

LITCHFIELD INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
February 14, 2024 ~ 7:00 p.m.
In Person at Town Hall Annex, 80 Doyle Road, Bantam

1. Call to Order: Chairman Robert Blazek called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Susan Clarkin, Martin Connor, William Dooley, and Robert Blazek. Also present were Spencer Musselman, Wetlands Agent, and Ann Combs, Recording Secretary.

Members Absent: Jack Hamill, Jack Healy, Mike LoRusso

Appointment of Alternates: None

APPLICATION CONSIDERATIONS

2. Robertson – 39 Sheldon Lane

2/14/24

Remove, widen and repave existing driveway, remove the deteriorating retaining wall, construct a new retaining wall in same location as existing and remove scrub growth. (3,160 sq. ft. affected) MBL#194-046-011

Motion: M. Connor moved to table this item to 4a. and S. Clarkin seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed.

APPLICATION RECEPTIONS

3. Litchfield Country Club, Inc. – 256 Old South Road

2/14/24

Proposed golf driving range with natural tee areas, artificial tee areas, car parking, cart paths, cart parking, irrigation, ball netting, 20 x 30 ft. shed with 10 x 20 overhang, gravel pads, conversion of field into grass. See plans for details. MBL#067-050-010 & 210-050-004

Jim Strub, Attorney at Secor, Cassidy & McPartland, spoke on behalf of Litchfield Country Club. Brian Baker, Civil 1 Engineer, Ian Cole, Soil Scientist, Peter Gorman, Turf Specialist, Bill Honan of Litchfield Country Club, Liz Devoe and Ted Kohler, General Manager, and Lucas Hyder of White Memorial Conservation Center were also present. Mr. Strub referred to the survey and explained all components of the proposed work. They are working with owners White Memorial and Arethusa Farm, who has submitted a letter of support. Much of this application is in the 100- year flood plain with 30 ft. buffers to protect the river. They believe there are minimal impacts on the wetlands. Brian Baker then spoke about his work on this project over the past year, showing details and where the access lies past the soccer fields. He estimates construction will be completed in the summer of 2025. They will build a shed on piers. There will be no bathrooms, no septic, and no lighting, with no negative impact. M. Connor then asked if this project will be disturbing the natural and indigenous character of the wetlands or watercourses by removal of deposition of material, alteration or obstruction of water flow or pollution of the wetland or watercourse. He asked because this activity may be allowed under 4.2b of the regulations for outdoor recreation including golf courses and would allow this activity under as of right farm use if not obstructing any watercourse. Soil Scientist Ian Cole said this activity will maintain the flood plain capacity and will maintain the natural capacity of the onsite wetlands, which is the upland flood plain. This project avoids all areas where there are poorly drained soils. Therefore, he answered no to Mr. Connor's question. Lucas Hyder, WMCC Executive Director, said his biggest concern is the 30 ft. river buffer and is pleased with the plans. There are gaps in the netting to allow for wildlife movement. Peter Gorman spoke to the turf, fertilizers and pesticides that will be used. He minimizes the environmental impact of the processes, using A-list certified grasses with dense root systems that require very little irrigation, fertilizer, pest control products and resist weed infestation. The fertilizer breaks down in the

soil. This is all included in the Construction & Maintenance Report. After hearing explanations on all aspects and how the activity satisfies Sec. 4.2b of the regulations, the Commission was polled for its opinion on whether it should be a permitted use.

Motion: M. Connor moved and W. Dooley seconded a motion to declare this application a permitted use as a non-regulated use in a wetlands area under Sec. 4.2b for an outdoor recreation use for a golf course. All voted aye and the motion carried.

4. Northwest Lawn & Landscaping, LLC – 82 East Litchfield Road South **2/14/24**
After-the-fact application for a salt and material shed with asphalt base. MBL#266-003-002

S. Musselman said the applicant will not be here this evening but said he will be here next month. The problem is that he has 30 days to comply with P&Z's cease and desist order. If we schedule him for the next meeting, it will be past the 30-day point. It was decided to continue this application to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Motion: S. Clarkin moved to notify the applicant by letter that he is not to add any more salt to the bin. W. Dooley seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried. R. Blazek read a 2/13/24 letter from Heather Fox, 83 East Litchfield Road, with concerns about the illegal salt shed.

Motion: S. Clarkin moved to send a copy of this letter to the Torrington Area Health District, and W. Dooley seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed.

4a. Robertson – 39 Sheldon Lane **2/14/24**
Remove, widen and repave existing driveway, remove the deteriorating retaining wall, construct a new retaining wall in same location as existing and remove scrub growth. (3,160 sq. ft. affected) MBL#194-046-011

This item, tabled above, was addressed now with James Robertson present. He reviewed his plans per the submitted survey. In response to M. Connor's request for detail on how they will build the stone wall, he said he contacted the contractor, but he could not make the meeting. He did, however, send a sketch showing that in front of the wall, he will be putting a ditch, gravel, and a perforated pipe to drain. In addition, the interlocking wall with a gravel base will allow water to drain through and provide a barrier to protect the creek. He presented some photos he took.

Motion: M. Connor moved to approve the application by James Robertson, 39 Sheldon Lane, to remove, widen and repave the existing driveway, remove the deteriorating retaining wall, construct a new retaining wall in the same location and remove scrub growth. S Clarkin seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

5. Inland Wetlands Agent Report: S. Musselman said he was going to discuss Item 4a, but feels there is a good plan in place. He will send the letter and information to Torrington Area Health and send a letter to halt the storage of the salt, reiterating the cease and desist.

6. Approval of Minutes

- a) **November 8, 2023:** tabled
- b) **December 13, 2023:** tabled
- c) **January 10, 2024:** tabled

7. Correspondence

- CT Pond Services – aquatic material application on Floren Pond
- CT DEEP – Use of pesticides in State Waters – 637 Bantam Rd., the Materia Ristorante pond

8. Adjournment: Motion: W. Dooley moved to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. and S. Clarkin seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Ann D. Combs, Recording Secretary