

Town of Stafford  
Inland Wetlands Commission  
Regular Meeting  
September 20, 2023  
Veterans Meeting Room

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TOWN CLERK

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

Also Present: Eric Peterson, P.E., Gardner & Peterson, representing Dabney Baum  
Kenneth Hrica, P.E., representing applicant, Thomas Briggs  
Public

**Agenda:**

1. Call to order
2. Establish a quorum
3. Review and approve minutes of 8/16/2023
4. Wetlands Applications –
  - **Applicant:** Eric Peterson, 178 Hartford Turnpike, Tolland, CT 06084  
**Owner:** Dabney Baum, 84 Abbott Rd, Wellesley, MA 02481  
**Property:** 97 Wales Rd, Stafford Springs, CT 06076
  - **Applicant:** Thomas Briggs, 705 N. Mountain Road, Newington, CT  
**Owner:** Dunbeath, LLC, 30 West Stafford Road, Stafford, CT  
**Property:** 30 West Stafford Rd., Stafford, CT
5. Other Business
6. Adjournment

**1. Call to Order**

John Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**2. Establish a quorum**

A quorum was established with John Wilson, Chair; Dr. David Mordasky, Kurt Mordasky, Tom Topping, and Dave Smith. Ricky Dorman, alternate, arrived to the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

### 3. Review and approve minutes of 8/16/2023

Dave Smith made a motion to approve the 8/16/23 meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Tom Topping. All were in favor. Motion carried.

### 4. Wetlands Applications –

- **Applicant:** Eric Peterson, 178 Hartford Turnpike, Tolland, CT 06084  
**Owner:** Dabney Baum, 84 Abbott Rd, Wellesley, MA 02481  
**Property:** 97 Wales Rd, Stafford Springs, CT 06076

Eric Peterson, P.E. with Gardner & Peterson attended the meeting and made a presentation. He said Dabney Baum purchased the two-acre parcel at 97 Wales Road and bought 93 Wales Road in 2021. The original plan was to build a large house on 93 Wales Road and reconstruct a driveway. A wetlands permit was obtained and they designed a septic system. However, the property owner found the cost to do this was turning out to be too expensive and decided on a more modest house on the other lot, 97 Wales Road.

He indicated where they will build a driveway now instead of cutting a new driveway off Route 19. This will result in less erosion. He said the lot at #97 was Lot #2 of the Lakeview subdivision. The plans showed the house and septic. Eric Peterson said they dug new test pits and found good soils but it is in the upland review area. However, the plan will result in minimal disturbance. Eric said most of the lot is in the upland review area, but only 0.4 acres of disturbance will happen in there.

Eric Peterson noted distances from the wetlands of 30 feet for the well, 35 feet for the septic, and 25 feet for the house. He said the closest is a footing drain at 10 feet. He noted the erosion and sediment controls are off 93 Wales Road and everything was already permitted there. He indicated where the silt fence and barriers would be located.

John Wilson asked members how they felt about the septic system being located in the upland review area. Dr. David Mordasky said there did not appear to be many choices where it could be located. There were no objections.

Dave Smith said a good thing is that they don't have to account for a driveway corridor as one site supports the other. Dave Smith asked if there were plans for a garage. Eric Peterson said the plan has no garage. It is a two-bedroom house with a small parking area. Dave Smith asked if the entrance moved and if they obtained an encroachment permit. Eric Peterson said it is more or less in the same spot that was originally approved, but he does not know if the contractor has gotten the permit.

Dave Smith asked also what the schedule is. Eric Peterson said some work has started on the driveway but there is a bit of site work that remains to be done to get to the house. He said he expected they would probably start on the house next year.

There was no further discussion.

