



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.

June 27, 2024

Members present: Susan Baker, chair; Ben Nissim, David Smith, Alan Pilch, Secretary; Chris Phelps

Members absent: Carson Fincham, Tim Bishop

Also present: Caleb Johnson, Wetlands Agent; Lee Bussinger.

I: Call to order:

Ms. Baker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 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>

No representative for this application was present at the meeting. Ms. Baker noted that without a withdrawal of the application or an extension of the time to complete the discussion and render a decision, both of which would need to be done by the applicant, the Board would need to consider and render a decision based on the current application.

After giving the applicant additional time to appear at the meeting (following acceptance of the two new applications below), during which no representative appeared, Ms. Baker reminded the Board that in addition to the application for new home construction there is still an open violation.

Mr. Johnson confirmed that he had been in contact with the applicant about both the violation and the new application and had not received a response. In terms of the violation, the planting bond was due April 15 and the planting was to have been completed by June 15. The Board had indicated willingness to hold off on the planting in case the applicant wanted to make changes because of the location of the house. At this point, Mr. Johnson will proceed with having the applicant post the bond and proceed based on the approved planting plan.

Ms. Baker then indicated that since the extension from the applicant only covered until June 30 and no further extensions would be forthcoming the Board needed to render a decision.

Mr. Phelps motioned to deny the application. Mr. Pilch seconded.

The following reasons for denial were stated:

1. The concern of the Board that the house was located too close to the wetland was not addressed.
2. Due to the high water table present on the site, the Board had requested that the applicant consider a design that would eliminate the negative impact of the footing drains and the need for continuous pumping of groundwater that would convey the water to the surface, changing the hydroperiod to the detriment of wetlands onsite and possibly affecting wetlands on neighboring property.
3. The applicant did not consider a design that which would have allowed for an opportunity for situating the house closer to the septic and further from the wetlands, which would also have reduced impervious surfaces as the driveway would be shorter.

The motion to deny passed 5-0.

III: Applications for Receipt(s):

1. **IW-24-19; 27 Abbott Avenue;** Plenary Ruling application for the construction of a 10 residential town houses with associated drainage and landscaping within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner: Veton Alimi. Applicant: Brian Carey. For receipt and scheduling a sitewalk and discussion*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/97127>

Mr. Pilch motioned to receive the application. Mr. Phelps seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Sitewalk not formally scheduled as most members have been to this site previously. Mr. Johnson will check with the applicant if members wish to go individually. The public hearing will begin on July 25, 2024.

The applicant had requested via Mr. Johnson if the Board would consider waiving the fees for this application. After a brief discussion the board members indicated that they did not feel that waiving fees would be appropriate.

2. **IW-24-21; 599 Branchville Road;** Summary Ruling application for a stream crossing and related site work for an accessway/driveway with some related drainage work within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner: Moreton Binn. Applicant: Robert Jewell. For receipt and scheduling a sitewalk and discussion* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/97450>

Mr. Smith motioned to receive the above application. Mr. Pilch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Sitewalk scheduled on July 7, 2024 and discussion on July 11, 2024.

IV: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

V: Other Business:

1. **IW-21-42; 282 Branchville Road** – Planting bond release

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

2. IW-21-7; 148 Ledges Road – Planting bond release

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

3. IW-21-62; 799 North Salem Road – Planting bond release

During the Board’s discussion, there was some concern about the amount of plants installed and whether some specific plants were swapped out with others during installation. Mr. Johnson will review with Chris Sullivan, who prepared the plan and oversaw installation. The Board will review again at the next meeting.

4. IW-22-23; 131 Seth Low Mountain Road – Planting bond release

Mr. Bussinger (homeowner) appeared at the meeting. He stated that due to a family hardship he is not able to post the 50% bond agreed to a year ago. Mr. Johnson stated that as of now, 1 tree and 3 winterberry shrubs were missing, but overall, more than 80% of the plants had survived their first year. Mr. Bussinger stated that he would go through the plan with the landscape architect to make sure that all approved plantings were there or replaced as of this time. Board stated that a monitoring fee will be charged as Mr. Johnson will be conducting inspections to check on the planting’s status.

VI: Approval of Minutes:

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting: May 23, 2024**

Mr. Phelps motioned and Mr. Nissim seconded. Mr. Smith abstained. Motion carried 4-0-1.

VII: Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:02 PM.

Submitted by

Susan Baker
Chair