



**TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD**  
**Inland Wetlands Board**  
**WEB BASED MEETING VIA ZOOM**

**APPROVED/REVISED MINUTES**

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

October 12, 2023

Members present: Susan Baker, chair; Alan Pilch, secretary; Carson Fincham, Tim Bishop, vice chair; Tracey Miller, Chris Phelps (joined at 7:03PM), David Smith

Members absent:

Also present: Caleb Johnson, IW Agent; Aarti Paranjape, Recording Secretary; Thomas Beecher, Dean Pushlar, Steven Trinkaus, Robert Jewell

**I. Call to order:**

Ms. Baker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**II. Discussion**

- 1. IW-23-35: 45 West Lane;** Summary Ruling application for inground pool, driveway modification, patio, sewer relocation and associated sitework within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner: Robert & Corrin Arasa. Applicant: Dean Pushlar*  
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/93450>

Mr. Pushlar, gave an overview of the proposed project. The existing asphalt at the back of the property will be removed and a new circular driveway in the front yard will be constructed. The 20x40 feet pool and spa is in the rear yard. The patio on the east side will be on three feet fill, on north of the pool is outdoor kitchen. The existing garage will be converted to pool cabana and a pergola will be added. A gravel path leads to the existing guest cottage.

Erosion and sediment controls will be installed. The infiltration system is proposed in the front yard into a level spreader on the east side of the house, because the soils in the backyard are not favorable to install the infiltration system there.

Invasive species will be removed. Plantings include birches with understory seed grasses ferns, iris along lawn edge. The mitigation plantings will help filter the run off slowly.

Mr. Smith inquired if the pool and patio were impervious.

Mr. Pilch also questioned why applicant is not proposing pervious patio which is approximately forty five feet away from wetlands.

Mr. Pushlar explained due to the maintenance and stability, the area where patio is proposed is not conducive to have pervious patio as its built on compacted fill. The infiltration system and levels spreader will be functional to capture the runoff.

Ms. Miller inquired about the pool runoff direction and if it's away from wetlands.

Mr. Pushlar explained the pool doesn't have cover and the runoff is piped to the infiltrators and then to the level spreaders.

Members expressed concern of the level spreaders discharge closer to the wetlands and the less robust plantings.

Discussion ensued and members recommended substantial native plantings at the level spreaders discharge and along the fence and around the birches.

Following special conditions were stated:

- A revised plan of additional plantings wide enough at the discharge of level spreader.
- Addition of more plantings on the south side of the property at the edge of the lawn.

**Mr. Smith motioned to approve Summary ruling application with above special conditions and standard conditions. Mr. Pilch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

**2. IW-23-36: 15 Cedar Lane;** Summary Ruling application for swim spa and associated site work within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses.

*Owner: Richard & Lisa Sauer. Applicant: Dean Pushlar.*

<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/93545>

Mr. Pushlar presented the application for the proposed 8x16 feet swim spa. The patio will be permeable with fifteen-foot gravel underneath. A wall will hold the proposed spa and patio. The invasive species will be removed, plantings include inkberries, blue stem grasses and arborvitae for screening. The grasses will filter the runoff. Existing footing drain will not be affected and proposes cobblestone to avoid any additional scouring.

Mr. Pilch inquired if there will be grading where the steps are proposed closer to the wetlands line. He commended the proposal of permeable patio Mr. Pushlar confirmed there is no grading involved and will match the existing grade.

Members discussed additional native plantings and grasses near the outlet of the footing drains and a wider planting along the fence to the west.

Mr. Pushlar agreed to plant extra 36 plants- 12 sedges and 24 perennials.

Following special conditions were stated:

- Planting plan with additional native plants between the edge of silt fence and the proposed blue stem grasses and at the footing drain.

