



Town of Watertown Connecticut

Planning and Zoning, Zoning Board of Appeals,
Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency

Watertown Municipal Center

61 Echo Lake Road

Watertown, CT 06795

Telephone: (860) 945-5266

Fax: (860) 945-4706

Website: www.watertownct.org

CONSERVATION COMMISSION/ INLAND WETLAND AGENCY

Regular Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2022

6:30 PM

Place: Watertown Town Hall, Town Council Chambers
61 Echo Lake Road
Watertown, Connecticut

Call to Order/ Roll Call

Members Present: Craig Palmer
Pierre Moran
Tom Murphy
George Touponse
Luigi Cavallo, Jr. – joined meeting at 6:33pm
Joe Polletta
Ned Dalton

Members Absent: Scott Tearman
Edward Norton
Charles Beliveau

Others Present: Mark Massoud, Zoning Enforcement Officer
Roseann D'Amelio, Secretary

Public Hearing

1. Application #2021-36 of Bassett Farm, LLC for construction of a single-family home, an accessory dwelling, a common driveway, and onsite septic system on a parcel of land aka Map 10 Block 26 Lot 2A Bassett Road, Watertown, CT.

Michael Lambert, Civil1, on behalf of the applicant. When I was previously here, it was deemed a significant activity and I understand the site walk has to be rescheduled due to the snow. To recap, this site's on Bassett Road, the entire parcel is 22.1 acres with 6.37 acres of wetlands on the property. This was originally subdivided into 5 lot subdivision back in 2008 and at that time the roadway coming into the property and spilling over the wetlands is going to serve two lots. With that 2008 subdivision there was 1,176 sf of wetland disturbance that was only for this crossing that we have here so the rest of the 5 lots, there was no wetlands disturbance, it was just in this one area. For the driveway we mimicked the same layout, the drainage with 4 15" pipes underneath the driveway as well as a stream crossing. The original plan had a 4x6 culvert and we're proposing a 4' tall 8' wide 24' long box culvert. We are disturbing 1,905 sf with a difference of under 800 sf because the wetland delineation line has changed from 2008. The roadway coming in is going to serve the sfh, detached garage and accessory dwelling to the rear. Each of the houses are going to have their own rain gardens that the roof leaders are going to discharge to and both buildings are going to tie into the same septic system. The plan has been provided to the Health Dept but we haven't heard back from them yet.

Craig Palmer: I think you have the wrong address. I believe it should be in the 300's

Michael Lambert: I do not have an answer but I will look into it.

Craig Palmer: Are there 2 parcels of land there? Does he own both parcels?

Michael Lambert: There's a parcel north northwest that's not a part of this application but there are 2 parcels that the owner owns but we're just looking at this parcel

Craig Palmer: Is there going to be a conservation easement?

Michael Lambert: I can talk to him and if he does we can get something sketched up for the next meeting.

Craig Palmer: We have to reschedule the site walk that got cancelled because of the snow so we'll probably need a 30 day extension from you

Michael Lambert: Even if this is the first public hearing there needs to be an extension?

Craig Palmer: It needed to be closed by the 17th.

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Michael Lambert: I will work with Town staff if we need to file an extension.

Michael Lambert: The barn is going to be the accessory dwelling and the primary house is going to be closer to the front with the detached garage and the accessory dwelling further in the rear.

Ned Dalton: Watertown doesn't allow 2 dwellings on one piece or property.

Michael Lambert: under a special permit it does.

Tom Murphy: Moosa brought that up. There are two houses allowed on the same piece or property. It can't be called in-law apartment because it's not attached to one house

Michael Lambert: there's an accessory dwelling unit and there's an accessory dwelling. We're looking at this as an accessory dwelling so there's permitted to have two houses pending a special permit

Ned Dalton: It's going to affect the impact of the wetlands more because we're going to have more vehicle traffic

Craig Palmer: Mark, has this gone through zoning?

