

Town of Stafford  
Inland Wetlands Commission  
Special Meeting  
January 18, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.  
Stafford Community Center

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Members Present:     John D. Wilson, Chair  
                              Dave Smith  
                              Dr. David Mordasky  
                              Tom Topping  
                              Kurt Mordasky

Also Present:           Devin Cowperthwaite, Public Works Director  
                              Gary Giroux, P.E., Senior Project Manager, Cardinal Engineering  
                              Public

## AGENDA

1. Call to order.
2. Establish a quorum
3. Review and approve minutes of 12/21/2022
4. Application of the Town of Stafford for Westford Avenue Bridge Replacement
5. Adjournment

Prior to the formal meeting, a slide presentation was provided starting at 6:30 p.m. on the Westford Avenue Bridge Replacement over Baker Brook. Public Works Director Devin Cowperthwaite introduced Senior Project Manager Gary Giroux, P.E. of Cardinal Engineering Associates, who gave an overview of the existing conditions of the bridge and the planned replacement work.

Devin Cowperthwaite said the town just posted a bond to pay for 50 percent of the project, noting the other 50 percent will be paid for by the CT Department of Transportation and the State Local Bridge Program. Gary Giroux explained that because Westford Road is a local road, it qualifies for the local bridge program. Additionally, the program will pay for any public utilities replacement needed. He noted that the CT Water Company will also be involved.

Gary Giroux said Baker Brook leads to a downstream pond and both are controlled by a dam. The existing bridge is a ten-foot structure, built in 1935 and is a concrete frame on concrete footings. The bridge is in serious condition with a 39.8 percent sufficiency rating. Gary Giroux showed pictures of deteriorating concrete on the bridge and walls and exposed reinforcing steel. The bridge rail is substandard and not safety compliant. Other issues include spalling, cracking,

exposed and rusted rebar and moderate scour. He noted that the downstream retaining walls are leaning into the pond and there are two unprotected utility pipes.

The proposed replacement structure will include a 16 foot by 16 foot precast concrete box. The invert will be depressed one foot with natural streambed material above it. The proposed replacement passes the CT DOT design flow for 100 year events. Riprap will be minimized to only protect wing wall footing. The plan will include relocating the utility pipes under the new structure. They also plan to replace the entire retaining walls along the pond. They will need to also replace some sewer line. The utilities will be protected by any flow.

Impacts to wetlands will be minimal with about 1,470 square feet of temporary and permanent impacts (about 900 square feet permanent). They will be installing a diversion structure to divert flow during construction. The diversion structure will be removed when the work is completed to allow flow through the proposed culvert.

Gary Giroux reviewed the traffic detour plan. He said it was decided to do the entire project in one phase and that projects such as these average about three to four months.

The Commission and public were invited to ask questions or make comments. Dave Smith asked if they had an idea about the time frame for when the project might begin. Devin Cowperthwaite said they would like to go out to bid for the project to start in the spring, but once a contractor is chosen, they will need to know when the fabricator will be able to deliver the boxes. Gary Giroux said he would expect an early summer (June) start. Devin Cowperthwaite said the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection owes them a flood management certification and they have permits from the Army Corp of Engineers and DEEP.

Dave Smith asked what the rails would look like. They will be similar to those installed on Williamson Road.

Matilda Champagne of 58 Westford Avenue asked if they will be doing anything with the pond. Devin Cowperthwaite said they are not touching the pond as the Town does not own it. Gary Giroux said they will install a coffer dam to keep the site dry.

Dave Smith asked about the sewer pipe. Gary Giroux said it will be encased in concrete with a manhole on either side. He added that CT Water will sleeve their pipe, making it a pipe within a pipe.

Dr. David Mordasky asked if Westford Avenue would be able to handle the heavy loads from concrete trucks going up and down it. Devin Cowperthwaite said the road isn't in the best of shape and will need to get paved either way at some point.

There were no other questions or comments.

**1. Call to order.**

John Wilson, Chair, called the formal meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Establish a quorum.**

A quorum was established with John Wilson, Chair; Dave Smith, Dr. David Mordasky, Tom Topping and Kurt Mordasky, all who attended the earlier presentation. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

**3. Review and approve minutes of 12/21/2022**

Dave Smith made a motion, seconded by Dr. David Mordasky, to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2022 meeting as written. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**4. Application of the Town of Stafford for Westford Avenue Bridge Replacement**

John Wilson thanked Gary Giroux and Devin Cowperthwaite for the excellent presentation. He noted also that the bridge on mill pond at Leonard Road came out very well. He asked Commissioners if they had any concerns about wetlands for this project and said he felt the impacts would be minimal. Dave Smith agreed. He said the coffer dam and bypass should eliminate problems with dewatering.

Dave Smith asked Gary Giroux about the size of the temporary piping. Gary said he believed it would be triple 30" RCP. It is designed for a 2-year frequency, 110 CFS. He noted the contract requires the contractor to pay attention to the weather and pull equipment out if it is warranted. The contractor must also follow all DEEP standards for protection. Dave Smith said it's good to see they built in contingencies for unanticipated events.

Dr. David Mordasky made a motion, seconded by Kurt Mordasky, to approve the application of the Town of Stafford for the Westford Avenue Bridge Replacement as presented. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**5. Adjournment**

Prior to adjourning, John Wilson passed around a contact sheet so the new office manager will have up-to-date contact information for Commissioners. Dave Smith briefly discussed the need to fill the ZEO/Wetlands Agent position as soon as possible as they relied on and valued David Perkins' expertise. Devin Cowperthwaite said the ZEO position has been posted and one requirement is that applicants have a CT DEEP Wetlands certification.

Dr. David Mordasky made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Dave Smith. All were in favor. Motion carried. The January 18, 2023 Special Meeting of the Stafford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Annie Gentile  
Clerk