

**TOWN OF SOMERS  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
600 Main Street  
SOMERS, CT 06071**

**CONSERVATION MINUTES  
SPECIAL MEETING**

**Wednesday, July 15, 2009-Town Hall Auditorium – 7:00 p.m.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Joan Formeister called the Meeting to order at 7:03pm. Members Lise Wood (seated for Candace Aleks), Dan Fraro, and Henry Broer were present and constituted a quorum. Also present were Erosion Control/Wetland Agent David Askew and Joanna Winkler, Wetland Agent-In-Training.

**II. OLD BUSINESS**

**a. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE DECISION: WETLANDS APPLICATION #608, DRIVEWAY WITHIN WETLAND AND UPLAND REVIEW AREA FOR NEW HOUSE, 142 ROOT ROAD, MAULUCCI.**

Mr. Palmberg presented revised plans, and explained that the alternative driveway location had been analyzed more extensively, and that the grading would be prohibitive. Mr. Palmberg identified improvements made to the original driveway plans, including stone-lined swales, stone spreaders, and a grass level spreader for stormwater management. These additional protective measures were requested by Mr. Askew, who had also requested a wetland functional assessment, and report comparing wetland impacts of the two driveway alternatives, as well as stormwater calculations. Mr. Askew asked about alternative house locations, including the southwest corner of the parcel. Mr. Palmberg responded that there is a watercourse in the area and that the proposed house location is preferable and the driveway would provide access to the adjacent parcel for future use. Mr. Zulick, the project wetland scientist, explained his wetland assessment, and stated that the original driveway location is more protective of the wetlands. Mr. Palmberg described other features of the stormwater management system, including 2 additional catch basins that will discharge into a level spreader. Ms. Formeister inquired about the upper wetland crossing associated with the driveway, to which Mr. Askew and Mr. Zulick explained that the wetland is part of a groundwater seep that discharges into the larger wetland.

Mr. Askew stated that aside from some disagreements with Mr. Zulick's written wetland report regarding the alternative wetland crossing, he concurred with Mr. Zulick's presentation and believes the plans are sufficient to prevent significant wetland impacts. Mr. Askew recommended that if the commission was inclined to approve the application, a condition of a pre-construction meeting with the contractor, as well as a condition that the driveway base consist of pervious material as shown on the plans.

Ms. Formeister requested a motion for the purposes of discussion. *A motion was made by Dan Fraro, seconded by Lise Woods to approve Wetlands Application #608: Driveway within Wetland and Upland Review Area for New House, 142 Root Road, Maulucci, with conditions of a pre-construction meeting and a pervious driveway.* Ms. Formeister asked about future activities that may impact the wetland as a result of approving this application. Mr. Askew responded that it is possible that a property owner would clear the adjacent woodland, but that a permit would be required within the upland review area. Mr. Palmberg explained that the limit of proposed grading was also the extent of their activities for the project. Mr. Fraro asked about the grade between the wetland and the top of the driveway, concerned that water may run down to downgradient properties as has occurred at other sites. Mr. Palmberg explained that there is plenty of buffer between the limit of activities and the property line, and that the intention was to maintain existing hydrology as much as possible. *Ms. Formeister called for a vote, and the commission unanimously voted to approve Wetlands Application #608: Driveway*

*Within Wetland and Upland Review Area for New House, 142 Root Road, Maulucci, with conditions of a pre-construction meeting and a pervious portion of the driveway.*

**b. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE DECISION: WETLANDS APPLICATION #609: DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS AND WETLAND MITIGATION, 56 EGYPT ROAD, FOUR TOWN FAIRGROUNDS.**

