



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

DRAFT MINUTES

Thursday, March 12, 2026

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

Members present: Susan Baker, Chair; Alan Pilch, Recording Secretary; Carson Fincham; David Smith; Keith Carlson; Noah Berkowicz

Members Absent: Tim Bishop; Vice Chair

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. **IW-26-6; 0 West Branchville Road;** Plenary Ruling application for Town Bridge Replacement # 05510 at Portland Avenue over the Norwalk River within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Town of Ridgefield – Bridge 05510. Applicant: Jeffrey Fontaine.
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/104477>

Public Hearing opened at 7:01PM.

Mr. Johnson read the legal notice and the documents submitted into the record. Mr. Fontaine, Mr. Gerrish, and Mr. Muller were present to represent the Town/applicant. Mr. Fontaine shared his screen to describe the proposed project. IWB discussion ensued. Mr. Fincham asked about the side view of the bridge and the low part of the bridge/high water mark. Mr. Carlson inquired about construction equipment access and associated disturbance. Ms. Baker asked how long the project would take to complete. Ms. Baker asked about a planting plan for the embankment.

Hearing no further comments from the IWB, Ms. Baker opened the discussion to the public. No public comment came forward.

Mr. Pilch asked about the surface treatment for removal of dam area. Mr. Pilch stated that turf would lead to interesting maintenance and Ms. Baker asked for elaboration on maintenance of turf. It was clarified that turf establishment would be outside of the bridge because that is the only area that would see sunlight. No further comment or interest.

Mr. Pilch made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Carlson seconded.

Public hearing closed at 7:31PM.

Mr. Pilch made a motion to approve the application with standard conditions and no special conditions. Mr. Smith seconded. Motion passes 6-0.

III: Discussion

1. **(Cont.) IW-26-4; 0 Rockwell Road;** Summary Ruling application for construction of a three-bedroom single family dwelling, driveway, septic, and associated sitework within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Joseph Donnelly. Applicant: Michael Mazzucco. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104527>

Mr. Mazzucco was present to represent the applicant/owner of the property. The IWB asked for additional information and clarification at the last meeting on topics including: the conservation easement; soil scientists report on the pocket wetland; newly defined lawn with a row of large boulders to define the lawn; updates to the drainage plan to spread out the water as much as possible; additional trees added to the planting plan; detail of level spreader added to the details sheet; change in detail of rain garden including soil base layer instead of gravel and a change in proposed plantings.

Discussion ensued by the IWB. Mr. Carlson asked about the intent of relocating the pocket wetland. Mr. Fincham asked about the area of the existing wetland vs the recreated/proposed wetland. Mr. Pilch stated that he appreciated Mr. Mazzucco hitting the points of concern from the last meeting. Mr. Pilch asked about the runoff from the driveway. Ms. Baker asked about monuments along the easement border.

Special Conditions Suggested:

- *Change the level spreader into a 6-9 inch depression in the natural soil with raingarden plantings to accept the driveway runoff.*
- *Add monuments to demarcate the easement corners in close proximity to the boulders demarcating the lawn.*

Motion made by Mr. Carlson to approve the application with normal conditions and special conditions as discussed. Mr. Pilch seconded the motion. Motion passes 6-0.

2. **(Cont.) IW-26-5; 215 Farmingville Road;** Summary Ruling application to correct a wetlands violation of site work within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Riccardo Arruzza. Applicant: Joe Arruzza. <http://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104347>

Mr. J. Arruzza was present to discuss the application updates since the last meeting. Ms. Baker stated that the information was just received today and the IWB did not have an opportunity to review the landscape architect comments. This will have to go back on the agenda at a future meeting to allow the IWB time to review. This will allow Mr. McManus an opportunity to get back to the applicant and give his professional opinion on the usability and depth of the fill. Mr. Pilch stated that the new selection of plants is fine. Mr. Fincham believes the soil was addressed by the landscaping plan and he no longer has concerns.

