

**MEETING MINUTES**  
Town of Granby  
Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission  
Wednesday, January 24, 2024 at 7:00 pm

**PRESENT:** Nicholas Dethlefsen, Fred Jones, Susan Okie, John Laudati, Vickie Dirienzo, and Aurelle Locke (via ZOOM)

**ALSO PRESENT:** IWWC Agent Cameron Covill, Town Attorney Richard Roberts and Land Use Coordinator Renee Deltenre

**1. Call to Order**

Acting Chairman Laudati called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Elect Chair and Vice Chair**

**ON A MOTION** by V. Dirienzo seconded by F. Jones, the Commission voted 5-0-1 to appoint John Laudati as Chair. J. Laudati abstained.

**ON A MOTION** by V. Dirienzo seconded by F. Jones, the Commission voted 5-0-1 to appoint Sue Okie as Vice Chair. S. Okie abstained.

*A. Locke was no longer able to participate via ZOOM due to technical issues; however, was able to call in and listen to the remainder of the meeting.*

**3. Action on the minutes of December 13, 2023**

**ON A MOTION** by S. Okie seconded by V. Direnzo, the Commission voted 5-0-0 to approve the December 13, 2023 minutes as presented.

*ON A MOTION* by F. Jones seconded by S. Okie, the Commission voted 5-0-0 to amend the agenda to discuss Item #5e, 37 Hartford Avenue first. J. Laudati recused himself from all proceedings regarding this application; however, received permission from the Commission, public and applicant team to continue to run the meeting.

**5. Permit Requests**

**e. 37 Hartford Avenue – Vessel RE Holdings, LLC and Vessel Technologies, Inc. – Permit application for regulated activities in connection with the development of a 42-unit apartment building and associated improvements.**

Attorney Tim Hollister of Hinckley Allen and Vessel Technologies, Inc. Vice President Josh Levy were present to discuss the application and answer any questions the Commission had. T. Hollister provided an overview of the original application that was withdrawn due to nitrogen and phosphorus discharge levels from the proposed on-site septic system. A revised and reduced application has been submitted for consideration, and this evening will consist of a brief presentation. Mr. Chuck Coursey has been retained to conduct community outreach to abutting property owners and concerned residents. J. Levy discussed the company's history and construction methods in order to provide the Commission with a better understanding of their mission and goals.

The application consists of a three-story, multi-family apartment complex with 42 units, 59 parking spaces and landscaping. The proposed layout for site development is quite similar to what was approved in 2007 for the construction of a 45-foot-tall office building. The entire site is just over 2.5 acres located on the southwest side of Hartford Avenue and consists of approximately 932 square feet of wetlands. Professional Engineer Seamus Moran of H+H Engineering Associate, LLC ran through pre-existing conditions, including the stormwater management system that was previously approved and partially installed as part of the 2007 approval. The site will be served by public water and a private septic system, and an application of the proposed system is currently under review by the Farmington Valley Health District.

The development includes .34 acres of improvement within the 100-foot wetlands setback and an additional .29 acres within the 200-foot watercourse setback. The proposed septic system consists of one long, linear row along the backside of the parking lot and utilizes stormwater to dilute effluent runoff per DEEP practices. Landscape Architect Greg Wilson of Fuss & O'Neill ran through the proposed planting plan, which was developed as a result of prior conversations with the Town's prior Wetlands Agent Kate Bednaz. Soil Scientist James Sipperly was retained to conduct a field survey and delineate wetland boundaries. He stated that no wetlands or watercourses are on the subject property but do exist on the neighboring property, in which he provided an overview of the soil characteristics.

Soil Scientist George Logan provided an overview of his findings from two field inspections, inclusive of the characteristics of the wetlands, water quality results from the Phoenix Environmental Laboratory, and how the wetlands would handle nitrogen and phosphorus discharge levels. C. Covill referenced Steven Danzer's report and his comment regarding the development as a significant impact activity, and how the applicant's team has not stated that there will be no impact. The Commission briefly shared their remarks regarding the application and agreed to schedule a public hearing for the next regular meeting.

**ON A MOTION** by V. Drenzo seconded by F. Jones, the Commission voted 4-0-1 to receive the application and schedule a public hearing for February 14, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. due to public interest based on the project's location, history and size. J. Laudati abstained.

*F. Jones left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.*

#### **4. Request for Review**

**a. Salmon Brook, Route 20 to Granby/East Granby Town Line – Paula Saaf – RFR to cut/remove 6 fallen trees within the brook to improve navigability.**

Paula Saaf of 20 Wynding Hills Road, East Granby, CT would like to hire an arborist to remove fallen trees in accordance with DEEP Regulations within the East Branch of Salmon Brook starting at Route 20 and ending at the Granby/East Granby Town line. The arborist will cut a section of the fallen trees in order to create a navigable path down the river. The removed section will be relocated near the shore and anchored in place so it does not float downstream. J. Laudati requested that letters of support from other involved constituents be provided as part of the application and that abutting property owners be notified.