Mark Massoud: Not yet Mr. Chairman

Craig Palmer: What's the length of that driveway from the road to the house

Michael Lambert: To the first driveway it's about 600 ft

Craig Palmer: I think the Fire Dept is going to require a different type driveway so it'll probably affect the wetlands more so they're going to require something else because of the distance set off the road so it's going to be wider in some areas.

Ned Dalton: How wide is this proposed driveway?

Michael Lambert: 12 ft wide. I can certainly reach out to the Fire Chief before the next meeting.

Luigi Cavallo, Jr.: How many horses are being proposed in the horse barn

Michael Lambert: I do not have an answer to that

Luigi Cavallo, Jr.: Do you know what the square footage of the dwelling is?

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Michael Lambert: I don't have that information but I can definitely get it

Luigi Cavallo, Jr.: I just think that if they start renting stalls we're talking another increase in traffic.

Michael Lambert: My understanding is the owner is going to use this more of just his family and not going to be renting out to the public but I'll get an answer from the applicant

Ned Dalton: This is just one 2 bedroom house or 2 two bedroom houses like a duplex. The way the driveway lays out it looks like a duplex but it says 2 bedrooms. It's awfully big for two bedrooms

Michael Lambert: It's going to have the garage under so it's going to have a reverse type walkout type home with bedrooms and family rooms on the second floor with ground access on the backside.

Ned Dalton: So it's a single two bedroom house

Michael Lambert: Yes

Craig Palmer: Anyone from the public wishing to speak

Adam Krazinski, 300 Bassett Road. I'm just wondering what the detriment of the neighborhood is going to be with this horse ranch. Is it going to be a commercial thing?

Craig Palmer: Planning and Zoning will have a hearing on this. We're only the wetlands part of it. We're going on a site walk so you can come listen to what's going on

Tom Murphy: Motion to table the application and was seconded by Luigi Cavallo, Jr.

Regular Meeting

Public Participation

Action on Minutes

1. Regular Meeting November 18, 2021
2. Regular Meeting December 9, 2021

Joe Polletta motioned to Approve Regular Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2021 and December 9, 2021 and was seconded by Luigi Cavallo, Jr. - All in Favor

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Pending Applications

1. Application #2021-36 of Bassett Farm, LLC for construction of a single-family home, an accessory dwelling, a common driveway, and onsite septic system on a parcel of land aka Map 10 Block 26 Lot 2A Bassett Road, Watertown, CT.

Joe Polletta motioned to reschedule site walk at the discretion of the Wetland Enforcement Officer and was seconded by Tom Murphy - All in Favor

Joe Polletta motioned to Table Application #2021-36 of Bassett Farm, LLC for construction of a single-family home, an accessory dwelling, a common driveway, and onsite septic system on a parcel of land aka Map 10 Block 26 Lot 2A Bassett Road, Watertown, CT and was seconded by Tom Murphy - All in Favor

Joe Polletta: Mr. Chairman, I'm abstaining from any comments on this

2. Application #2021-39 of Giuseppe Polletta for filling regulated areas for construction of single-family homes on Lot 11 and Lot 12 and relocation of an existing conservation easement at Lake View Estates Subdivision, Lake View Drive, Watertown.

Tom Murphy motioned to reschedule site walk at the discretion of the Wetlands Enforcement Officer and was seconded by Luigi Cavallo, Jr.

All in Favor: Craig Palmer Opposed: None Abstentions: Joe Polletta
Tom Murphy
Ned Dalton
Pierre Moran
George Touponse
Luigi Cavallo, Jr.

Tom Murphy motioned to table Application #2021-39 of Giuseppe Polletta for filling regulated areas for construction of single-family homes on Lot 11 and Lot 12 and relocation of an existing conservation easement at Lake View Estates Subdivision, Lake View Drive, Watertown and was seconded by: Luigi Cavallo, Jr.

All in Favor: Craig Palmer Opposed: None Abstentions: Joe Polletta
Tom Murphy
Ned Dalton
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George Touponse
Luigi Cavallo, Jr.

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New Applications

1. Application #2021-40 of Watertown Plastics, Inc. for construction of a 10,000 Sq. Ft building addition and expansion of a parking lot at 830 Echo Lake Road, Watertown, CT.

