

March 10, 2020

MINUTES: THE INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, March 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Legislative Council Chambers, Memorial Town Hall, 2372 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT, with the following results:

Commissioners in attendance:

Joan Lakin, Chairperson
Kirk Shadle
Lee Campo
George Schneider
Jonathan Clapp
Mike Milazzo
Lauren Wholey
Mike Stone

Staff in attendance:

Dan Kops, Town Planner
Tim Lee, Assistant Town Attorney
Tom Vocelli, IW Enforcement Officer
Natalie Barletta, Commission Clerk

Ms. Lakin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Shadle called the roll and there was a quorum. Ms. Lakin explained the meeting procedures.

I. Pending Applications:

1. **20-1232** 801 Main Street, Construction of a single-family residence
801 Main LLC, Applicant

Jim Galligan, President of Nafis and Young, addressed the Commission. This proposal was previously approved in 2015 as a single family residence with wetlands septic, but since that application has expired, the applicant wishes to obtain a new permit.

Mr. Clapp said that we would like a clarification, and wanted to know what the recent revision was. Mr. Vocelli said the recently-reviewed plans expanded the minimum buffer width, and addressed some suggestions from the town engineer.

Ms. Wholey moved to approve Application #20-1232 for the construction of a single – family residence at 801 Main Street, subject to the following conditions:

1) Sediment and erosion controls shall be installed along the silt fence line depicted on Site Plan Sheet No. 1 (dated February 21, 2020), prior to the onset of any other grading or construction. The silt fence shall be reinforced with a row of staked contiguous hay bales. Any soil stockpiles shall be located within the work area defined by the silt fence. The stockpiles shall be covered with tarpaulins prior to any rain event and at the close of each workday. Appropriate sediment and erosion controls must be put in place around all stockpiles. Roof drain outlets, including rip-rap splash pads or other erosion control measures, and **the proposed stockpile areas**, shall be depicted on the final revised plans;

- 2) The non-disturbance buffer area that abuts the wetland shall have a minimum width of 50 feet, and the non-disturbance boundary-line shall be permanently demarcated at 35 foot intervals with Inland Wetland Conservation medallions mounted on either a permanent split-rail fence or on a permanent stockade fence. The medallions shall not be mounted on trees;
- 3) In order to discourage down-slope dumping, the buffer boundary-line fence shall be located at least ten (10) feet from the top edge of the slope that overlooks the wetland/watercourse area. In order to reduce erosion or the formation of rills & gullies, the portion of the buffer between the fence and the edge of the slope, as well as the slope itself, shall be seeded with a New England Wetland Plant (NEWP) Semi-shade and Forb Mix (or with an alternative seed mix or a native ground cover approved by the Wetlands Officer after consultation with appropriate members of the Commission);
- 4) The lawn shall not encroach into any part of the non-disturbance buffer area;
- 5) Except for the aforementioned seeding or planting requirement, no grading, clearing or disturbance (either pre or post construction) shall occur in the wetland/watercourse area or in the abutting non-disturbance buffer area unless approved by this Commission or by the Wetlands Officer. The Wetlands Officer shall provide non-disturbance language for inclusion in the final revised plans, and this language shall govern uses and activity within the wetland/watercourse area and the non-disturbance buffer area;
- 6) The wetland /watercourse area and the abutting non-disturbance buffer area shall be depicted on all site plans and on all as-built drawings;
- 7) No wood chips, grass clippings, or debris of any kind (including stumps and tree stumps for disposal) shall be deposited in the wetland/watercourse area or in the abutting non-disturbance buffer area. No tree stumps or debris of any kind shall be buried anywhere on-site;
- 8) Any change in the location of the proposed house or septic system or well, or any change in the size or configuration of the non-disturbance buffer area, shall be subject to review and approval by this Commission or by the Wetlands Officer. If the Wetlands Officer does not deem any such change to be *de minimis*, it would need to come before the full Commission;
- 9) No site clearing or tree cutting or tree removal shall occur prior to the issuance of a zoning permit;
- 10) If during the course of the project any fill is required to be brought on site, such fill shall be clean fill (i.e. free of construction debris or other contaminants).
- 11) All conditions of approval shall be listed on the final revised plans and all conditions of approval shall be cross-referenced to their location in the plan itself. The final revised plans must be approved by the Wetlands Officer prior to the issuance of a zoning permit;
- 12) The owner shall provide any prospective buyer of this property with a copy of the final revised plan that has been approved by the Wetlands Officer and with a copy of the Notice-of-Decision (including these conditions-of-approval) that will be issued by the Wetlands Officer.

It was seconded by Mr. Schneider.

