

TOWN OF COLUMBIA
INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSE COMMISSION

Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room

323 Route 87, Columbia, CT

Monday, February 3, 2020 - 7:00 P.M.

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Chairman John Allen, Vice-Chair Tom Archambault, Secretary Ron Wikholm, Tip Garritt, William Ross, Ian Dann, Carol Ann Jaswinski

Members Excused: None

Staff Present: Wetlands Agent John Valente, Board Clerk Flo Polek

Others Present: Don Cianci, Adam Leston, Robert Sullivan, Mary Sullivan, Contractors for the Sullivan's

Call to Order: J. Allen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call-Seat Alternates: None

Additions/Changes in order of Agenda: as noted after item 2.2

1. Audience of Citizens: None

2. Old Business:

2.1 IWWC-1920-09 Application of Oasis Auto, Owner Tai Xu, to locate a detention basin within 100 feet of wetlands for commercial activity expanding car dealership.

J. Valente explained that this is a commercial enterprise, 98% of the project is outside of the Upper Review Area with no opportunity for any water or sediment to get into the wetlands. John recommends that the Commission approves the application.

J. Valente read the summary of conditions into record;

T. Garritt **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the application with conditions as read and presented;

W. Ross **SECONDED; MOTIONED CARRIED; 7.0.0**

2.2 IWWC-1920-10 Adam Leston & Cristina Granese, 4 Hop River Road, to remove wood chips from wetlands deposited by Eric's Tree Service.

D. Cianci stated that the woodchips were removed between January 23, 2020 to January 26, 2020 by an agent of Eric's Tree Service. J. Valente passed photos to the Commission as well as A. Leston who provided photos and video of the site. Both commented on the removal of the wood chips. J. Valente commented on the video and photos noting the slopes and the trees leaving the stumps as markers where the chips were removed. He stated that there is a diversion created by wood chips to divert the storm water and thought this was a fair compromise. He does not anticipate any storm water going into the wetlands. There was approximately 1500 to 2000 cubic yards of wood chips removed. Trees were cut down because the excavator needed to be able to swing 180 degrees left and right to remove the wood chips. Some woods chips will remain on the banks above the wetlands. To remove more would mean to bring in trucks to move it further up the hill adding additional time to the project. There is approximately a foot and one half of wood chips left in some areas (not in wetlands). J. Valente visited the site each day when the wood chips were being removed. He stated that the chips that remained would not fall back into the wetlands and it would be beneficial to have some wood

chips on the disturbed slopes. T. Garritt visited the site on February 3, 2020 and agreed with J. Valente. W. Ross questioned if fill was placed on the area prior to the depositing of the wood chips over the last year. J. Valente said the area was filled over the years greater than 40 years ago. Tree stumps were used as benchmarks to form a line in removing the woodchips. A big pile of wood chips was removed from the road in the back. The wood chips increased the elevation of the land up to a foot to five feet. J. Valente noted that the wood chips were left on a slope outside of the wetlands area as A. Leston is asking the Commission to consider leaving the chips there as an expansion of agriculture land and pasture. The Lestons have a farm and are permitted "as a use as of right per Section 4.1 of the Commissions Regulations to fill adjacent to the wetlands under the regulations for agricultural use. J. Valente is satisfied with the removal of the woodchips that are stored in the Upper Review Area. He recommends that A. Leston monitor the storm water, monitor that the wood chips are not sloughing off the bank into the wetlands, and any others issues and be available to do a joint inspection of the site in eighteen months to make sure the area has been stabilized and no other issues exists.

J. Valente read the summary ruling with conditions into record;
T. Garritt **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the application with conditions;
W. Ross **SECONDED; MOTIONED CARRIED; 7.0.0**

On behalf of A. Leston and C. Granese, D. Cianci thanked the Commission and J. Valente for his positive involvement in this very difficult issue. W. Ross seconded that statement.

W. Ross left the meeting.

T. Garritt **MOVED** to hear item 3.1-**IWWC-1920-13** before items 2.3 and 2.4; T. Archambault **SECONDED; MOTIONED CARRIED; 6.0.0**

W. Ross returned to the meeting.

2.3 Bylaws

J. Valente reviewed the proposed Bylaws;
W. Ross **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the changes in the Bylaws;
T. Archambault **SECONDED; MOTIONED CARRIED; 7.0.0**

2.4 Proposed Regulation Changes -State DEEP revisions to Town of Columbia IWWC Regulations, Discuss Section 19 Fee Structure among other Sections of the Regulations.

J. Valente suggested the changes to the regulations. A Public Hearing will be set up for the new regulations. J. Valente reviewed with the Commission Section 19 Fee structures. J. Valente will have full regulations and fee structures change next month.

3. New Business:

3.1 **IWWC-1920-13** Mary and Robert Sullivan, 7 Nuhfer Drive, Application to replace/repair seawall, Assessor's Map 012B, Lot 34, in the LAR Zone.

J. Valente explained that there are two issues, one to replace two docks, and the seawall that must be replaced. R. Sullivan would like to have the Commission meet in fourteen days to approve the application to replace the seawall because the project must be completed no later than March 15, 2020. Water level is low at this point. R. Sullivan presented his case with the contractors who will

complete the projects. During the fall clean-up it was noted in mid-November that the seawall was in much needed repair. W. Ross questioned if the same material is used. R. Sullivan noted that the existing material will be removed from the site and new material will be used. Concrete blocks will be used. This cannot be an administrative approval since the wall will be taken down and then digging begins at the interface between wetlands and uplands soils. The timeline is approximately one week to complete the project start to finish, with weather permitting. T. Garritt questioned if there is only one opening and asked if there is a drainage pipe. R. Sullivan stated that there is no drainage pipe. J. Valente noted that the area was all sand. W. Ross suggested that the excavation should begin immediately. J. Valente stated this could be considered an emergency repair/construction if it were through the coming year the whole in the wall would increase 3-fold and yards of material would go into the lake. By consensus the project can go forward under the Agents Direction. The Commission will hold a Special Meeting on February 18th to act on this Application

J. Valente read the **RECEIVED** document into record.

T. Garritt **MOTIONED** to **RECEIVE** Application IWWC-1920-13;

W. Ross **SECONDED**; **MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0**

J. Allen **MOTIONED** to schedule a Special Meeting for 7 Nuhfer Drive, on Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.;

W. Ross **SECONDED**; **MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0**

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 6, 2020:

Ian Dann asked that the spelling of his name be corrected.

I. Dann **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the Meeting Minutes of January 6, 2020, C. Jaswinski **SECONDED**;
MOTION CARRIED 7.0.0

5. Audience of Citizens: None

6. Communications/Correspondence: None

7. Commission Open Discussion:

J. Allen opened discussion regarding tree services that drop wood chips in wetlands area. J. Valente stated he did not speak with anyone. The Town dumped wood chips near the road. The dumping of the wood chips was not part of the dumping near the wetlands.

J. Allen mentioned an article related to the mile a minute weeds in the Habitat. In Connecticut now, and what are people doing about it. It was an interesting article.

8. Administrative Reports: None

9. Adjournment:

W. Ross **MOVED** to **ADJOURN**; C. Jaswinski **SECONDED**; **MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.