



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

DRAFT MINUTES

Thursday, September 24, 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; Carson Fincham; Noah Berkowicz; David Smith

Members Absent: Keith Carlson

Also present: Caleb Johnson, Inland Wetlands Agent; Tom Beecher, Town Counsel

I. Call to order:

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

II: Discussion

- 1. IW-26-29; 225 Bennetts Farm Road;** Revision to Summary Ruling application #2013-014-SR-REZ-A-S-SP for work done without approvals within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: Justin Stoney. Applicant: Michael Mazzucco.
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/106788>

Ms. Baker gave an introduction to the application. This application has an approved Intervenor: Chris and Beth Ingram. The Town Engineer will be looking at the application because the violation stemmed from a subdivision from 2013. The Engineer report will be submitted prior to the next meeting. No decision will be made this evening prior to the report. Ms. Baker opened the floor to the Interveners if they wanted to present this evening.

Mr. Ingram stated the IWB asked for statements from a Civil Engineer at the last meeting. Since then, they hired Mr. Fowler. Mr. Fowler was responding to the construction detail sheet and discussed the rip rap swale and rip rap drainage. He was also looking at the Studer Design planting plan as part of the basin. He also looked at the site plan showing the drainage easement, pipes, and basin including the spot elevations on an as-built survey. The plans show that the basin was designed according to plan. Ms. Baker asked when the plants were installed. Mr. Fowler did not know. Ms. Baker asked Mr. Fowler if he had been to the site. Mr. Fowler was last there for an as-built survey on Lot 6.

Discussion ensued by the IWB. Ms. Baker asked if the IWB had seen all of the plans that Mr. Fowler referenced. Mr. Johnson stated that all plans are part of the application. Mr. Fowler recommends that the basin be recreated according to plan. It is not just the plants, but the basin and the plants are not there. The point was the function and not to be pretty. It was meant to satisfy a requirement by the Town which was 0% peak increase in runoff. Mr. Ingram asked Mr. Fowler if Mr. Mazzucco's testimony that the basin is still there and as designed is accurate. Mr. Fowler said no, it is not there and should be recreated. Ms. Baker asked Mr. Ingram if he had anyone else to speak. He said no. Mr. Ingram restated his perspective of how could you make an informed decision on the work when the application does not show the current conditions that prompted the violation in the first place.

Ms. Baker reopened the floor to Mr. Mazzucco. He refuted that the basin is not functioning. He said the basin does provide impoundment. He thinks it is important to show the footing drains on the

neighboring property and that they should not be draining into a drainage basin designed to impound water. That could potentially be over the slab elevation of the basement. Mr. Stoney will have a topographic map made of the area and do a comparison with the plan. He stated that the basin is pretty close to the design and has compared LiDAR data over time since 2013. They will reevaluate after the surveyor visits. However, the surveyor will take four weeks to provide the work and survey. He feels there is a lot of speculation. He will not be available at the next scheduled IWB meeting. Mr. Stoney said the water did not get much higher than the outlet control pipe. Mr. Stoney is not opposed to the Ingrams repairing the pipe but he would like to see a sketch of what they want to do. He would also like the work to be done by hand. He would also like to know elevations. At this point, Mr. Mazzucco would like to grant the IWB an extension for a meeting after four weeks when the survey data is present.

Mr. Ingram responded to Mr. Mazzucco's comments. He would like something in writing from Mr. Stoney to grant permission to enter his property fix his pipes. They do not currently have access rights. He believes there have been many changes to the basin both documented and not documented. He is disheartened that this process has gone on for six months and his pipes are still broken and not flowing properly. He is disappointed that his home is at risk and he now has to wait another six weeks. He would like a resolution.

Ms. Baker understands Mr. Ingrams concerns and she is trying to find a resolution. Mr. Stoney wants a sketch of what is going to be done. Mr. Ingram wants approval in writing that Mr. Stoney grants permission to do work by hand. This can be done without IWB permission.

The discussion will be continued to October 22.

2. **IW-26-31; 157 Spring Valley Road;** Summary Ruling application for construction of a detached garage within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: David and Susan Jeffries. Applicant: Doug MacMillan. <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records106010>

Mr. MacMillan was present to represent the application. This is a continued discussion. Mr. Johnson shared his screen to show the altered planting plan. Ms. Baker asked if the quantity shown on the plans is accurate. Yes, it is. Discussion ensued by the IWB. Mr. Pilch asked about the extent of the planting plan and confirmed that it is actually a 90-degree rotation from the image of the property that Mr. MacMillan showed. Mr. Bishop applauded the applicant for taking the IWB recommendations at the last meeting. He thinks this is a much better plan than before.

Mr. MacMillan believes this will be planted this season, if possible. If it goes into the next season, the applicant should notify Mr. Johnson.

Motion made by Mr. Bishop to approve with revisions shown tonight to the original plan and as discussed. Seconded by Mr. Fincham. Motion passes. 6-0. Publication date of October 1 with an effective date of October 2.

III: Application(s) for Receipt:

1. **AIW-26-1: Regulations text amendments.** Board initiated. (To receive and schedule a Public Hearing for November 12, 2026). <https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/108581>

Mr. Johnson distributed this to the IWB. It is a draft red lined version to discuss.

Motion made by Mr. Bishop to receive the amendments and hold a Public Hearing on November 12, 2026. Seconded by Mr. Pilch. Motion passes 6-0.

2. **IW-26-38; 47 Boulder Hill Road;** Summary Ruling application for construction of an addition, septic system, stormwater management system, driveway extension and landscaping within the

upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. Owner: The Leir Retreat Center Inc. Applicant: Alex Bellina. For receipt and scheduling a sitewalk and discussion.
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/10836>

Motion made by Mr. Bishop to schedule a sitewalk on October 4 with discussion on October 8. Seconded by Mr. Pilch. Motion passed 6-0.

IV: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

Mr. Johnson suggested releasing the bond for plantings at the Aldrich Museum in full for \$82,245.90. He showed photos of the plantings on his screen from the site walk. Photos are native and were in place for two growing seasons. Survivability was very high with some replanted last season. No deer browsing issues observed.

Motion made by Mr. Bishop to release the bond in full. Seconded by Mr. Fincham. Motion passed 6-0.

V: Executive Session

1. Pending Litigation – Moreton Binn v. Inland Wetlands Board

Discussion held by IWB. Not open to the public.

Motion made by Mr. Bishop to go into Executive Session and invite Attorney Beecher and Mr. Johnson. Seconded by Mr. Pilch. Without objection, the Board, Attorney Beecher, and Agent Caleb Johnson entered executive session at 7:41. Executive session ended at 8:04 PM.

VI: Other Business

1. Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Regulations discussion

No discussion was held.

2. 599 Branchville Road – Discussion on Resolution of Approval

Ms. Baker read a judgment statement and special conditions into the record. Motion made by Mr. Bishop to approve the Resolution of Approval. Mr. Berkowicz seconded. Motion passed 5-0-1 with Mr. Fincham abstaining.

VII: Approval of Minutes

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting:** September 10, 2026

Motion made by Ms. Baker to approve the minutes. Mr. Pilch seconded. Motion passed 5.0.1 with Mr. Smith abstaining.

VII: Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:27 PM

Submitted by

Beth Peyser, Recording Secretary via Zoom Recording