Mr. Milazzo said that he would like to could include by way of amendment the engineer's comments on the final width on the driveway shall be 16 feet, even though temporarily it can be 21 feet. Mr. Vocelli asked if that was a wetlands issue, as when he writes the suggested motions he tries to limit it to wetlands. Mr. Vocelli said that he was not sure it was good practice to step beyond wetlands issues. Mr. Milazzo then withdrew that change. Mr. Kops added that the Zoning Enforcement Officer will look at it carefully, and restrict it.

Mr. Shadle said that he would like to amend condition #1 to include “proposed stockpile areas.” Ms. Lakin asked if Ms. Wholey and Mr. Schneider were in agreement, and they were.

Ms. Wholey asked Mr. Vocelli if we are asking them not to put the medallions on trees, but the plan has a standard detail that says trees may be four inches in diameter. Mr. Vocelli said that there is no current written standard that governs this, but the concern is that trees die sooner than fences ‘go south,’ although that happens as well. Mr. Vocelli said that he assumed the reference to the trees would be stricken from the final revised plan.

The vote was unanimous in favor.

II. Other Business:

1. Review Site Inspection Schedule

There are currently no site visits scheduled.

2. Review of October 2, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Schneider asked about developing a system that was better to distribute minutes, since the last meeting was in October. Ms. Lakin said that she will work on it with the Clerk. Mr. Kops added that all of the minutes are available online for anyone to view.

Mr. Schneider made a motion to approve the October 2, 2019 minutes. It was seconded by Mr. Shadle, and the vote was unanimous, with one abstention.

3. Storm water catch-basins

Ron Walters, Senior Environmental Analyst of the Regional Water Authority, addressed the commission about the project. Mr. Walters said that this is a good project to be submitted for a grant, which is due April 1st. Mr. Walters said that medallions would be a longer lasting marker than stencils. Mr. Walters added that the discussion is who is going to oversee the project and how big it is going to be. Mr. Walters then stated that the biggest issues of this project are organizing the project, mapping where the medallions are placed, and deciding which neighborhoods to place them in.

Ms. Lakin asked the Commission for suggestions. She suggested that maybe Boy and Girl Scouts may want to get involved.

Mr. Shadle asked how the medallions are attached to the basins. Mr. Walters said concrete adhesive.

Mr. Walters said that there is also an education component. Mr. Walters said that this requires some sort of watershed education, and having a lot of educational material out there that is personalized to the individual watershed. Mr. Walters suggested having a poster board in Town Buildings/schools, and having a pamphlet about the project to distribute for Earth Day. Ms. Lakin said Earth Day would have been a good opportunity, but it is too soon. Mr. Walters said that would be as we moved forward.

Ms. Lakin asked if this was a part of the grant application process to the watershed fund. Mr. Walters said the educational component would not need to be developed now, as all that is needed is an overview and then submit that. Mr. Walters said that he does not know the reporting process and what would be needed by the Watershed Fund.

Ms. Lakin asked how Mr. Walters would suggest proceeding in the first few steps. Mr. Walters said that he thinks that the first step is identifying someone who is willing to oversee the project, as that’s the big time consuming portion. Mr. Walters added that there is a Mill River Watershed Association meeting on March 10, and he said that he plans to discuss this with some stakeholders that attend the meeting.

Mr. Walters stated that he can fill out the application, and it would take about a day and a half. Mr. Walters said that creating the maps are also not that difficult to do, as there is the town Stormwater GIS and that developing the educational material may take a few months to do so. Mr. Walters said that the whole thing really centers on who is going to get volunteers together, schedule where people are going, and passing out the medallions. Mr. Walters did remind the Commission that finding that person will be difficult.

Ms. Lakin asked what role Mr. Walters would play. Mr. Walters said that is willing to help submit the grant application, developing the educational material, and making the maps. Mr. Walters added that it wouldn't be too difficult for the Regional Water Authority to offer their service support on this. Ms. Lakin said that the Commission would need to find volunteers then. Mr. Walters answered that probably the person overseeing the project would have to identify volunteers.

Ms. Lakin asked if the Commission has any questions. Mr. Schneider asked who should be owning the project, between the Regional Water Authority, Inland Wetlands Commission, and the Town of Hamden Public Works. Ms. Lakin brought up the question of who owns the catch basins. Mr. Kops answered that the Public Works department did. Mr. Walters said approval is needed from the Town. Mr. Kops said that they would need two approvals from the town: one would be to do the project, and the other would be acceptance of the medallion or a grant, both of which can be done at the same time. Mr. Kops added that he thinks that either someone in Public Works or Engineering would be responsible for the project. Ms. Lakin asked if they have to be the initial stakeholders. Mr. Kops said that he would think so.