**ON A MOTION** by V. Drenzo seconded by F. Jones, the Commission voted 4-0-0 to delegate the application as a permit request and continue to the next regular meeting.

## 5. Permit Requests

- a. **371 North Granby Road – 369-371 North Granby Road, LLC – Permit application to modify an existing approval for a 35’ x 50’ outdoor storage area to a 70’ x 50’ outdoor storage area within a regulated area.**

J. Laudati recused himself on this application. Property owner John Pagliaro and tenant Brandon Michael were present to update the Commission on the application and answer any questions. C. Covill conducted a site inspection with the property owner earlier in the day and noted that the drainage swale had been lined with stone and boulders were placed to prevent driving on the leach field; however, the tenant has not demonstrated compliance within the newly proposed storage area. B. Michael stated that the equipment located outside of the proposed storage area was placed there due to snow and the need to plow in front of the building. C. Covill noted that the tenant had prior issues meeting the conditions of approval and was asked at the last meeting to demonstrate cooperation. S. Okie expressed concerns over the lack of compliance and willingness to cooperate, and feels the location is no longer appropriate for the business. The application was continued to the next regular meeting.

- b. **200 Simsbury Road – Empire Solar Solutions – Permit application to construct a ground mounted solar array and associated utilities within a regulated area.**

Stephanie of Empire Solar Solutions was present via ZOOM to discuss the application and answer any questions the Commission had. The property owners are looking to install a hybrid solar array, which would consist of 26 roof-mount panels on a detached garage and 21 ground-mount panels on the adjacent lawn area. The proposed location would require the removal of two trees and is within the Upland Review Area. C. Covill discussed the need to modify the application to address the removal of trees, erosion and sediment control measures, and the stockpiling of any excavated soil during the project. The application was continued to the next regular meeting.

- c. **215 Salmon Brook Street – East Granby-Granby Little League – Permit application to construct a two-story, 18’ x 14’ press box for Field 2 within a regulated area.**

Chris Perry of the East Granby-Granby Little League (EGGLL) was present to discuss the application and answer any questions the Commission had. The EGGLL is looking to construct a 17.5’ x 14’ press box adjacent to Field 2 at Salmon Brook Park in order to host tournaments and provide year-round equipment storage. The structure will be built using piers, utilize existing utilities and excavated soil will be removed from the site. A 10’ x 6’ storage shed currently sits in the proposed location, which will be relocated to Field 5. The area is currently a maintained ball field with lawn, and the Commission had no concerns. The application was continued to the next regular meeting.

- d. **10 High Ridge Drive – Brett & Jennifer Chenail – Permit application to construct a 20’ x 30’ shed within a regulated area.**

Applicant and owners Brett & Jennifer Chenail were present to discuss the application and answer any questions the Commission had. They are looking to construct a 600 square foot non-agricultural structure within an existing lawn area that falls within the Upland Review Area. No removal of trees is necessary and the structure would be placed on a crushed stone pad where an in-ground pool once existed, abutting up to an existing parking space. Fill will be brought in by Kloter Farms to level the pad site as the property tapers down in elevation to the east. C. Covill discussed the need for erosion and sediment control measures to prevent material from going down the embankment into the wetlands and asked the applicants to update their plans to indicate the installation of silt fence. The application was continued to the next regular meeting.

**6. Agent Report and Correspondence**

- a. **59 Loomis Street** – In response to a potential wetlands concern, C. Covill met with the property owner and took soil samples where ponding was present. There were no indicators of wetland soils and the area is not delineated as a wetland based on state mapping. The ponding is most likely due to the recent removal of numerous pine trees and the influx of rain. Staff will consult with the Town Engineer regarding excess water that is entering the property from the road.
- b. **40 Wells Road** – In response to a complaint regarding an adjacent property, C. Covill met with the property owner on-site to discuss concerns about excess water coming from 6 Meadowbrook Road. The property owner claims that the lack of maintenance of the water leveling devices is creating increased water levels, thus flooding his property to the rear.
- c. **233 West Granby Road** – C. Covill stated that work has occurred within the Upland Review Area without a permit. During a site visit it was noted that topsoil had been removed, no erosion and sediment control measures were installed, and sediment was reaching the stream. The property owners were unaware of the regulated area and permitting process but have stopped work upon meeting with Town Staff. C. Covill stated that a Notice of Violation doesn't seem necessary at this time, as the property owners are cooperating and working on their application submittal, and the site is relatively stable. The Commission discussed the situation and shared their concerns; therefore, directing staff to issue a Notice of Violation.

**7. Commissioner Reports and Correspondence**

V. Dirienzo and S. Okie expressed interest in working with the local paper, The Granby Drummer, to publish an article to help educate the public on wetlands and watercourses, the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, available resources, regulations and permitting.

**8. Adjourn**

**ON A MOTION** by S. Okie seconded by V. Dirienzo, the Commission voted 4-0-0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Deltenre  
Land Use Coordinator