The IWB did not have time to review the planting plan sufficiently. This item will go back on the agenda for the IWB meeting on March 26, 2026.

3. **(Cont.) IW-26-7; 216 Florida Road;** Summary Ruling application for installation of an inground pool, patio, pool house, and relocate septic tanks and pump chambers within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Christopher and Audra Cartelli. Applicant: Steven Trinkaus. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104585>

Mr. Trinkaus was representing the owner and discussing the application. Mr. Trinkaus shared his screen to go over the modifications since the last meeting.

IWB continued discussion. Mr. Pilch believes that the filter strip should be larger than the 8ft filter strip proposed. Mr. Pilch said \ 10ft is minimal and he would like to see it wider. Mr. Pilch would also like to see some woody vegetation in the strip. Mr. Pilch also commented on the chambers at the far end of the site. Mr. Trinkaus suggested having a soil scientist create a planting plan along the filter strip as a visual barrier. Mr. Pilch also commented on the amount of piping for driveway runoff vs roof runoff. Ms. Baker asked about the

boulder location. Ms. Baker asked about the square footage ratio between the new coverage and the filter strip. Mr. Fincham appreciated the changes but concurred that the driveway should go into the CULTEC unit as opposed to the roof drain. He would like to see the vegetated width increase to 10ft and change the pool items further from the wetlands. Mr. Pilch agreed with Mr. Fincham and feels more comfortable with 15 feet as a standard planted buffer filter strip.

Changes Suggested:

- *The minimum planted buffer width should be 10ft to 15ft, with the wider end closest to the pool.*
- *Add native woody vegetation to intermix with the grasses in the planted buffer.*
- *Add drain to collect the runoff from the driveway instead of the roof and direct it into the Cultec chambers.*
- *Relocate boulders to the eastern side of the planted buffer to demarcate the lawn as opposed to having them on the wetland border.*
- *Relocate the pool mechanics to between the pool and the play area.*

This will go back on the agenda for March 26, 2026.

IV: Application(s) for Receipt:

1. **IW-26-11; 14 Market Street;** Summary Ruling application for installation of an inground swimming pool and associated sitework within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: CJW Fund. Applicant: Erica Cowper. *For receipt and scheduling a sitewalk and discussion.*
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/104651>

Motion made by Mr. Fincham to receive and schedule a sitewalk on March 22 and discussion on March 26. Seconded by Mr. Carlson. Motion passes 6-0.

V: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

No ongoing enforcement actions.

VI: Other Business:

1. Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Regulations discussion

Mr. Bishop had sent a document for IWB review. He has suggested adding a new section – 7.5J. Mr. Johnson shared his screen with the new proposed language.

Discussion at the last meeting ended around Section 8 so the IWB picked back up at this point. Ms. Baker suggested going back to pg 9 and 10 to discuss definitions. They then returned to Section 8.

Mr. Johnson asked for updated resumes of all IWB members to include them in application packets if IWB members are speaking as professionals.

Ms. Baker suggests reaching out to the Lakes Association to see if any updates have been made to Appendix A since 2007. Ms. Baker suggested considering revisions to Appendix B.

2. Taylors Pond Dam Removal

A quick discussion ensued on this topic. Ms. Baker stated that it has been discovered that one of the neighbors has been treating the water multiple times, up to six times each year since 2009 by a company to control for invasive plants with approval by DEEP, but it is Conservation Commission land and not the neighbors' land. This topic is in the early stages and the IWB doesn't have any additional information to determine what will happen around the removal of the dam. Mr. Johnson has details on what the pond was being treated with and

for and will share with the IWB. Also, Mr. Johnson stated that in the future he will check all pond treatment notifications for possible conflicts with conservation easements or public land/waterbodies.

VI: Approval of Minutes

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting:** February 26, 2026

Mr. Fincham motioned to approve the above minutes as is. Mr. Carlson seconded. Motion carried 5-0-1. Mr. Berkowicz abstained.

VII: Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:56 PM.

Submitted by

Beth Peyser, Recording Secretary via Zoom Recording