John Andrew, 482 Winding Brook Farm

Michael Lambert, Civil1: Mr. Andrew is the owner and applicant of this project at 830 Echo Lake Road. It's home to Watertown Plastics. The building is currently 29,550 sf, parking along the front & side of the building and off the rear are loading docks, dumpster pads. The storm drainage on site that is currently there is collected through a series of catch basins and discharged to a small detention basin. The plan is to have a 10,000sf addition off the rear of the building and readjust the parking lot and add a small section of parking at the front of the building and the rear will be expanding out the pavement to accommodate 2 overhead loading docks. With the increase of the asphalt will get collected in a series of catch basins diverted through a catch basin top of a water quality structure discharged into a small detention basin and have a low flow outlet pipe to the south towards the wetlands to the existing detention basin on the east side of the property. The only change there's going to be there was a pipe in the catch basin it's going to be removed and be relocated to be able to handle the retaining wall in the building addition. We have zero sf of wetland disturbance and there's 31,875sf of upland review area disturbance but only 6,454 sf is tree clearing. We're going to have a silt fence backed with hay bales to protect the wetlands during construction.

George Touponse: Has this been submitted to the Town Engineer? I'm sure he going to want to review the stormwater pond for water quality insurance

Michael Lambert: The plans and the engineering report have been submitted along with this wetland package but I'm not sure if the Town Engineer has review it or if it's a different dept we have to submit to

Craig Palmer: I though on commercial property it was for 100 year storm?

Tom Murphy: The report says it's done to a 25 year storm but it's also saying that project site is located within Steele Brook drainage area in Naugatuck River and watershed drainage basin obviously Steele Brook is very sensitive

Michael Lambert: If I had misjudged or misread that in the regulations, I apologize

Tom Murphy: I'm not sure but it seems to be sensitive and I think we should be leaning towards the 100 year as our minimums.

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Michael Lambert: I have no problems working with the Town Engineer and getting that determined on which storm event we should be addressing.

Joe Polletta determined this to be a significant activity and was seconded by Pierre Moran
All in Favor

Joe Polletta motioned to schedule a site walk at the discretion of the Wetlands Enforcement Officer and was seconded by Tom Murphy - All in Favor

Joe Polletta motioned to Schedule a public hearing for Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 6:30pm and was seconded by Tom Murphy - All in Favor

2. Application #2021-41 of Echo Asset, LLC for construction of a 12,800 Sq. Ft industrial building and associated infrastructure including driveway, water and sewer lines and onsite drainage system at 0 Echo Lake Road, Watertown, CT.

Sev Bovino: Scott Sambrook is with me and he's going to be occupying this facility once it's constructed. The property is located on Echo Lake Rd. The land area is 33 acres and mostly wooded and we'll graze that slope towards the center of property toward Turkey Brook and there are wetlands associated with it. A culvert discharged from Echo Lake Rd creates some wetlands and there's a drainage pipe that discharges into our property that a finger wetlands associated with it. In addition to that there's a wetland finger that goes from east and comes down to the major wetlands here and it generates up in this area here. The total wetland area on the property is 5.9 acres. The upland review area is 8.9 acres. The upland soils have moderate infiltration capabilities, the soil report was submitted as part of the application package. The applicant is proposing a 12,800 sf building with office space and a shop and a fuel pump for his business, which is Connecticut Sealcoating. The building and parking have been placed as far east and north away from the wetlands as possible and the state property is abutting our property. We have a 75 ft requirement to stay away from that boundary so we hug that 75 ft as much as possible so the driveway in the building is as far east and north as possible on the property. We are maintaining the drainage patterns that exist now on the property. On the north side we're proposing a 200 foot grass swale that takes runoff from the truck

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parking area with no curbing here. The drainage from the swale goes into a pipe system and heads out into a large bioretention basin with wet bottom. Clean water will be directed to the wetlands. The driveway drainage is controlled by a set of catch basins and piped into a water quality basin located at beginning of driveway. At tow slope we're proposing grass swale of 300 ft. This proposal disturbs about 2.31 acres of upland review area. Some will be temporary and some permanent. The wetland impact in terms of filling or disturbing wetlands is 415 sf and we backfill with the wetlands soil to regenerate.

