

INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY
TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE
REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 18, 2023

The regular meeting of the Woodbridge Inland Wetlands Agency (Agency) was commenced at 7:31 pm on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, in the Central Meeting Room of the Woodbridge Town Hall, 11 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge, by Chairman Robert Blythe.

Agency members present for the meeting were: Chairman Robert Blythe, Jack Kurek, Dave Speranzini, Steven Sosensky, Josh Goldberg, Enréne van Tonder (alternate) and Jean Webber (alternate). Agency Enforcement Officer (AEO) Kristine Sullivan was also present.

NEW BUSINESS

David K. Edwards: 35 Indian Trail Road

Application for Eagle Scout Project to build a bridge across a stream on Land Trust Property related to an existing trail

The application submitted by David K. Edwards, for his proposed Eagle Scout project to build a bridge across a stream on Land Trust Property for an existing pedestrian trail was formally received by the Agency. The application was accompanied by plans showing how the bridge would be constructed, where the bridge would be located, proof of notice to the abutting property owners and request for a waiver of the application fees.

As the first order of business relative to the application, the Chairman asked for a motion to approve the request for a waiver of the application fees.

*** **Kurek moved to approve the request for a waiver of the application fees**

*** **Sosensky seconded**

*** **In favor: Blythe, Kurek, Goldberg, Speranzini and Sosensky**

*** **Opposed: No One**

*** **Recused: No One**

*** **Abstained: No One**

The applicant, David Edwards was present to discuss the application with the Agency members. In discussion and in response to questions from the Agency members he noted:

- The application is to construct a bridge over a watercourse on the hiking trail on land owned by the Woodbridge Land Trust located at 35 Indian Trail.
- In addition to the bridge, there would be two “walking planks” on either side of the bridge
- The bridge would be 12’ long and 3’ wide.
- The two separate walkways leading to the bridge would be constructed of two side by side 10” wide planks.

The Chairman noted:

- In accordance with State Statute, that the application could not be acted on that evening.
- If approved, the application would most likely be subject to field adjustments in consultation with the Agency Enforcement Officer.

Agency members noted that the application was complete, and the submitted drawings clear and informative.

Action on the application was then deferred until the Agency's next regular meeting on February 15, 2023.

Town of Woodbridge: 100 Center Road

Application for construction of an expanded foundation to the existing storage garage foundation behind the fire house, construction of a storage garage, filling and disruption of wetlands and creation of a wetland mitigation area.

The application submitted by the Town of Woodbridge, for construction of an expanded foundation adjacent to the existing storage garage foundation behind the fire house, subsequent construction of a storage garage, filling and disruption of wetlands and creation of a wetland mitigation area was formally received by the Agency. The application was accompanied by project plans, a soil scientist's report, wetland assessment report and mitigation recommendations, proof of notice to the abutting property owners and a request for a waiver of the application fees.

As the first order of business relative to the application, the Chairman asked for a motion to approve the request for a waiver of the application fees.

*** **Sosensky moved to approve the request for a waiver of the application fees**

*** **Kurek seconded**

*** **In favor: Blythe, Kurek, Goldberg, Speranzini and Sosensky**

*** **Opposed: No One**

*** **Recused: No One**

*** **Abstained: No One**

First Selectman Beth Heller then submitted and read opening remarks relative to the subject application.

Project engineer Donald W. Smith was present to discuss the application. In his presentation and in response to questions by Agency members he noted while referring to a colorized print of the project area that:

- The application is to add 2000 sq. ft of foundation adjacent to the existing storage garage foundation behind the fire house.
- The additional foundation would allow for the construction of a 3825 sq. ft building.
- An additional 2500 sq. ft. of impervious driveway would also need to be created.
- There would be a direct wetland impact of 1600 sq. ft.
- 1700 sq. ft of wetland mitigation area would be created to offset the filling of the wetlands.
- The area for the additional foundation would be excavated to a depth of 2'
- 1700 sq. ft of upland area would be replanted to create a new wetland area.
- The planting plan is part of the application submission.
- As required by the building code, there would be two side exits from the building on the eastern and western sides of the building, closest to the parking/driveway area.
- Those exits would have concrete landings.

Jennifer Beno, Biologist/Wetland Scientist at Soil Science and Environmental Services, Inc. then reviewed her Wetland Assessment Report and Mitigation Recommendations dated

January 11, 2023, which was submitted as part of the application. In her presentation and in response to questions from Agency members she noted:

- She had inspected the site on December 9, 2022 and January 7, 2023.
- The site had also been reviewed by Scott Stevens, a registered professional soil scientist at Soil Science and Environmental Services, Inc.. His report dated December 9, 2022, was also part of the application submission.
- There is a wetland area to the east of the existing foundation which has been cleared and is covered in wood chips.
- There are some invasive species in the woodchipped wetland area.
- Her report included written information and pictures pertaining to the wetland values, functions, wildlife, and existing conditions.
- She had reviewed the Natural Diversity Data Base Mapping of the area. That mapping shows approximate locations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species and important natural communities in Connecticut. As shown on that mapping, the project area has no areas of concern.
- There would be 1600 sq. ft of direct wetlands impact from the project
- To mitigate the direct wetlands impact, wetlands would be created to the east (sic).
- Clean topsoil would be used for that mitigation project. There are invasive species in the existing wetland soil that would typically be used for a mitigation project, but because of the presence of the invasive species that would not be advisable to be done.
- There would be wetland restoration plantings as well as buffer plantings for the created wetlands.
- While a list of planting species is provided, substitutions may be necessary dependent on availability at the time of the work.
- It was her professional opinion that there would be no adverse, significant impacts on the onsite wetlands.
- That she would recommend annual invasive species removal.
- That she would recommend a visual demarcation between the mitigation/buffer area and the firehouse area to prevent intrusion into that area.
- That she would recommend an inspection of the wetland and buffer plantings when they were first done, and then again for three years after the plantings were done to ascertain that there was no more than a planting mortality rate of 15%. If the mortality was higher then replanting of deceased plants would have to be done.

