

Windham Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency

Minutes of Special meeting held on February 7, 2007

Call to order

The chairman called the meeting to order at 7:12 P.M. Those present were: Jerry Iazzetta, Chairman, Joseph Marsalisi, and Susan Johnson, Vice Chairman along with Town Engineer Joe Gardner, and Town Planner, James Finger

Old Business John R. Brown Homebuilder LLC for 571 Jerusalem Rd. – wetland application to install a driveway across a stream, and to build a new home and septic system in an upland area, and the applicant John Brown is here. Wes Wentworth introduced himself, and said he is the soil scientist, and design engineer for this project.

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Mr. Wentworth gave an overview of the property and orienting the Board to the plan. This is a lot of record that's wet in the back. It's a very sandy – gravelly site with steep slopes pitching to the southwest. Soils are a stratified drift deposit with good percs at 2-5 minutes and this is excellent for the septic system. Due to the narrow shoulders on Jerusalem Rd. There are very limited sight lines to the North and west, so they are putting the driveway as far east as they can to improve the sight line as much as possible - which will require an easement over this other lot that John owns to the south. That's why this driveway crosses the intermittent brook. We worked the house into the site as much as possible to minimize disturbance. It has a walk out basement, and a garage underneath, and it fits pretty well for what the lot is.

Susan Johnson asked how he was going to control the spill off from the driveway. Mr. Wentworth responded that they planned to have the driveway paved so it will be a stable situation. Shoulders are about 4-5 feet on either side, and we want to eliminate any long term erosion off the driveway itself. In terms of the culvert there is a large wetland to the north that drains into this culvert in the street, and we have shown rip rap on the up-hill side, but we've opened it up a little bit along the bottom to widen the water course. Right now the watercourse is maybe 2-3 feet wide, and we've widened it out so we don't get trash and a build-up and we've up-sized the pipe so we don't get a back up situation. The pipe is laid in at the bottom of the existing stream bed so we're not altering that.

The Chairman said he didn't have any other issues; they appear to have answered all of his questions from the last meeting. He asked if the staff had any comments. Joe explained that he took a look at the sight line of the curve- its about a 28-30 mph curve, and he checked the driving speeds and found that its pretty hard to go over 30 mph. He said what they're going to do is ask the builder to put up a sign that says blind driveway

ahead as a warning. Susan wanted to know if it met the Towns guidelines for drainage, and Joe responded that yes it does, and that they've up-sized their pipe to an 18" pipe.

The Chairman asked for a motion, and Susan Johnson made a motion to approve the plan for a wetland permit. Joe Marsalisi seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

The Chairman then introduced the next item on the agenda Spring Valley Associates – 78 Mervyn Lane South Windham application for activity in upland of wetland for a new 1000 foot roadway and associated drainage for proposed 15 lot residential subdivision. This will just be the receipt of the application.

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Marc Gooden of Meehan & Gooden introduced himself as a Professional Engineer (representing the applicant). He gave the Board an overview of the subdivision layout, and the control measures they planned to employ to control drainage. He referred to the Soil Scientists report which included aerial photos of the site from several years earlier, and gave the history of the previous plans for 33 lots that had been approved, but not built. The earliest approvals dated to the early 1970's which expired. They came back again in 1988 and got approval for a revised layout for 19 lots, and 12 acres of open space, but they didn't complete the second phase, and that one lost its permits too.

So now they have revised the plan again, and have reduced the number of lots to 15, and increased the amount of open space to 22 acres –about 45 % of the site, and the open space will have access from two roads. They will extend the existing dead end of Mervyn Lane several hundred feet, and put in a new cul-de-sac; and will have two lots off of Insalaco Dr., and the second access to the open space.

The most important thing for the Wetlands Commission is the storm drainage, and he then proceeded to describe the measures to control, detain, and renovate the outflow. He also identified the location of existing wetlands, watercourses, and small pond or swamp. The construction of the subdivision will not involve any wetlands or watercourses, other than to clean out some sediment at the bottom of the old right of way that empties into the wetlands. He described the existing drainage which comes from the existing development, and empties into the old right of way and travels down the hill to the wetlands and there has been some erosion, and it has carried some sediment down to this point (pointing to the low spot in the right of way near the wetlands). So they are correcting both of those areas. They are taking out the old drainage system with metal pipe, and installing two new catch basins to bring it down to a natural detention basin. Most of the soil is Hinkley sand and gravel, and it drains really well – kind of like beach sand with some stones in it. In fact, they had mined the area for sand and gravel at one time.

He explained the drainage control features stating that they are not installing any wet fore bay, because they just can't hold any water. This will be essentially a maintenance free detention system. He said they plan to make it two feet deep with rip rap to trap the sediment. Marc added that there is an existing kettle hole at this location that they are going to expand, and its 190 feet from the wetlands (on the Insalaco Dr. side).