Mr. Mocko, the environmental consultant representing the applicant presented revised plans. Mr. Mocko explained that he included notes based on Mr. Askew's recommendation, including removal of debris and fill along the north edge of the wetland. Mr. Broer asked about water ponding at the site. Mr. Mocko explained that the area is sandy and drains quickly. Mr. Mocko outlined the proposal, including under-drains and reseeding a vegetated. Mr. Askew recommended that if the commission is inclined to approve the application, a condition be imposed that Mr. Mocko or a person of equal experience be present to supervise the wetland restoration, and to notify Mr. Askew before construction begins. Mr. Mocko explained that such supervision was part of his contract. Mr. Fraro and Mr. Mocko discussed permanent delineation of the wetland boundary. Ms. Woods proposed imposing a time limit for construction, and Mr. Askew suggested a condition that all work must be completed by October 2010. Mr. Askew further recommended a condition that the wetland mitigation be Phase 1 of the activities, and that drainage and other construction occur as Phase 2, not to be initiated until the mitigation is complete.

*A motion was made by Dan Fraro, seconded by Lise Woods and unanimously voted to approve Wetlands Application #609: Drainage Improvements and Wetland Mitigation, 56 Egypt Road, Four Town Fairgrounds, with conditions of: 1) a wetland scientist be on site during wetland restoration; 2) that the wetland agent be notified prior to commencement of work; 3) that the work be completed in two phases, with the wetland mitigation being Phase 1, to be completed within 2009, and the remainder of work being Phase 2, to be completed within 2010; and 4) that the wetland boundary be permanently delineated.*

**c. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE DECISION: WETLANDS APPLICATION #610: ADDITION WITHIN UPLAND REVIEW AREA, 974 MAIN STREET, GOSSELIN.**

Mr. Dauphin presented plans for the proposed deck, to be located four feet out from the existing structure. Mr. Askew explained the discrepancy on the hand-drawn plan, stating that the new deck will be approximately three feet from the stream bank, although it looks much further on the drawing. Mr. Askew explained that according to Mr. Dauphin, no machines or excavators were needed and the work would be done by hand. Therefore, the top of the streambank should not be disturbed.

*A motion was made by Lise Woods, seconded by Dan Fraro and unanimously voted to approve Wetlands Application #610: Addition within Upland Review Area, 974 Main Street, Gosselin.*

**d. OTHER – There was no other Old Business.**

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE DECISION: WETLANDS APPLICATION #611: 3-LOT SUBDIVISION IN UPLAND REVIEW AREA, 380 FOUR BRIDGES ROAD, LIPTON.**

Mr. Juliano presented a site plan for the proposed pool. Mr. Askew explained that the property abuts Wood Stream, and is also close to Lafayette Pond. There is a distinct wetland boundary, and the commission has not required the wetland to be flagged for previous permits. Mr. Juliano stated that the pool would be elevated, and the soils are not subject to erosion, yet a silt fence could be installed if necessary. Mr. Juliano additionally stated that he would be on site during construction. Mr. Askew stated that the project was straightforward and

he did not anticipate any wetland impacts. Mr. Askew and Ms. Formeister explained to Mr. Juliano that the Commission could not vote until the next meeting, due to the required 14-day appeal period after receipt of an application.

**b. WETLAND APPLICATION #612: THREE-LOT SUBDIVISION, 145 HIGHLAND VIEW DRIVE, MACCORMACK**

Mr. Stintson of Alford Associates discussed the affects of the curtain drains on the property and said the drains had contributed to draining the wetland and the die-off of wood frog tadpoles in the small pool within the wetland. He explained that while the dewatering caused by the curtain drains may have contributed, it was also due to an especially dry spring with a lower than usual water table. The pool is also thought to be a “decoy” vernal pool, which is a pool that will attract breeding activity, but does not have sufficient hydrology to support full development. The pool is likely to be manmade, created out of rutted tire tracks, and is not likely to support tadpole development. Mitigation was nevertheless proposed, including removal of a historic fill pile, repair of the pool area, sensitive grading to increase the function of the wetland, and appropriate seeding. Mr. Stintson further hypothesized that once the curtain drain was covered, some surface water may rebound.

