried 5-0-1.

Publication date is July 31 and Effective date is August 01, 2025.

3. **IW-25-31; 9 Maplewood Road;** Summary Ruling application for installation of an above ground swimming pool, patio and stormwater management system within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Harris Kaplan. Applicant: Samantha Brant. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101807>

Members discussed on the project details, including the location of the pool and patio, and stormwater management considerations.

Concerns were raised about the proximity of the patio to the wetland boundary and the need for a buffer.

Discussion of the existing buffer planting plan and the potential impact on a red maple tree which was a required planting as stated in the prior violation remediation at the property.

Mr. Pilch and Mr. Bishop expressed concerns about the lack of detailed information on the plan and the potential impact on the wetland.

The board also discussed the prior violation, the missing plantings as required to comply with the violation conditions.

The applicant suggested using a wood deck instead of a patio to reduce impervious surface.

The applicant was advised to consult with zoning and potentially revise the plan for the next meeting. Discussion continued to August 28, 2025.

- 4. IW-25-32; 10 Shady Lane;** Summary Ruling application for construction of a sauna and deck within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Vincent Nagle. Applicant: Victoria Baird. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/101844>

Ms. Baird presented the project details, including the location and size of the proposed sauna and deck. Discussion on the proximity to the wetlands boundary and the measures to divert water away from the structure.

Mr. Bishop suggested enhancing the buffer with plantings to add ecological value and reduce water velocity. Mr. Pilch recommended adding riparian plants along the pathway to the fire pit area to provide additional protection.

Discussion continued to August 28, 2025.

- 5. (Contd.) IW-25-26; 59 South Street;** Summary Ruling application for decommissioning of a pump station, construction of new gravity sewers, and construction of a new force main from the new pump station to the South Street Wastewater Treatment Facility within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Town of Ridgefield. Applicant: Matthew Formica. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/100527>

Mr. Formica gave an update about revisions since the last meeting:

Removal of an 8-foot wide, non-contiguous walking path from the plans.

Addition of trees along the north and west sides of the pump station for visual impact mitigation as per Architectural Advisory.

Mr. Pilch suggested replacing white pines with white spruce to reduce maintenance issues.

Mr. Formica agreed to note this change in future plan updates, pending approval from the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Formica identified three wetland crossings along the project route.

Mr. Formica mentioned that work will be performed per Army Core of Engineers' general conditions for crossing wetlands in the project specifications.

Requirements for low or no flow conditions, revegetation with native species, and use of swamp mats or low-pressure tires for equipment will also be followed.

Mr. Pilch emphasized the importance of replacing wetland soils and ensuring careful handling of materials during construction.

WPCA to handle oversight with an engineer on-site full-time during construction.

Mr. Pilch motioned to approve the project with standard conditions. Mr. Carlson seconded. Mr. Smith abstained. Motion carried 4-0-1. (Mr. Bishop had left the meeting).

III: Applications for Receipt(s):

- 1. IW-25-35; 14 Rowland Lane, 35 East Ridge, 43 East Ridge, 34 Market Street;** Summary Ruling application for dredging and debris clearing along the Rowland Lane watercourse at the above four properties within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: 14 Rowland Lane - Seth Byerley; 35 East Ridge – James Zegarelli; 43 East Ridge – William Najam; 34 Market Street – Douglas Barile. Applicant: Town of Ridgefield - Jacob Muller. *For receipt and scheduling a sitewalk and discussion.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/102170>

Mr. Smith motioned to receive the above application. Mr. Berkowicz seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Sitewalk scheduled on September 07 and discussion on September 11, 2025.

IV: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

None

V: Other Business:

1. IW-23-2; 41 Governor Street – Planting bond release (\$35,960.00).

This was voted at the last meeting to be released however since there was lack of quorum, the bond could not be released.

Mr. Berkowicz motioned to release the bond in full. Mr. Carlson seconded. Motion carried Unanimously.

2. IW-22-44; 115 Flat Rock Drive – Planting bond release (\$1,388.00)

Ms. Paranjape shared the pictures of the plants installed as per the planting plan at the above address. Members noted that plants were thriving one hundred percent.

Mr. Smith motioned to release the bond in full. Mr. Berkowicz seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

VI: Approval of Minutes:

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting: June 26, 2025**

Mr. Carlson motioned to approve the above minutes. Mr. Smith seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting: July 10, 2025**

Ms. Baker motioned to approve the above minutes. Mr. Carlson seconded. Mr. Pilch, Mr. Smith and Mr. Berkowicz abstained. Motion carried 2-0-3.

- **Sitewalk Minutes: June 29, 2025**

Mr. Berkowicz motioned to approve the above minutes. Mr. Pilch seconded. Motion carried Unanimously.

- **Sitewalk Minutes: July 20, 2025**

Mr. Berkowicz motioned to approve the above minutes. Mr. Smith seconded. Mr. Carlson abstained. Motion carried 4-0-1.

VII: Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 9:31 PM.

Submitted by

Aarti Paranjape, Recording Secretary