Ms. Wholey said that this seems like it can be accomplished by breaking it down into manageable chunks, and it seems like it can be a large community developing opportunity. Ms. Wholey said she would be interested in helping.

Mr. Kops mentioned that he will contact the First Selectman of North Haven, as North Haven has completed a similar project before, to see their experiences on how many people need to be done, etc.

Ms. Lakin said that she would assume we want to get medallions that say different things, depending on where it was located. Mr. Walters said that he thinks that it would be best to be as general as possible, such as saying that it "drains to a river." Mr. Walters added that if it were to be personalized, then it would have an additional cost. Mr. Walters then said that you can get them cheaper in bulk.

Mr. Walters advised that in terms of the grant, it is best to start small, as the Watershed Fund allows multiyear grants. Mr. Stone said that the bigger the project, the more comprehensive it will be. Mr. Vocelli said that given the fact we have limited resources he would suggest that a demo program along the Mill River to get things launched, and instead of having a lot of complicated mapping it would be simple enough to start near and running parallel to the Mill River. Mr. Vocelli added he thought that was the approach of Save the Sound when did some funding, as it simplifies the start-up. Mr. Vocelli added that basically, you can just take a map and pick what to start with.

Ms. Lakin asked about replacement lids. Mr. Kops replied that he doesn't know. Mr. Schneider volunteered to get together to talk with Ron and talk about the project and all of the different compounds and make them fit together, and talk to someone from North Haven.

Mr. Vocelli said that for the Watershed Fund public education grants, the Wetlands Commission and the Town would have no standing. This grant requires applicants to be a 501c3, and the Mill River Watershed Association is such an organization.

Ms. Lakin asked if the Commission was on board with this. Ms. Lakin said that the Commission needs to come up with volunteers, and asked Mr. Walters if the Commission needs do so before the application. Mr. Walters said that it is not needed, but empathized that the project needs a leader. Ms. Lakin asked where the leader comes from. Mr. Walters suggested bringing it up to various groups. Mr. Mack said he was meeting with the Hamden Land Trust tomorrow and will bring it up to see if there is interest. Mr. Walters also suggested that an Eagle Scout can lead this project, and

added that once you get the materials, it's all about organizing. Ms. Lakin said that would be ideal. Mr. Shadle said that he might know someone who is looking for an Eagle Scout Project.

Ms. Lakin said that if there are potential leaders, and Mr. Walters is taking care of writing up the grant and the GIS mapping, then they are already on their way. Mr. Walters said that the grant application needs to be submitted by April 1st, and the winners will be announced in May. Mr. Walters added that there are two deadlines each year to submit a grant—April and October. Mr. Kops added that approval to accept the funds will need to come from the council.

Mr. Walters said that we would need to put in the timeline. Ms. Lakin asked Mr. Walters if he had an idea of where to start. Mr. Walters said that throughout the watershed. Mr. Vocelli suggested starting at the Mill River. Mr. Schneider said that he thought that it was possible. Mr. Walters said that any neighborhood that you start it in could be a good thing.

Mr. Mack asked if there was liability. Mr. Lee said that it's a safety issue of putting children in the roads, however the short answer is he doesn't think that the town is liable. Mr. Kops confirmed that adult supervision is needed if there are minor volunteers. Mr. Schenider asked if there were any potential union issues with this project. Mr. Lee said that there are no Town workers, it is not going to be an issue, as his understanding is that it's simply on a volunteer basis. Mr. Lee added that the question is if Public Works would allow them to put signs on the catch basin. Mr. Kops said that they would take a look. Mr. Lee said he will give North Haven a call tomorrow to see if he can get information.

Ms. Wholey said the responsibility will be finding the leader. Ms. Lakin said that Mr. Shadle and Mr. Mack will discuss it with Boy Scout troops. Mr. Walters said that it would be good to have someone in line for this. Ms. Lakin asked if Mr. Mack, Ms. Wholey and Mr. Shadle would stand in if they can't find someone. They all agreed to be stand ins who are going to find at least one permanent person.

Mr. Walters added that he will bring it up at the Whitney Water Center meeting of the Miller River Watershed Association at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10. Ms. Wholey said to tell people about the project, even when a leader is found. Mr. Mack said he will bring it up to the Hamden Land Trust at tomorrow's meeting.

Ms. Lakin then thanked Mr. Walters for coming to address the Commission.

4. Adjournment

Mr. Mack made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Mr. Campo, and the vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Natalie Barletta-Clerk of the Commission