Mr. Askew stated that a review of historical aerial photographs indicated that the main body of the wetland was to the northeast and that the wetland in question was on the “dry end” of the wetland to the west. It was cut off from the larger wetland during road construction. It does not appear that this portion of the wetland ever had significant ponding. Based on his review, it appears that the fill pile was most likely from 1994 or earlier, and that the current pool was a decoy vernal pool, formed from recent alterations. Mr. Askew’s expressed concern regarding the location of the wetland in a homeowner’s front yard.

A homeowner on Highland View Drive in the audience stated that runoff from the property causes icing on the road during the winter. Mr. Stinson indicated that curtain drains should help alleviate that problem in the future.

Mr. Askew explained that based on recent inspection of the site, the drains are not likely to completely drain the wetland. The wetland was recently inundated with over 6 inches of water and he believes the wetland will continue to support hydrophytic vegetation.

Mr. Askew stated that the wetland has low functionality, and that a house and driveway within 100 feet would is not expected to cause direct alterations to the wetland. He requested that the plan show a clearing limit and that the mitigation plan be more developed for the next meeting.

**c. WETLAND APPLICATION MODIFICATION OF PERMIT #541: POND DREDGING AND LINER INSTALLATION, 17 ORCHARD VIEW, WHITELEY.**

Mr. Mocko explained that the original permit included future removal of sediment from the man-made farm pond. Mr. Broer asked the size of the pond; and Mr. Mocko explained that it was 90 feet by 55 feet. Mr. Mocko stated that the proposed modification of the permit includes an anti-seepage barrier to the down-gradient berm, as well as additional plantings. Mr. Mocko explained that the existing earthen berm leaks, and in dry weather, the water level in the pond drops. The barrier will decrease the rate of seepage. Mr. Mocko stated that the native soils would be replaced on top of the liner to allow for aquatic plant re-growth, and that aquatic plants and shade trees would be planted.

Mr. Fraro asked if the pond was spring-fed or groundwater-fed, and if this would compromise the integrity of the liner, to which Mr. Mocko replied that it is both, yet the liner would only be on the down-gradient side, and that they would work around any potential spring holes. Mr. Mocko explained that the fish and amphibians would be relocated for the activities. Mr. Askew explained that although the pond was originally man-made, it provided valuable vernal pool habitat when the area became naturalized after the original farm was abandoned.

Mr. Askew discussed the transition of the pond over that last several years and the loss of habitat resulting from that transition. Mr. Askew stated that the plan as proposed is acceptable, given that the pond is a man-made feature.

*A motion was made by Dan Fraro, seconded by Lise Woods and unanimously voted to approve Wetlands Application Modification of Permit #541: Pond Dredging and Liner Installation, 17 Orchard View, Whiteley.*

There was no other New Business.

#### **IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

There was no audience participation.

#### **V. STAFF/COMMISSION REPORT**

Wetland Agent, David Askew, presented his July report.

*A motion was made by Lise Woods, seconded by Dan Fraro, and voted unanimously to accept the Staff/Commission report dated July 15, 2009 as presented.*

#### **VI. CORRESPONDENCE AND BILLS**

Mr. Askew presented a letter from the Town of Enfield regarding culvert work, as well as the Municipal Inland Wetland Commissioner Training Program 2005 Summary Report. Mr. Askew additionally presented an invoice from the North Central Conservation District for contracted wetland agent services.

*A motion was made by Dan Fraro, seconded by Lise Woods and voted unanimously that the correspondence be accepted and the bills be paid.*

#### **VII. MINUTES APPROVAL**

Minutes could not be accepted, as this was a Special Meeting.

#### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion was made by Lise Woods, seconded by Dan Fraro and unanimously voted to adjourn the July 15, 2009 Conservation Commission Special Meeting at 9:06 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Winkler  
Recording Secretary

Candace Aleks  
Commission Secretary

***MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING.***