



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

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**Thursday, April 9, 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; Alan Pilch, Recording Secretary; David Smith; Keith Carlson; Noah Berkowicz; Carson Fincham

Members Absent: None

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: 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 present to represent the applicant. He shared his screen to show the plans and discuss the application.

Discussion ensued by the IWB. Mr. Bishop did not attend the site walk but commended the planting plan. He inquired about stormwater management. Mr. Pilch added comments about the stormwater management and believes it would be required. He also asked about the slope by the driveway. Mr. Pilch would like the Planning and Zoning Department to comment on stormwater management and if it would be required under the regulations. Mr. Pushlar believes that the subdivision occurred prior to the stormwater management regulation and therefore it is not triggered. Mr. Bishop would also like to see stormwater management. Mr. Pilch is happy the impervious surfaces are all outside of the upland review area. Mr. Carlson asked about the state of existing trees in the upland review area. Mr. Fincham also has concerns with stormwater management and is most concerned that construction on slopes will create erosion. He would like to see more natural interception or control such as spreaders or rain gardens to intercept the flow and prevent erosion. Mr. Carlson inquired about the septic system. Mr. Bishop asked additional questions about the stormwater. Mr. Bishop asked about the courtyard and what it was composed of. Mr. Bishop stated he would not support the application as a professional wetland scientist in its current state without stormwater management. Ms. Baker asked if there was resistance to stormwater management from the applicant. Mr. Pushlar stated that it was not a requirement so that was their biggest pushback and he feels that if it is required by Zoning, he will add it.

Ms. Baker suggested sending a letter to Planning and Zoning about the lack of stormwater management and ask for their feedback.

Mr. Carlson agrees with Mr. Bishop that as proposed without a more robust drainage management system, he couldn't accept this application based on the wetlands regulations and not based on the zoning regulations.

Ms. Baker suggested taking the application to the owner and asking if they would install stormwater management even if it is not required. Mr. Pushlar stated that the attorney is confident that it is not necessary. Ms. Baker would also like to look into it. Mr. Pushlar said if the process works properly the IWB could work

with what is presented and if the application changes within the regulated area and needs to come back due to added stormwater, it would come back to the IWB.

Mr. Pushlar suggests tabling this until the next meeting and he will reach out to Zoning for additional information on the stormwater plans. Ms. Baker will also reach out to Zoning and do more research on their end. Mr. Pushlar will also explore more robust level spreaders, etc. Mr. Bishop has concerns with approximately 9,000 new square feet of impervious surface. Mr. Fincham agreed with Mr. Bishops comments and he doesn't believe an application has been presented to the IWB without a stormwater management system. Mr. Pilch also agrees about the comments on stormwater management and he feels uncomfortable with the slopes and impacts of runoff to the upland review area and wetlands.

This discussion was continued to the IWB meeting on April 23.

**III: Application(s) for Receipt:**

No application(s) for receipt.

**IV: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:**

**1. 238 Mimosa Circle – Wetlands Violation**

Mr. Johnson discussed the current violation. This property was inspected due to a complaint from the neighbors. The property owner had completed a three story addition with a patio and deck. Stormwater runoff is going directly into a stream and onto a neighboring property. The owner had pulled a building permit but did not construct the building as designed in the permit. The property owner will have to go in front of the ZBA for the expansion. Mr. Jewell will have him submit a corrective application. An engineer will be hired to make sure everything was designed properly. A general stormwater plan will need to be updated. At the present time, silt fencing has been installed. The proposed culvert units are as designed directly adjacent to the home. The owner will also need to come up with a more robust planting plan. The owner added hay, seed, and two rows of silt fencing as a temporary erosion control measure. The activity has also encroached onto the neighboring property. Mr. Bishop stated that the fee would be 2x the original application because it is a corrective action. This violation remains ongoing.

**V: Other Business:**

- A letter came in on 04/09/2026 from the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters (CTLCV). Ms. Baker distributed it to the IWB for review to decide if they would like to sign or not sign.
- Mr. Johnson distributed a presentation on riparian buffers that UCONN clear will be presenting on riparian buffers at 1PM April 23.

**1. Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Regulations discussion**

Ms. Baker stated that input on revisions had been received from multiple IWB members. Overall, a discussion occurred on what changes they had proposed, what works, and what they do not agree on. The adjusted language will then go to Attorney Tom Beecher for review.

The final discussion was to go through the LID Appendix. If anyone has any concerns or updates bring it back to the IWB.

Ms. Baker and Mr. Johnson will incorporate all the edits that were discussed and create an updated version to review.

**VI: Approval of Minutes**

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

*Motion made by Mr. Pilch to approve the above minutes as is. Mr. Berkowicz seconded. Motion carried 6-0-1. Mr. Bishop abstained because he wasn't present.*

**VII: Adjourn**

*Mr. Bishop made a motion to close the meeting. Mr. Carlson seconded.*

Hearing no further business, Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 9:12 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://zoom.us/rec/play/2jwGaDSPZmsXwxd6PPjjOSLgGpkrBuJexioHH\\_BEUnKnRLHaG8MnvHmEOGoWsVQgRyPALnp3OpXQ7Gdk.MZutEJq1eWd8Wugr?autoplay=true](https://zoom.us/rec/play/2jwGaDSPZmsXwxd6PPjjOSLgGpkrBuJexioHH_BEUnKnRLHaG8MnvHmEOGoWsVQgRyPALnp3OpXQ7Gdk.MZutEJq1eWd8Wugr?autoplay=true)