



## TOWN OF THOMPSON Inland Wetlands Commission

### MEETING MINUTES – January 11, 2022 7:00 PM

*Via ZOOM Online Meeting Portal*

- A) The meeting was Called to Order at 7:00 PM by Chairman George O’Neil, who announced the protocols for conducting the ZOOM meeting.

Members and town staff present: George O’Neil (Chairman), Diane Chapin (Treasurer), Charlie Obert (Commissioner), Francesca Morano (Commissioner), Marla Butts (Wetlands Agent), Dan Malo (Recording Secretary), and Amy St. Onge (First Selectman).

Members of the public, including Daniel Blanchette, Max Candidus, Austin Harmon, Mike Bartlett, Harry Heller, Dave Held, and Marc Baer.

- B) Appointment of Alternates – n/a  
C) Minutes of the December 14, 2021 Meeting –

Commissioner Obert made a MOTION TO APPROVE the December 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Chapin seconded. **The Commission voted unanimously to APPROVE.**

The minutes were accepted as read.

- D) Citizens Comments on Agenda Items – none  
E) Applications

a) Old Applications

1. **DEC21029**, Town of Thompson, 35 Marshall St. (Assessor's map 169, block 92, lot 13), request for ruling on erection of 6 to 8 sculptures in 100- foot upland review area for the French River for recreational purposes, stamped received 9/9/21, action tabled 9/14/21, application withdrawn 1/10/22.
2. **IWA21031**, Max Candidus, 0 Sunnyside Drive (Assessor’s map 133, block 1, lot 3), construct a driveway and septic system for a new single-family home, portions of which are in wetlands and the 100-foot upland review area, stamped received 11/3/21, statutorily received 11/9/21. The sitewalk scheduled 1/8/22 was canceled due to inclement weather. Daniel Blanchette of J&D Civil Engineers discussed features of the proposed site plan, specifically the Commission’s request to incorporate a retaining wall in the driveway design. Commissioner Morano asked if rip-rap would provide stability in the slope. Wetlands Agent Marla Butts asked if rip-rap would allow for a 1:1 slope. Daniel Blanchette was of the opinion that a standard 2:1 slope would be preferable for improved filtration, maintenance, and unimpeded riparian corridors. Marla Butts asked if the driveway could be moved any closer to property lines for less impact to wetlands. Daniel Blanchette said that modifications could be made, but the proposed location was their best option that was rendered. Members of the Commission wished to walk the site. A Special Meeting sitewalk was scheduled for 1/15/22 at 9AM.

## b) New Applications

1. **DEC21035**, Linda Manning, 444 Thompson Rd (Assessor's map 103, block 41, lot 1), timber harvest, stamped received 12/15/21. Wetlands Agent Marla Butts identified a stream and 4 wetlands crossings on a site plan. Austin Harmon and Mike Bartlett of Hull Forest Products discussed their plan to use temporary timber crossings to harvest from the property. Mike Bartlett stated that the crossings are typical and reliable and require no engineering design. Austin Harmon mentioned that some of the crossings and logging paths exist onsite from past harvests. They anticipate minimal impact to the stream bank. Corduroy will be used where necessary. Any impacted areas will receive seed and hay post-harvest.

Commissioner Morano made a MOTION TO APPROVE the Use Permitted As A Right. Commissioner Chapin seconded. **The Commission voted unanimously to APPROVE.**

2. **WAA22001**, Danielle J. Robbins, 0 Thompson Rd (Assessor's map 87, block 37, lot 2C), construction new single-family home, septic system and driveway, portions of which are in the 100-foot upland review area, stamped received 1/5/22, under review. The applicant is awaiting septic approval. No action required.
3. **IWA22002**, Strategic Commercial Realty, LLC, 0 West Thompson Rd (Assessor's map 65, block 101, lot 9) earthmoving associated with the mining 1 million cubic yards of earth materials, portions of which are in the 100-foot upland review area, stamped received 1/6/22, to be statutorily received 1/11/22. Attorney Harry Heller of Heller, Heller, & McCoy discussed the erosion and sediment control measures planned for the site. A vegetated berm will be constructed and remain in place for the duration of the project to protect the adjacent French River. No work is proposed in wetlands. Material will be removed from the site, and processed on the property to the direct north. The applicant will provide a bond for monitoring and mitigation of any adverse impacts. If adverse impacts occur, applicant will provide mitigation plan and construction of mitigation before the bond is released. Attorney Heller anticipates the project to begin in 2026 and take 5 years to accomplish. Wetlands Agent Marla Butts suggested that the Commission conduct a sitewalk to familiarize themselves with the property. A sitewalk is scheduled for February 5, 2022 at 9AM.
4. **DEC22003**, 1267 Thompson, LLC (Cheryl Popiak, Manager), 1267 Thompson Rd (Assessor's map 116, block 24, lot 16A), replace existing septic tank, construct two stone walls and associated grading for maintenance and enjoyment of a residential home in addition to the work already approved under Wetlands Agent Approval WAA21032. Wetlands Agent Marla Butts pointed out proposed improvements on a siteplan produced by J&D Civil Engineers. The septic is proposed far from wetlands.