**Mr. Pilch motioned to approve Summary ruling application with above special conditions and standard conditions. Mr. Smith seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

- 3. IW-23-34: 54 Ketcham Rd.** Summary ruling application to construct a crossing of intermittent stream with accessway and associated work within the upland review area of wetlands and watercourses. *Owner: Joseph & Diane Fossi. Applicant: Steven Trinkaus. Statutorily received September 14, 2023*  
<https://ridgefieldct.portal.opengov.com/records/93444>

Mr. Trinkaus presented the application for the crossing at the intermittent stream. He said the crossing is proposed over a manmade ditch. The accessway is for the future lots. The septic system will be installed by the existing driveway and a two-inch force main will be installed under the crossing forty-two inches below grade. The proposed crossing has been suggested as it will involve minimum site disturbance and less impact to the wetlands. A 12" HDP pipe will be set into the existing bottom of the ditch between the two wetland areas, with boulders will be on the either side of the driveway.

Mr. Pilch suggested a fifteen-inch pipe will be better size for the drainage as opposed to the 12 inch.

Members expressed concern about the disturbance in the upland review area as shown on plans for the construction of dwellings on the two lots.

Discussion ensued if the application should be raised to plenary due to the limit of disturbance within the upland review area.

Mr. Jewell explained that the applicant will be back for the for subdivision or any of the lots. The application is just for the crossing. They will need the review from the Board when they come for lots and construction within the upland review area.

Ms. Miller suggested for an open culvert system versus the closed pipe for the mobility of the wildlife.

Mr. Trinkaus said that this is not a continuous waterflow but an intermittent waterbody. Discussion ensued on the type of crossing and the possibility of using a squashed pipe.

Discussion continued to October 26, 2023.

- 4.(Contd.) IW-23-18; 27 Abbott Avenue.** Plenary ruling application for construction of apartment complex, associated parking and drainage infrastructure within the upland review area of the wetlands. *Owner: Alimi Veton. Applicant: Brian Carey.*  
<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/91085>

Attorney Beecher guided the Board regarding the determination they have to make for the intervention and state on record the reasons that there is a feasible and prudent alternative to the proposal presented by the applicant and that the proposed project will have negative impact on the wetlands and watercourses.

Members after much discussion deliberated to deny the applications stating the reasons:

- Detrimental impact to the wetland from runoff flowing directly into the wetland and the thermal effects of that runoff as well, particularly during hotter times of the year. The stormwater management system will not sufficiently remove harmful sediments, chemicals, and substances prior to flows reaching the wetland. The close proximity of the outfall as well as likely overflow runoff to the wetland during storm events leaves little or no room for natural or other additional filtration before flows enter the wetland.
- A feasible and prudent alternative exists consisting of an increased buffer between the wetland and the limits of construction of at least 75 feet,

**Ms. Miller motioned to approve resolution of denial with the above stated reasons Mr. Fincham seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

**III. Application(s) for receipt:**  
**None**

**IV: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:**  
**None**

**V: Other Business:**

- **187 Rippowam Road – Performance Bond Release**

Mr. Johnson gave an update on the bond posting. He said that two bonds were posted one for bridge construction and a separate for plantings. The applicant has requested for the bond release for performance bond only. He added the engineer certified that the bridge is completed as per the plans submitted.

Board members discussed not releasing the full amount of the performance bond to ensure that that applicant will complete the work as planned. Members agreed to release seventy five percent of the performance bond. The performance bond was reduced to twenty five percent. The planting bond is not released as the plantings have not been completed yet.

**Mr. Bishop motioned to reduce the bond to twenty five percent and release seventy five percent of performance bond. Mr. Phelps seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

**VI: Approval of Minutes:**

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting: September 28, 2023**

**Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Fincham seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

- **Special Meeting: October 05, 2023**

**Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Fincham seconded. Mr. Smith abstained. Motion carried 6-0-1.**

- **Sitewalk Meeting:** October 08, 2023

**Mr. Smith motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Pilch seconded. Mr. Bishop, Mr. Fincham and Mr. Phelps abstained. Motion carried 4-0-3.**

**VII: Adjourn**

Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 9:49 PM

Submitted by

Aarti Paranjape  
Recording Secretary