At the conclusion of the presentations by Mr. Smith and Ms. Beno the Agency members discussed whether or not to hold a public hearing on the application, and if so, under what criteria. At the end of that discussion, Agency members acted to schedule a public hearing on the application as follows:

***** Goldberg moved to schedule a public hearing on the application by the Town of Woodbridge for construction of an expanded foundation to the existing storage garage foundation behind the fire house, construction of a storage garage, filling and disruption of wetlands and creation of a wetland mitigation area. The public hearing to be called under Section 9.1. of the Agency's Regulations based on the**

Agency's finding that a public hearing regarding the application would be in the public interest.

***** Kurek seconded**

***** In favor: Blythe, Kurek, Goldberg, Speranzini and Sosensky**

***** Opposed: No One**

***** Recused: No One**

***** Abstained: No One**

OLD BUSINESS

Asmk Assoc., Inc.: 10 South Bradley Road

Application for work to protect building from erosion from rising flood waters in West River and removal of dead trees along the riverbank

The application submitted by Asmk Assoc., Inc. for work to protect the business building from erosion when flooding occurs in the West River and removal of dead trees along the riverbank had been formally received by the Agency at its December 21, 2022, regular meeting.

Some members of the Agency had individually inspected the site since the December 21, 2022 meeting. Based on those individual inspections Agency members noted:

- The West River is very narrow behind the applicant's building and should not be narrowed any further.
- It was difficult to access the area of the site along the riverbank for inspection purposes.

Adam Bakhtiar was present to discuss the application. In response to questions from Agency members he noted that:

- Dead branches in the river would be removed.
- Riprap would not encroach into the river.
- The riprap would be installed along the river bank for the length of the property owned by the applicant which adjoins the river.
- The point of the work was to stabilize the riverbank.
- There is an old retaining wall which has cracked and is falling into the river.
- The work area would be accessed by removing existing stone slabs to access the rear of the building.
- The plan is to clean up the whole area, including where the stone slabs are stored.
- Styrofoam which is used for packing when the stone is shipped, can, under windy conditions, blow out of the dumpsters.
- The contractor who would be doing the work was supposed to furnish a scope of work to the Agency. It is regretted that that report was not provided to the Agency and will be provided prior to the Agency's next meeting.
- Asked if removal of the trees could be done sooner rather than later

At the conclusion of discussion, it was the consensus of the Agency members to conduct a formal site visit on Wednesday, January 25, 2023 at 8:30 am. At that time, the Agency members can make a determination if tree cutting, but not stumping, can commence. Mr. Bakhtiar reiterated that a project plan will be provided by the site contractor. In addition the submitted site plan will be reviewed to provide additional detail.

Further action on the application was deferred until the Agency's regular meeting on February 15, 2023.

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence had been received.

ENFORCEMENT OFFICER'S REPORT

The AEO reported that an email had been received from a member of the Woodbridge Land Trust inquiring if monuments had been installed to denote the property line between the Trust property located at 55 Peck Hill Road and the adjoining property at 15 and 21 Wolf Tree Lane owned by Daniel Esposito, when a final inspection of the wetlands restoration work for the foregoing properties would be done and if a member of the Land Trust could be present for the final inspection of the wetlands restoration. AEO Sullivan noted:

- When she had last spoken with Soil Scientist/biologist David Lord, she had been told that the plants for the restoration project had been delivered and were to be planted.
- To date no written report has been received relative to the status of the required plantings.
- An email will be sent to Mr. Lord, project engineer John Paul Garcia, and Attorney Pellegrino, legal counsel for Mr. Esposito requesting an update on the project, if monuments were agreed to be installed between the Land Trust and the property owner and when the performance bond for the wetland plantings will be posted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

***** Speranzini moved to approve the minutes of the Agency's regular meeting of December 21, 2022, with amendments.**

***** Kurek seconded**

***** In favor: Blythe, Kurek, Goldberg, Speranzini and Sosensky**

***** Opposed: No One**

***** Recused: No One**

***** Abstained: No One**

Unanimous approval

SITE INSPECTIONS

As previously noted a formal site visit was scheduled of 10 S. Bradley Road for Wednesday, January 25, 2023 at 8:30 am.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

***** Kurek moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 pm.**

***** Sosensky seconded**

***** In favor: Blythe, Kurek, Goldberg, Speranzini and Sosensky**

***** Opposed: No One**

***** Recused: No One**

***** Abstained: No One**

Unanimous approval

Accordingly, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristine Sullivan, Acting Recording Secretary