



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD INLAND WETLANDS BOARD
Web Based Meeting Hosted on Zoom

DRAFT MINUTES
Thursday, May 14, 2026

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not a verbatim transcription.

Members present: Susan Baker, Chair; Tim Bishop; Vice Chair; Keith Carlson; Noah Berkowicz; Carson Fincham; David Smith

Members Absent: Alan Pilch, Recording Secretary

Also present: Caleb Johnson, Inland Wetlands Agent; Beth Peyser, Recording Secretary

I. Call to order:

Ms. Baker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. A quorum was present.

II: Public Hearing

1. **(Contd) IW-26-9; 599 Branchville Road;** Plenary Ruling application for construction of a 75' clear span bridge, multifamily dwellings, driveways, septic and associated sitework within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Moreton Binn. Applicant: Robert Jewell.
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104519>

The applicant has withdrawn the application. This agenda item will no longer be discussed.

- Mr. Bishop commented on 599 Branchville application withdrawal and he felt that the letter of withdrawal submitted by Mr. Jewell was disappointing and comments were disrespectful to the IWB.

III: Discussion

1. **IW-26-13; 160 Wilton Road West;** Summary Ruling application for grading and associated sitework within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Owen and Melissa Barthelmes. Applicant: Dean Pushlar. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104856>

Mr. Pushlar was at the meeting to represent the applicant. The last meeting ended with the IWB asking for more time to review the plans and a recommendation from Mr. Pilch to capture stormwater coming off the driveway which has been addressed. There was also a comment to capture the stormwater leader drains and that has been addressed and shown on the plans.

Discussion ensued by the IWB. Mr. Carlson felt the applicant team had done a good job responding to the comments from the IWB at the last meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Carlson to approve the application with General Conditions and no Special Conditions. Seconded by Mr. Berkowicz. Motion passes 6-0. Publication date will be May 21, 2026 and effective date May 22, 2026.

IV: Application(s) for Receipt:

1. **IW-26-16; 238 Mimosa Circle;** Summary Ruling application to correct a wetlands violation of site work within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: 238 Mimosa Circle LLC. Applicant: Robert Jewell. *For receipt and scheduling a sitewalk and discussion.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/105656>

Motion made by Mr. Bishop to receive the application with discussion on May 28. Seconded by Mr. Fincham. Motion passes unanimously.

V: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

Mr. Johnson brought up a new neighbor complaint about a tractor pulling a water drum. They are pumping water out of a water body and spraying the water on their horse farm to suppress the dirt. Agricultural activities are generally as of right. Because the water quantity is low, it would likely be a private issue and not an IWB issue.

No additional ongoing enforcement discussion.

VI: Other Business:

- A brief discussion on scheduling an executive session for an appeal on 27 Abbott Avenue. This will have to be discussed prior to May 28. Ms. Baker suggests an Executive Session for 7:00PM on May 21.

1. Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Regulations discussion

The goal this evening is to identify areas that still need additional work. It is anticipated that this will be in front of Attorney Beecher for review in the near future.

There was discussion on the definition of regulated activity. There are outstanding questions for Tom. There was discussion on the definition of riparian. There was additional discussion on tidal and coastal regulations.

Discussion was held on the Show Cause Hearing within 10 days and whether that is a realistic and necessary timeframe. Discussion was held on clearly stating that no fees are refundable.

Additional comments were removed that were topics discussed but changes no longer being considered. There were also some general copy edit changes. The IWB questioned the need for a Table of Amendments. The IWB also discussed the LID appendix and if it was the most relevant.

Keith discusses a pamphlet that he circulated to the IWB on best practices and recurring issues. They will give the document to the Conservation Commission for review.

The IWB felt the edits were in a good place to get out the door for additional feedback.

VII: Approval of Minutes

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting:** April 23, 2026

Motion made by Mr. Carlson to approve the above minutes as is. Mr. Berkowicz seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Fincham abstained.

VII: Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:28 PM.

Submitted by

Beth Peyser, Recording Secretary via Zoom Recording

Note: The Zoom recording for this meeting can be accessed at the following link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/NDUwbULEHkNalQWdKf3nBgJe_JdNRJ6NWPAPQCG3pObxJvDN1awPhm aSwqO1ju_GxguB8N-i3Y0lfKQQ.eRZPDDm2bIWf0TJK