



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD INLAND WETLANDS BOARD
Web Based Meeting Hosted on Zoom

DRAFT MINUTES
Thursday, July 23, 2026

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

Members present: Susan Baker, Chair; Tim Bishop; Vice Chair (left at 8:12); Alan Pilch, Recording Secretary; David Smith; Noah Berkowicz

Members Absent: Carson Fincham; Keith Carlson

Also present: Caleb Johnson, Inland Wetlands Agent

I. Call to order:

Ms. Baker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. A quorum was present.

II: Discussion

1. **IW-26-25; 340 Barrack Hill Road;** Summary Ruling application for installation of a septic system within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Reina Guzman-Soni. Applicant: York Mueller. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/106554>

Mr. Mueller presented the details of the application. This is a septic installation to replace a failing system. Discussion ensued by the IWB including installation of an additional drainage pipe in the event of failure, adding a planting plan and no mow in the wetlands area as suggested by Mr. Bishop. Mr. Pilch agreed with Mr. Bishop.

Special Conditions:

- *Additional pipe is to be inserted under the stream bed, for emergency use in the event of a failure.*
- *Establish a no mow zone between the fence and the intermittent stream on the west side and on the east side create a buffer with native plantings including sedges and shrubs 5 feet from the stream between WLF 3 and WLF 7. Planting to include 20 Carex and 5 Winterberry.*
 - *At least 1 Winterberry should be male and the rest female.*
- *Native plantings should be added to the current plan with colored dots and labeled and submitted to the Inland Wetlands Agent in the office for approval prior to the start of work.*
- *Restore and stabilize the trench that cuts through the intermittent stream.*
- *Work limited to dry times and must be completed by September 30, 2026.*

Motion made by Mr. Bishop to approve with Special Conditions and Standard Conditions. Seconded by Mr. Pilch. Motion passes 5-0. Legal notice will be published July 30, 2026. Effective date is July 31, 2026.

2. **IW-26-27; 0 Carriage House Drive;** Summary Ruling application for proposed septic system and driveway construction and grading and associated sitework within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: AERIE AT F4-007 LLC. Applicant: Gaurangkumar Rana. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/106611>

Mr. Rana was present to go through the design plans. Mr. Johnson shared his screen including the plans. The applicant is looking for input on how to make the plan better. Discussion ensued by the IWB. Mr. Johnson confirmed that there is no existing permit from the IWB for sitework that had been completed at

the time of the site walk. Mr. Bishop expressed concern for significant tree clearing onsite without permits and would like to see this application include the remedy of a violation. Mr. Rana stated that he had discussed tree clearing with the Tree Warden who stated that he did not need a permit for tree removal.

Suggestions to move forward include remedying the violation, more details on how to design the driveway, showing grades on the driveway, and stormwater mitigation prior to discharging into the wetland.. Mr. Bishop liked the current location of the driveway not going through the wetland. Mr. Johnson suggests applying for a corrective action to remediate in addition to this application. He asked for a count of trees that were cut in the upland review area of wetlands. Ms. Baker asked about a possible conservation easement on the steeply sloped part of the property.

This will be back on the agenda for August 27.

III: Application(s) for Receipt:

1. **IW-26-29; 225 Bennetts Farm Road;** Revision to Summary Ruling application #2013-014-SR-REZ-A-S-SP for work done without approvals within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Justin Stoney. Applicant: Michael Mazzucco. *For receipt and scheduling a sitewalk and discussion.* <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/106788>

Motion made by Mr. Bishop to receive the application. Seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion passes unanimously.

IV: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

No ongoing enforcement.

V: Other Business:

1. Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Regulations discussion

This was not discussed at this meeting.

2. 27 Abbott Avenue – Discussion on Resolution of Approval

Draft resolution of approval. Mr. Johnson shared his screen and the IWB reviewed the Special Conditions. Edits to proposed language were discussed. Mr. Pilch has additional language he would like to present to counsel for review prior to creating draft language. Ms. Baker would like this to be the last round of suggested language to counsel.

A member of the applicant's team (Mr. Smith) asked to make a comment. He expressed a need to move this approval along in accordance with the judge's order. He reiterated that the approval has to be in accordance with the judgment. He will be in contact with Attorney Beecher to discuss.

Ms. Baker asked the IWB to continue to discuss the language after the applicant's representative expressed concern about a delay. Additional clarifying edits were included in the proposed special conditions.

Motion made by Mr. Smith to approve the Draft Resolution of Approval as updated, with general and special conditions. Seconded by Ms. Baker. Mr. Berkowicz abstains because it was prior to him joining the IWB. Motion passes 4-0-1. Publication date of July 30, 2026 with an effective date of July 31, 2026.

3. 313 Old Sib Road

Agriculture as of right discussion. The homeowner wants to do farming activities on this property. Activity was not in the regulated wetlands area but because there are wetlands on the property, Mr. Johnson wanted to bring this to the IWB for a better understanding of what can be done by the property owner.

Ms. Baker suggests that he has to still come to the IWA for an administrative approval from the office.

Mr. Renzulli was present to discuss his proposed agricultural use. He is passionate about permaculture and planting flowers in a nursery setting. He is trying to understand what the process would be in the future if he wanted to use the regulated wetlands area as part of his nursery. Ms. Baker would like to reread the as of right language in the regulations, discuss with Mr. Johnson, and get back to Mr. Renzulli.

4. IW-22-40; 100 Danbury Road – Planting bond release (\$37,216.00)

Mr. Johnson presented photos of his inspection of plantings. He stated the plants are all there and in good shape.

Motion made by Mr. Pilch to release the planting bond in full. Seconded by Mr. Berkowicz. Motion passes 4-0.

5. Chipmunk Lane – Miry Brook erosion

Mr. Johnson showed the GIS map of the property. There is erosion on the bank along the stream on Conservation Commission property. No work has been done but it appears that erosion of the stream is occurring due to a tree root system.

Ms. Baker stated that aside from looking at the property, there isn't much the IWB can do. This needs to go to the Conservation Commission for recommendation. Mr. Johnson will discuss with the Conservation Commission.

VI: Approval of Minutes

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting:** July 9, 2026

Motion made by Mr. Smith to approve the minutes as is. Mr. Pilch seconded. Motion carried 3-0-1. Mr. Berkowicz abstained.

- **Sitewalk Minutes:** July 19, 2026

Motion made by Ms. Bishop to approve the minutes as is. Mr. Pilch seconded. Motion carried 2-0-2. Mr. Smith and Mr. Berkowicz abstained.

VII: Adjourn

A quick reminder to the IWB that there is a break and there is not a meeting until August 27, 2026.

Hearing no further business, Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:31 PM.

Submitted by

Beth Peyser, Recording Secretary via Zoom Recording

Note: The Zoom recording for this meeting can be accessed at the following link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/9GHiIKeG2U2AK_tRqLCt1QOPrnMjiNQubdMIhFwPYoWV1yRidhyH6J0yj_qncnUrFg3YDs4PDptLD7izX.w32URHs_rKAHDpAJ