

Town of Stafford  
Inland Wetlands Commission  
Regular Meeting  
February 15, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.  
Veterans Meeting Room

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4 pages  
*Michael J. Russo*  
TOWN OF STAFFORD

Members Present: John D. Wilson, Chair  
Kurt Mordasky  
Ricky Dorman  
Hickory Lake  
Dave Smith  
Dr. David Mordasky

Also Present: Jeff Garnelis, applicant  
Jay Ussery, J. R. Russo Surveyors & Engineers  
Scott Nigro, owner of Aqua Pump, with other Aqua Pump employees  
Public

## AGENDA

1. **Call to order.**
2. **Establish a quorum**
3. **Review and approve minutes of 1/18/2023**
4. **Application of the Three Stooges Venture – 94 West Stafford Road, site of Aqua Pump**
5. **Application of 5 Trolley Crossing – new home build**
6. **Adjournment**

1. **Call to order.**  
John Wilson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Veterans Meeting Room. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **Establish a quorum.**  
A quorum was established with John Wilson, Chair; Kurt Mordasky, Ricky Dorman, Hickory Lake, Dave Smith and Dr. David Mordasky
3. **Review and approve minutes of 1/18/2023**  
Kurt Mordasky made a motion to approve the minutes of 1/18/2023, seconded by Dr. David Mordasky. All voted in favor, with the exception of Hickory Lake who abstained. Motion carried.

A brief discussion was held about the two applications, with an agreement to take the two out of order as the second would be shorter.

**4. Application of 5 Trolley Crossing new home build**

Applicant Jeff Garnelis shared two sets of drawings prepared by Gardner & Peterson of the single family home he planned to build for his family to live in. He said his father bought the lot as part of an approved subdivision in 2007 and he bought it from his father about 1-1/2 to 2 years ago. A portion of the lot was cleared shortly after it was purchased. He reviewed the plans pointing out the existing homes nearby and the retaining walls on the property.

John Wilson noted the whole project is not in the wetlands, but sitting on the edge of them. Dave Smith said he helped do the soil testing for the original subdivision and they are suitable for a septic system. He noted also they could hook back or shorten the retaining walls if there is any concern about their location.

John Wilson said he walked the site and had no objections to the plans. He said back when the property was bought, the upland review area was 50 feet and the State later wanted them to increase it to 200 feet. They compromised at 100 feet. He asked if there were any watercourses on the property. Jeff Garnelis said he was not aware of any.

Dave Smith made a motion to approve the new home build at 5 Trolley Crossing per the plans presented, seconded by Kurt Mordasky. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**5. Application of the Three Stooges Venture – 94 West Stafford Road, site of Aqua Pump**

John Wilson noted a lot of regulated activity has gone on at the site and the upland review area is all filled in. He said there were originally 34 wetlands flags, but when he walked the site he only found two. He said there was a silt fence that was 10 to 15 feet beyond where it should be. He asked the applicant why he did not first come before the IWWC to get a permit.

Applicant Scott Nigro, owner of Aqua Pump, said he originally spoke to former ZEO David Perkins about the project. He said he was in the process of taking trees down and David Perkins said he wanted them to put up silt fence. Scott Nigro said David Perkins later checked it out and approved it. He said they left some big trees, then took the rest down, stumped them and removed the stumps to Stafford Sand and Gravel. He said they didn't go in any area they shouldn't have been in. John Wilson said they were well within the 100 foot upland review area, and that requires a permit. He questioned why the stakes were removed.

Jay Ussery of J. R. Russo Surveyors and Engineers said the wetlands were flagged 2+ years ago. They will put them back so the Board members can walk the property and see where things stand. John Wilson noted the paperwork for this project only came in on February 9<sup>th</sup>, so he urged all members to walk the property before the next meeting. They can accept the application this evening but don't have to act on it.

Jay Ussery reviewed a map of the property. The parcel is at 94 West Stafford Road to the west of the Big Y traffic light and Subway. He said a single-family brick garage was previously on the property but was removed in recent years. The parcel is about 8 acres in size and is bordered to the west by a brook that comes under the highway, plus wetlands. He said they will add silt fence where it is not already in.

Jay Ussery said Scott Nigro is proposing putting in a new two-level 50-foot by 150-foot building for Aqua Pump, a driveway, parking and access to the back. Trucks and equipment will be in the basement area. The graded area is to be paved. The parcel will allow room for more development.

Drainage will be handled with three infiltration basins, each of which he described. The majority of the drainage will flow out back to one of the basins. He said they did five test wells and most hit water. There are good sandy, gravelly soils on the parcel. Sanitary sewer and water are located in the street. Jay Ussery said Rick Zulick delineated the wetlands back in December of 2019 or January of 2020, shortly after the property was purchased. Based on the design, there will be no wetlands disturbance.

There was agreement that the 34 wetlands flags need to be put back as soon as possible. They are mapped out. Dave Smith asked if Rick Zulick had seen the configuration outlined on the plans seen tonight. Jay Ussery said Rick has a copy of the plan and his letter is based it.

Dr. David Mordasky asked about future development areas on the plan, what they had in mind to build. Jay Ussery said they were not yet sure but have a concept for a restaurant in the left front corner. The area in back might be suitable for some kind of commercial businesses that don't require visibility, such as flex garage and office space.

Hickory Lake asked if they sized their drainage overflow for the extra development. Jay Ussery said, yes, it is sized for full development and configured for full pavement.

John Wilson said they need to address the activity that was done without a permit. He said David Perkins would never have allowed the upland review area to be stripped away. Dave Smith suggested when they walk the area, they will be able to see how the situation has changed.

Jay Ussery said he expected they could get all the flags back by the end of next week, and he will let John Wilson know when that is done so the Board can have time to see the property before the next meeting. John Wilson said no more work beyond that can be done before the next meeting. He stressed that they want the project to go forward, but it is important they adhere to the regulations. They can't approve the project without the wetlands being delineated.

Hickory Lake asked if the silt fence is doing its job. John Wilson said it appears to be, but it needs to be picked up in a few areas. It was noted a dead tree was down on a portion of it.

Dr. David Mordasky made a motion to continue the application to the next meeting, seconded by Hickory Lake. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Jay Ussery noted they owed a fee for the application and after a brief discussion said he would check with the office for the correct amount.

Dr. David Mordasky noted that at a recent PZC meeting a neighbor to the parcel expressed concern that the work might cause water to back up on her side of the street and cause potential flooding. John Wilson said he thought the elevation between her house and the project site might prevent that. He noted it is not a Wetlands issue.

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Donna Wright of 95 West Stafford Road said her concern was that there is a catch basin on Aqua Pump's side of the road which is directly across the road from a catch basin on her side of the road beside her mailbox. They are connected by a pipe and it goes into a culvert. She asked if their drainage or excess water from the surface would go into the catch basin. Scott Nigro said he believed the water would all be going in the direction away from her. Jay Ussery said they would come to her home and go over the plan in detail so she could see how it will work.

On a separate note, John Wilson said he had a permit application. He noted back in 2020 the Stateline Pond Association did a project where they killed a lot of weed growth there, and he discussed a pamphlet he received from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection about this type of activity. Dave Smith said he did not believe they had to act on it and the pamphlet was likely just advisory, for their information.

**6. Adjournment**

Dr. David Mordasky made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Hickory Lake. All were in favor. Motion carried. The February 15, 2023 meeting of the Stafford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Annie Gentile  
Recording Secretary