John Wilson made a motion to approve the wetlands application for 97 Wales Road as presented with the requirement that silt fence be used as indicated on the map. Dave Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

- **Applicant:** Thomas Briggs, 705 N. Mountain Road, Newington, CT  
**Owner:** Dunbeath, LLC, 30 West Stafford Road, Stafford, CT  
**Property:** 30 West Stafford Rd., Stafford, CT

Kenneth Hrica, P.E. of Hrica Associates, LLC, representing Thomas Briggs, attended the meeting and made a presentation. He said he researched the site since his last time before the IWWC and found a FEMA letter with a map of amendment. He said a letter of this type is obtained when a property owner asks a surveyor to go to FEMA to find out if a parcel is in a flood zone. In this case, it was found that FEMA took portions of the parcel out of the flood zone.

Kenneth Hrica showed the FEMA mapping where most of the property is in the flood zone, but that an amendment in 2007 took some structures out of Flood Zone A. FEMA also took one structure – at 30 West Stafford Road – out of Flood Zone B. The remaining structures are in Flood Zone C which is not a flood hazard zone.

Kenneth Hrica said the survey information was sent to FEMA and FEMA determined the elevation of the flood zone and sent it back to the surveyor. The elevation of the flood zone is 509.0. He showed how that elevation fits on the site and provided copies of the new maps to IWWC members.

He explained that if there is a proposal to build in Flood Zone A, you have to meet provisions of the special flood zone. For residential, you can build in a 100-year flood zone, but for any commercial buildings, they must be one foot above the flood zone. He said they always planned the building to be at an elevation of 510. He did note that a small corner of the building is in Flood Zone A, so he will need to go before the PZC to show that they meet requirements.

Kenneth Hrica and the Commission discussed the pond in back and the 100 foot regulated area. Kenneth Hrica said the plan will remove Building 32 and to build a self-storage building. He showed where the garage bay doors would be located and pointed out pervious and impervious areas on the site. He showed how the buffer will be increased and that they will gain about 5,000 square feet of pervious area on the site. They will also be moving pavement further away from the wetlands.

Kenneth Hrica pointed out the catch basins that serve the plaza. He noted there is a big washout behind one of them which created a big gully. This will need to be fixed and the area will need to be stabilized as it is getting closer to the wetlands. He noted there is a 24-inch corrugated metal pipe there and once they remove the debris there, they will be able to determine if it needs to be replaced.

John Wilson said the paperwork he had seemed to indicate that any work done there would need to be approved by FEMA. He asked if there would be any recourse on the town if a problem occurred. Kenneth Hrica said the PZC and flood plain overlay zone acts as a branch of FEMA locally and so they do need to get approval from the PZC. Kenneth Hrica also noted that if they don't meet the one foot of clearance from the flood zone, then they need to get flood insurance.

John Wilson said he was good with the plan, but that they definitely need to address the washed out area first. He said it is well understood that the property has not been maintained, so it needs to be corrected because it affects the pond. He said he would want that to be a condition of any approval.

Kenneth Hrica agreed that it needed to be repaired as soon as possible. He said they originally had a silt fence there, but he has since added a row of hay bales behind the silt fence. He said they need the pipe to be able to flow freely.

There were no further questions or comments.

Dr. David Mordasky made a motion to approve the wetlands application of Thomas Briggs at 30 West Stafford Road as presented with the condition that the washed out area at the southeast corner of the property be repaired as soon as possible prior to any other work starting on the property. John Wilson asked that the applicant notify the building/zoning office when the work is done so the zoning enforcement officer can be sent out to inspect it. The motion was seconded by Dave Smith. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Dr. David Mordasky noted that this area has been depressed for some time, so this plan is a move in the right direction for the town.

#### **5. Other Business**

Tom Topping asked about information the Commission received on continuing education. They discussed an eight-hour CT Wetlands Agency Training Program online course provided by DEEP, noting it is a free course and must be completed within 60 days of starting it. John Wilson said the course is good for both people new to Inland Wetlands commissions as well as well as a refresher course for those who have been on commissions for some time.

#### **6. Adjournment**

Dr. David Mordasky made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Kurt Mordasky. All were in favor. Motion carried. The September 20, 2023 meeting of the Stafford Inland Wetlands Commission was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Gentile  
Recording Secretary

