

**Town of Winchester**  
**INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of Special Meeting**  
**March 4, 2009**

The special meeting of the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission met in the LeeAnne LeClaire Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Town Hall, 338 Main Street, Winsted and was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman O'Meara. The roll was called:

**2. Roll Call:**

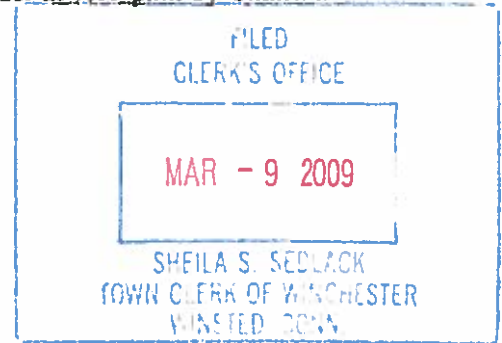
**Present:**

Tim O'Meara  
Sue Peacock  
James Rollins, Jr.  
Craig Sanden (7:09 p.m.)

Ric Nalette, Jr.  
Christopher Waring  
Robert Haburey

**Absent/Excused:**

Christopher Kiely  
Stephen Molinelli  
Agent Eisenlohr



**3. A Wetland Forum for the Winchester POCD**

Chairman O'Meara said that this is what Agent Eisenlohr is also working on in Hartland and Norfolk and he is going to try to get them information on what Wetlands approved for their final plan prior to Monday's meeting so that the Commission can look it over. He further said that he has reviewed what is in the current POCD for Wetlands regulations and it is pretty vague.

Commissioner Nalette said that not in the information that was given to them but in the Full Development Plan somewhere around page 60 are the actual goals of the POCD and he feels that is what is important to look at.

Commissioner Peacock said that she took some notes prior to that page 60 and she wanted to bring a few things to the Commission's attention that she felt were interesting or important.

Page 16: speaks to the very factors that limit development are in fact the factors that make Winchester the beautiful natural town that it is, etc. She said that she looked at it from a Wetlands point of view and what as a Commission with their regulations they are here to protect.

Page 20 & 21: It goes over the Inlands Wetland and Watercourses and the regulations which the 1970's Statute that gave the Town the control and regulation of the development of the land categorized as wetlands and watercourses. In additions it goes on to talk about Winchester's sensitivity to flooding, dependence on underwater aquifers for well water and control and development affecting inland wetlands and watercourses-a continuing process followed by the Commission. One fifth of the Town's area is categorized as inland wetlands and watercourses and is a major factor in land development.

Commissioner Peacock said that there needs to be updating in the zones in terms of footage from wetlands and watercourses.

Page 25: Speaks to the public sewer service and in number three it addresses the areas of steep slopes, wetlands and little or no anticipation of sewers in lot sizes larger than one acre are appropriate and two acres is prudent.

Page 26: It addresses the public water supply drainage area and the most important protective measure of a watershed area is 2 acre lot size limitation. She questioned whether Planning & Zoning rezoned the RU1 land to RU3 in watershed areas.

Chairman O'Meara said that the caveat is that there is the two acre zoning but there is also the open door for cluster developments.

Commissioner Sanden said that one of the things that they have found in other towns is that when you go into an open space there are areas such as under power lines, which is not buildable in any case or in steep slopes and that is all thrown into the easement and it throws the open space figures off. They should go into that and take those things out and then they come to the open space and they need to protect the inland wetlands. The only way to do that is to try to forestall the availability of overdevelopment.

Commissioner Peacock said that one of the proposals will be a consideration of all of the RU1 land to RU3. Commissioner Rollins said that this is in under the Section of Public Water Supply which would be areas such as Crystal Lake.

Page 27: Speaks to Brown Water Aquifers. The Stillwater aquifer is the largest, most significant aquifer in Town and it lies below the Still and Mad Rivers and to the south of the Route 8 corridor. The problems that they brought up was the use of land above the aquifer of retail, commercial and industrial already existence and the basic uses are detrimental to the aquifers. Great care should be taken regarding the drainage and sewage system, treatment of groundwater pollution should be a constant concern.