Joe Gardner explained that he had discussed the matter with Marc Gooden, and wanted the system to be designed to avoid maintenance as much as possible. Marc responded that he'd be happy to make the whole thing four feet deep to make it a fore-bay, but it won't really function as the code requires because it won't hold any water.

On the other side (Mervyn Lane), Marc explained the drainage coming down the hill breached a berm and eroded into the wetlands, and they will be correcting that by installing a higher berm, and a rip rapped basin ten feet wide and this will slow the water down, and store the sediment for a longer time. He explained that 90% of the storms are going to be 1" or less, and they'll just pond down at the basin. During the larger storms, the sediment will settle out in the basin, and the clean water will enter the wetlands.

Joe Gardner explained that this is similar to the Home Depot site where they installed a 300 ft. long channel along the wetlands to filter out the sediment before it entered the wetland. The water flows down, and it could overflow into the wetlands, but generally it percolates into the ground.

The Chairman asked if these energy dissipater's are the same size.

Marc Gooden answered that yes they are approximately the same size – they have almost the same amount of drainage coming out of both sides – about 30 Cubic Feet per second. So they have 2 - two foot sump energy dissipater's. He repeated that he'd be happy to increase these to four feet if the Board wanted, as the Storm Drainage (DEP) code required, but its not going to function.

The Chairman said he'd leave that up to the Town Engineer. Joe said that he's looking for sufficient area to trap the road sand.

Some discussion ensued regarding the abutter's rights to use the old paper streets, as rights of way, and they will continue to be so. But any effort to build a new street in these rights of ways will require a return to the Wetlands Commission for the appropriate permits. In some cases, they may be able to install a simple drive way around the drainage facility to access their land, and avoid substantial impacts to the wetlands.

The Chairman asked if any of the Board had any questions, and commented that they haven't had a chance to read through the report submitted. Marc replied that he understood, and that it was a thorough report. The Wetland Agent explained that the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the subdivision, and if the Board wanted to have a site walk that maybe we should coordinate that; adding that it may be good to see the site to get a better idea of the land.

Susan Johnson said that she wasn't sure when she wanted to walk the site because of the winter condition. Joe Gardner mentioned that they could look at the aerial photos of the site.

Agent Finger clarified that this application does not involve any activity in a wetland other than a corrective action to remove sediment which has eroded into the wetland. These are mitigation measures, and the activities they propose are reasonable. The only concern is with the details, but the Town Engineer is here to review those.

The Chairman urged the Town Engineer to make the basins bigger to increase the storage area... Joe responded that he was in favor of that, and we'll have them clean all of the catch basins in the subdivision to extend the life of the system before it has to be maintained by the Town.

Marc asked about the next meeting date which would be March 8, 2007. Susan Johnson said she will not be here for that meeting. Agent Finger said that since all of their proposed activities are in the upland, the Board could delegate the authority to approve these activities to the Agent under the regulations. Susan Johnson then made the motion to delegate the authority to approve the plan to the Wetland Agent. Joe Marsalisi seconded the motion, and all voted to approve. Agent Finger said he will confer with the Chairman before he issues the permit. Splash Park

Town Engineer Joseph Gardner presented a plan to implement a splash park feature at Lauter Park. He gave a general overview of the site, and explained that it will be protected with a fenced area for children to keep them away from traffic. All the work will be done with a combination of Town personnel, including Public Works, Water Department, and Water Pollution Control. The sprinkler heads will look like frogs, and will be serviced with public water, and collected in the sewer system to be removed to avoid contaminating the River with chlorinated water.

Susan Johnson asked if he needed the Board to approve it, and Joe responded that it will be within the 200 foot upland buffer of the Natchaug River, but out of the flood plains. Originally they wanted to put it in the Beach, but he and Brad convinced them that it should not be in the flood plain. After some discussion, Susan Johnson made a motion to delegate authority to the Wetland Agent to approve the activities. Joe Marsalisi seconded the motion and all voted in favor to approve. Fines – the Wetland Agent explained that the Town Attorney provided a draft in response to the Selectman's Office, and although it may deviate from other Town's fine ordinances, the Town Attorney said this one is consistent with the State Statutes.

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The Wetland Agent advised the Commission of various training programs and seminars that are available, but none of the Board members were interested in attending. He also mentioned that DEP will soon announce their annual Inland Wetlands Commissioner's Training program, and Susan Johnson said she would be interested in attending that course. She said she was also interested in the handouts from the Connecticut Bar Association.

Agent approvals- The Agent explained that he recently issued a jurisdictional ruling on an older lot split for Peter Misak on Beaver Hill Rd. that was not properly recorded in the early 1960's. This involved splitting out the non-conforming one acre lot, but bringing it up to a two acre lot, and showing a proposed house and septic system on the remaining ten acre lot – both were far away from any wetlands. This had been in the works for a long time, and finally they were trying to sell the larger lot, and needed to complete their paperwork, so the Agent agreed to sign off as there will be no effect – nor any activity for the next few years.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15 PM.

James Finger,

Inland Wetland Agent, and recorder