Joe Polletta motioned that Commission determined that this is a significant activity and was seconded by Luigi Cavallo, Jr. - All in Favor

Joe Polletta motioned to Schedule a site walk at the discretion of the Wetlands Enforcement Officer and schedule a public hearing and was seconded by Luigi Cavallo, Jr. - All in Favor

Old Business

1. Discussion on the construction of Watertown Dog Park at 0 Main Street, Watertown.

Louis Spina, Dir. Of Public Works. It was brought to my attention a few weeks back that I knew we did some improvements down at the area in question for the dog park and brought to my attention after we shut down for the construction season that we allegedly deviated from the approved plan. If that's the case, I do apologize. If I had known we made some changes I would have walked to the office next door and had a conversation and looked for some type of administrative approval and I'm here tonight to work through it

Craig Palmer: There was a violation back on July 15, 2016 and technically your permit had run out. You have five years, right Mark??

Mark Massoud: I think the permits are still valid because of the recent changes to the legislation so I believe the permits are still valid

Craig Palmer: The public has to follow a strict set of rules so we assume the town should follow a stricter set of rules. There was a lot of activity down there, a lot of material was brought in, there was drainage put in and none of that was on the application. Most of the time that happens we make them remove the material and restore it back. I don't know why it happened in 16 and then happened again. So basically, the town hasn't learned anything from what I can see. I'm not sure what course the commission wants to take

Ned Dalton: Why did they change what they're doing? You're new so you don't know what was going on

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Lou Spina: I've been here for 2 ½ months. When they started this work and I was asked by Park & Rec to get some work done before the end of construction season, I was told that we had all the approvals & plans, and again, I wasn't aware that anything was done differently until a couple weeks back. I've been trying to ascertain exactly where we veered off the path, so to speak, unfortunately, I was out and Joe Millette was out due to illness, but what I was told from the field force is, I don't think there was all that much material brought in and I was told that when we did some trenches for the water line that they unearthed big chunks of concrete so they brought in a little material to fill in the voids created by that being hauled out and they brought in dirt to cover the water pipe, which is customary. I don't know if we went too far off the path or not but I think they made game time decisions to get the job done to the best of their ability. I'm not aware we brought in a lot of material. I did speak with the chairman and I was hoping to speak with Joe Millette, he designed it and he did the inspection but unfortunately between me being out and now him being out we haven't had the opportunity to speak.

Lou Spina: I don't disagree, and had I'd been aware that we were forced to deviate, I would have walked next door, had a conversation and took a ride out there and we would've been on the same page and look for administrative approval. Unfortunately, it was not brought to my attention until after the fact.

2. Notice of Violation issued to the owner of 30 Jericho Road, Watertown.
3. Discussion on Application Review Process by the Agency

Ned Dalton: We look to have these applicants do certain things on their property and it seems that a lot of times, at the end of it, so during the review process through the initial review it goes through and it gets to here but after the fact never isn't really completed the way it's supposed to be. Who gives the final sign off and can we do a final site walk? Or on bigger projects do interim site walks? Can we do site walks to make sure things are being done or to see what the progress is and make sure these people aren't in the wetlands where they're not supposed to be.

Mark Massoud: Commissioners have the ability to enter a site before, during and after to ensure that all measures are being put into place, but I think a lot of that responsibility falls to staff as well. That's what our purpose is to make sure that a plan is being complied with and when a final assignment comes about you'll know what to do.

Craig Palmer: Would it be possible to get a month report back to us. Like I said, we go through to approve these. I go in to sign the final mylar two years later. Is there any way to get a

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quarterly report on what's going on with the larger projects. Someone must be going there to look, no??