Commissioner Nalette said that this is another example that this is an advisory document and Town is not required to follow any of the recommendations given they do not treat their groundwater with constant concern.

Commissioner Peacock said that this is important in that it was a concern and is still a concern. All they have to do as a Commission is to make sure this new document that is being developed has what is needed in place to protect the wetlands and watercourses.

Page 28: Commissioner Peacock said that this area gets into the developable land and she read this charted information to the Commission. The Commission wanted to keep in mind that these figures are from 1994. This information is also in the POCD information that was given to Commission members.

Page 66: Addressed policies and goals for POCD in preservation of natural resources. It was summed up in the POCD as "it is obvious that the character and quality of the Town is defined by its open spaces and natural resources whose preservation is the key policy of the Plan of Development. The Town should continue as it has in the past to balance the rights of the property owner to develop his land with the goals of preserving the natural beauty of the Town."

Page 41 and 42: Speaks to the Route 8 corridor. The Commission briefly discussed the Route 8 corridor as far as sewer and it's classification as a Class A water system. The POCD also discussed the Route 8 corridor and the reason for its location and the slopes, etc. It also discusses the strengths and opportunities and that it is the main location for future retail, commercial and industrial development and the quality of these developments will depend on zoning regulations. It also discusses the problems and constraints and the pressure to change zones.

Chairman O'Meara said that there were 13 members on the committee back in 1994 and wanted to know how many are on it now. Commissioner Waring said that all of the previous minutes regarding this have been through the Planning & Zoning Commission with George Closson speaking on the POCD Committee's behalf. Commissioner Nalette according to POCD meeting agenda that the subcommittee is two people.

Page 119: Addresses the development policies and proposals and she really thinks that what this talks about is what this Commission deals with all of the time.

Chairman O'Meara said that there is a need for more accurate wetlands maps like a computer database instead of depending on other people's maps. Commissioner Waring said that the GIS Mapping is part of that. Commissioner Sanden said that the GIS mapping can only do so much and in the next "X" number of years people will be required to supply CADS so they can plug it into database and that will expand it.

Commissioner Peacock asked how have they gotten demarcations in the past. Has it been through airplane flights, etc. Commissioner Rollins said that there are two ways they do it he believes. One is that they have records of public properties known to be wetlands and they got put on the map. And, two, the USGS did soil testing all over NW CT that was unbelievably thorough. The Commission briefly discussed soils and soil testing.

Commissioner Peacock said it seems a lot of the land that wasn't in need of a wetlands permit has been done and what they seem to be permitting now is land that has a wetland crossing or near the wetlands. It seems that a lot of the land that could be done without wetlands permitting is done. Commissioner Rollins said that that is not necessarily true. People use to just fill in the wetlands. The same development practice has been occurring but it is only about the last 30 years that the wetlands is part of the equation. On a small scale it probably didn't matter but now it is being done on a massive scale it is not just a decision and that makes it so much more important now. Before only direct impact was considered and now they are realizing the indirect impact is just as important.

Commissioner Nalctte asked Chairman O'Meara if he spoke to Agent Eisenlohr on what to talk about tonight and what is going to happen on this meeting. Chairman O'Meara said no and he doesn't believe that he is entirely sure either. Commissioner Peacock said that it appears by the agenda that it is going to be more listening.

Chairman O'Meara said that they should discuss issues like buffer areas, slope areas and maps. Commissioner Rollins said that their charge regardless of what the POCD is, isn't going to change. The Commission is limited on what they have to do and only what they have to do. It's not that their job can or will change but they can give information to the POCD group so they can be addressing Wetlands issues ahead of time. The main point is upland review areas and things like where Class A waters are.

Commissioner Peacock said that they should be including viewshed. Commissioner Rollins said that viewshed is more of a Planning & Zoning thing and not a Wetlands issue unless it is directly related to water. Commissioner Peacock said that they should be making sure the POCD Committee is educated and have their facts right.

Commissioner Rollins said that they have to help make development process more streamlined. There will be more of a heads up that the engineers have then the more they can avoid things they should not be doing in the Wetlands.

