



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.

May 23, 2024

Members present: Susan Baker, chair; Carson Fincham, Tim Bishop, vice chair; Ben Nissim (joined at 7:12 P.M), Alan Pilch, Secretary; Chris Phelps

Members absent: David Smith

Also present: Caleb Johnson, Aarti Paranjape, Recording Secretary, Doug Reich, Wayne D'Avanzo, Robb Heering, Paul Jaehnig, Louis Bottali, Walter Suin Chin

I: Call to order:

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

II: Discussion(s):

1. **(Contd.) IW-24-12; 25 Seymour Lane:** Summary Ruling Application for new home construction of a single-family 2-story colonial style dwelling within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner: Ferrandino Enterprises LLC. Applicant: Jason Ferrandino.*

<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/96042>

Mr. Reich commented nothing has changed since the last meeting. A revised report by the soil scientist Mr. Jaehnig was submitted. Mr. Jaehnig stated that he did the redoximorphic studies as suggested and found no presence of wetlands soil near the entrance and the soils were not poorly drained either, however the soil profile overall shows poor drainage due to the machine compaction which is peculiar on the sites like this under construction.

Members suggested that if the applicant considered removing the basement and building a slab-on-grade foundation, the dwelling could be moved further from the wetlands. The applicant noted that it might be possible to make the size of the building smaller in order to retain the basement.

Applicant will reconsider their options and present them at the next meeting.

The 65 day period to render a decision ends on June 01, 2024, the applicant will grant extension to continue to June 14 meeting.

2. **(Contd.) IW-24-17; 1 Twopence Rd;** Summary Ruling application for constructing an Accessory Dwelling structure within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner/Applicant: Louis Bottali.*

<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/96534>

Mr. Bottali addressed the concerns raised by Board at the last meeting. He added that fence and shed will be removed manually. The walkway is proposed from the parking to the accessory dwelling and connecting to the house. In order to capture the roof runoff he proposed a drip drainage as an infiltration system. The trench will be eight feet long and deep, eighteen inch wide to capture the water and direct it away from foundation.

Mr. Pilch commented that the plants suggested are more upland species and that native wetlands plants will be appropriate for this site.

Mr. Bishop commented that fence should be removed manually in the wetlands area with minimum disturbance.

Mr. Bottali will work with Mr. Johnson and choose wetlands native plants for the mitigation areas. A bond will be posted for planting.

Following special conditions were stated:

1. Remove fence manually
2. Planting list to include wetlands adapted plants without changing the quantity.

Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the summary ruling with special and standard conditions. Mr. Phelps seconded. Motioned carried unanimously.

III: Application(s) for receipt:

None

III: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

1. WV-23-2; 150 Barrack Hill Road

Mr. Johnson gave an update about removal of debris as part of remediation of the violation. He said a lot of debris has been removed but the applicant still has more on the property. The date to remove the debris was May 17, 2024.

Mr. Chin explained he has been removing the debris but given the amount and some personal emergency, he was delayed. He requested that Board give him some extra time where he will remove the rest of the debris.

Discussion ensued and members agreed that scope of removal is vast and may grant extension to the applicant.

Board granted applicant forty-five days as the final removal of the debris, before the next phase of plantings.

Applicant will attend the July 11 meeting and by then the debris shall be removed. He will contact Mr. Johnson before the meeting for a walkthrough.

IV: Other Business:

1. IW-21-49; 19 Belvedere Court – Planting bond release

Mr. Johnson informed the Board that bond is due to be released in August, but applicant requested to be released now. After inspection the survival of the plants is one hundred percent.

Members were pleased to know that all the plants are surviving and determined that they will thrive, and agreed to release the bond three months ahead.

Mr. Bishop motioned to release the bond in full. Mr. Phelps seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. FOIA

Ms. Baker informed members that Town recently had a FOIA session. The talking points were related to filing of agenda, minutes, ex-parte communications, etc. The meeting video is posted on the website and members can watch.

Discussion was continued on the documents shared by the Board members regarding an application, which was questioned by Mr. Jewell during the last meeting. Mr. Fincham consulted with the Town Counsel, and counsel concluded that expert scientific testimony can be shared with the members and noted in the return of records, similar to adding the resumes of board members if they comment as expert witnesses.

V: Approval of Minutes:

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting:** May 09, 2024

Mr. Fincham motioned and Mr. Pilch seconded to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

VI: Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 9:12 PM.

Submitted by

Aarti Paranjape
Recording Secretary