Mark Massoud: That's a good question, Mr. Chair. Again, I would say that would be primarily a staff function. I think staff should visit large sites on a regular basis and that should be the primary means of ensuring that those measures get put into place. If you want a report on a variety of sites I think that's appropriate to ask from staff.

Luigi Cavallo, Jr.: Mark, the property across from the junkyard, they were dumping there, which appeared to be the upland review area

Ned Dalton: That property is a DEEP issue and nothing is supposed to be happening on that property.

Mark Massoud: There's 2 parts to that. I had a call from CT DEEP bringing up the same issues that were reported to them that there was activity on that site and wanted to know as much info as the town knew about. The new owner of 0 Echo Lake, Watertown Brownfield, is in the same family of ownership as 243 Echo Lake Rd, which is an approved townhouse development. There was some material being taken off of 243 and taken to 0 Echo Lake for making a better roadway to get to some monitoring wells that needed to be inspected. He also said there has been some illegal (outside his realm) dumping, not by him, on the property and was bringing it down the road to the reclamation facility. Moosa and I had a conversation with him and we let him know that DEEP was interested in his activity particularly the brownfield portion and that he should not do any further work and bring us a plan with regards to any fill or material being brought onto that site that are in upland review areas. He stopped the work and is going to prepare a map and narrative as to what his intent with that property is so Moosa can review and bring to your attention.

Mark Massoud: Again, he'll bring us a map and show us exactly where any of that material is. No one has been to the site. This occurred at the end of Thursday, and since he was cooperative that's where it's been left.

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Communications and Bills

1. Memorandum from Moosa Rafey to Paul Jessell, Town Attorney dated December 16, 2021 regarding Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations.

Mark Massoud: Mr. Chairman, the last I spoke with the Town Attorney he was still interested in reviewing and making some comments and his request is to hold any further action in advance on the proposed regulations until he gets a chance to do that.

2. Re-appointment Letter for Mr. Craig Palmer
3. Re-appointment Letter for Mr. George Touponse III
4. Re-appointment Letter for Mr. Edward Norton

Tom Murphy motioned to Accept and File and was seconded by Luigi Cavallo, Jr. - All in Favor

Reports from Officers and Committees

1. Chairman's Report

Craig Palmer: Mark, if you can draft a letter on the commission members we have and alternates. I'm not sure of the status of some of them. We hear the names and I know they're not on the commission but we've never seen a letter that they're not on it. I don't know who we're supposed to go to find out. We only got letters for three people so technically there should be three people here

Joe Polletta: The council did not have their meeting yet.

Craig Palmer: There's other names like Scott Tearman and I've never seen him at a meeting. I just want to know so we can add members or put alternates on.

Tom Murphy: Who ever is on the roll call, are they on the committee or were they not replaced. Make sure the current names are the people who are already appointed and the ones that haven't shown up about to take actions against them

Mark Massoud: That's from the Town Manager's Office but haven't you guys written a letter a while ago about those not showing up?

Joe Polletta: I think the Chairman of the Democratic parties are responsible for the alternates to get a hold of people to see if they're going to go or not. The same thing should apply under the Republican party

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Craig Palmer: Is the 100 year storm through Planning & Zoning or Public Works/Engineering?

Mark Massoud: I think it's in the Highway design manual. The drainage manual is probably the most logical place for that to be. As I mentioned, there are new stormwater regulations for all towns through the ms4 program and they encourage the use of low impact development and they address those fundamental issues and in order for a town to effectively implement its mandated stormwater plan, it has to be written jointly into the P&Z regulations, subdivision regulations & wetland regulations. It's not a small task but we plan on tackling that and Paul has been working on the revisions to the town's stormwater regulations that are mandated by the state regulations.

2. Report from Wetland Regulations Review Subcommittee

Tom Murphy: The recommendations are to put forth to Paul Jessell, the Town Atty for review for statute references and we're waiting to hear back. I make a motion to Table Items 1 & 2 under Reports from Officers and Committees and seconded by Joe Polletta - All in Favor

Adjournment

Tom Murphy motioned to adjourn at 7:58pm and was seconded by Pierre Moran - All in Favor