Commissioner Peacock said that they have to be concerned with the conservation & development. And that is what this document's about which is preserving the character of the Town.

Commissioner Rollins said that as far as things in the POCD not being addressed, they can speak to that as far as those things go but not as a Wetlands Commission. The Commission discussed that they should have their guidelines on what they would like included as a Wetlands Commission.

It was discussed that in order to get funding from the State, the Town needs a current Plan of Conservation and Development in place and need to be following it.

Commissioner Nalette asked if anyone has looked at State of Connecticut POCD. He did and what really stuck out was development along the Route 8 and Route 44 corridor and they want more development in Indian Meadow and that area. This area and different development ideas were briefly discussed.

Commissioner Nalette asked if anyone had a chance to look at preliminary report for the POCD planning that was prepared by the TPA Design Group who are going to be presenting on Monday. Commissioner Nalette said that it boils down to "planning policy should continue to direct density, housing and development to the Winsted area. Commercial Zoning should not be extended along corridors unless the Town population growth creates market demand that cannot be met in Winsted....the expansion must be prioritized." He said that in this document he came up with a whole list of projects and plans and things that town of Winsted has spent a lot of money on it and there are a lot of questions regarding things that are started and not finished.

Commissioner Rollins said that this meeting may have been premature and they do not have enough information and they will know more after the meeting on Monday. It was discussed that it is important to know what direction they would like to go in but will know more after Monday's meeting. Chairman O'Meara said that Agent Eisenlohr is going to get what Norfolk and Hartland has done and he is working on getting it to them before Monday. Commissioner Peacock said that she thinks they should be looking at other towns such as Torrington. Chairman O'Meara said they he feels they would be better served by smaller towns instead of larger. Commissioner Sanden said that many of the POCD's were available on some town sites. Chairman O'Meara said that the Town Planning website is a very good source of information.

Commissioner Nalette asked what they should be discussing as Wetland issues of the development of the Town. His important points are riparian buffers and making sure that the stream sides and lakesides protected. Another thing is contiguous wetlands and that they maintain a connection between wetland pockets. He asked what else they should speak to in order to make sure they are educating the POCD Committee.

Chairman O'Meara said that one issue that Agent Eisenlohr brought up was vegetative buffers. Commissioner Haburey said that he would strongly encourage maintenance of storm drains and finished products.

After discussion Commissioner Rollins said that maybe a way of stating it that may make more impact is saying to avoid fragmentation of wetlands. It was discussed that contiguous will be heard by developers differently than fragmentation.

Commissioner Nalette said that there is a lot of great info on the website [www.ctjc.org](http://www.ctjc.org). There is information riparian buffers, etc. It also talked about wetlands issues as relevant to the CT River watershed and is important for local use.

Commissioner Rollins said that another thing is that in order to maintain Wetland and Watercourse quality some type of buffer is required and now that buffer is one that but what goes on beyond that buffer is another thing. In current POCD they talk about what types of development is allowed and what they don't want in certain areas. It seems that this can be put in POCD. He said that one thing that may make sense is to stress the importance of wetlands and watercourses quality up as well as character of the land. But the economic value of the land also. The POCD ought to stress agriculture land as a premium. This was discussed by the Commission. Commissioner Rollins said that and IWC angle to bring up is that agricultural is very good for wetlands and agricultural health.

Chairman O'Meara said that he feels that one person should speak on behalf of the Commission. It was agreed that Vice Chairman Waring would be speaking on behalf of the Commission with what input they would like to have.

The Commission agreed on a list of five concerns that they should be presenting:

- 1) Refer POCD back to current regulations for setbacks;
- 2) Contiguous wetlands/Avoid fragmentation of wetlands;
- 3) Vegetative Buffers around waterbodies;
- 4) Riparian Buffers and protection of stream sides & lakesides; and
- 5) Maintenance of finished products and storm drains.

12.

**Adjournment**

*Motion made by Commissioner Nalette and seconded by Commissioner Rollins to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m.*

*All in Favor. Unanimous. Motion Passes.*

Respectfully submitted,

  
Clerk, Anna L.

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