Commissioner Obert made a MOTION TO APPROVE the Uses Permitted As A Right. Commissioner Morano seconded. **The Commission voted unanimously to APPROVE.**

F) Applications received after agenda was published – none

G) Permit Extensions / Changes – none

H) Violations & Pending Enforcement Actions –

(continued)

- a) **Notice of Violation VIOL21019**, LIS Properties, L.L.C., 715 Riverside Dr. (Assessor's map 63, block 58, Lot 23), unauthorized structures diverting watercourse, flooding Thatcher Rd. & Riverside Dr., issued 7/7/21, request remove or response by 7/13/21. Structures have been removed but there are still concerns about the stream channel. Wetlands Agent Marla Butts will follow up with the property owner to resolve the matter.
- b) **Notice of Violation VIOL21023**, Jamie Piette, 0 & 73 Center Street (Assessor's map 16, block X, lots H & 2), unauthorized construction of retaining wall and associated backfill in or near Little Pond, issued 8/24/21, instructed cease further work, by 9/8/21 submit schedule for submission of A-2 survey and attend IWC meeting. A statement from Civil Engineer Normand Thibeault of Killingly Engineering Associates was read into the record. Per his assessment, the design of the retaining wall appears typical and does not require engineering since it is under 2ft in height. He concludes that it is properly installed, structurally sound, and not likely to fail. Marla will follow up with the engineers and owner regarding the property lines. Commissioner Obert stated that the property line issue may be outside of the Commission's jurisdiction.
- c) **Notice of Permit Violation VIOL21036**, Permit **IWA20022**, Marc Baer, 1227 Thompson Rd (Assessor's map 116, block 24, lot 10), grades not as authorized in modified plan approved by the Commission on February 9, 2021. Marla pointed out inconsistencies of the sitework with the plan approved by the Commission. Marc Baer described his frustration with the entire approval, build, and engineering process. A new foundation wall is scheduled to be poured this week. Marc Baer will discuss the approved plan with his engineer & contractor to remedy the violations and Commission's concerns.

I) Other Business

- a) Discussion of Proposed Revisions to Subdivision Regulations –  
Wetlands Agent Marla Butts discussed her efforts to compare the draft Subdivision Regulations with the existing regulations. A 'redline' version was requested by the Commission to demonstrate the changes, but could not be produced without difficulty. Marla has spent 30 hours of analysis and review of the changes and anticipates further work. Chairman O'Neil expressed concern that the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline for comment was too soon and that a rushed review could cause unintended consequences. Commissioners concurred unanimously. First Selectman Amy St. Onge provided context for the regulations, stating that the goal of updates was to bring Subdivision Regulations into congruence with the recently updated Zoning Regulations. Marla will ask the Planning & Zoning Commission to extend the comment period until a compendium of changes has been completed.
- b) FY 22-23 Budget Request Review –  
Commissioners discussed the yearly budget. It is projected that the Commission will exceed the Advertising line, due to an increase in permit applications and the costs of public notice. Commissioners decided to raise the Advertising line \$200.00, to a total of \$900.00. Chairman O'Neil had concern about limited spending available for Travel and Meetings, and suggested that both lines be brought to \$100.00. Marla will submit the budget to Finance.

J) Reports

- a) Budget & Expenditures – discussed during budget review.
- b) Wetlands Agent Report – Marla Butts gave the Commission updates on ongoing projects.

- K) Correspondence –
  - a) Eastern Connecticut Conservation District
  - b) Budget request for FY 22-23 and copy of Annual Report for FY 20-21
- L) Signing of Mylars – **IWA21028**, Wojciech Sudyka, 1574 Riverside Drive, Assessor's Map 55, Block 65, Lot 14. Mylars have been produced and will be available for signature in the Town Hall next week.
- M) Comments by Commissioners –
  - a) Commissioner Obert noted that some of the complaints covered during the meeting stem from unclear instructions and/or regulations.
  - b) Chairman O’Neil thanked Dan Malo and Amy St. Onge for their presence in the meeting.
- N) After completion of the agenda, Commissioner Chapin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morano. **The Commission APPROVED unanimously.**  
The meeting adjourned at 9:39PM.

To see/hear the entire meeting via ZOOM, click here to copy and paste into your search bar:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/QsMPk5EFqwj7VLdVGZrG4Cp7bNuV5F-QcL-BLW07-Jv8HUe9oeRLDWQfZXffPW\\_5.wF-jnt\\_wM\\_GM1\\_h8](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/QsMPk5EFqwj7VLdVGZrG4Cp7bNuV5F-QcL-BLW07-Jv8HUe9oeRLDWQfZXffPW_5.wF-jnt_wM_GM1_h8)

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Respectfully submitted, Dan Malo, Recording Secretary

