

Regular Meeting Minutes January 5, 2023

CITY OF NORWICH INLAND WETLANDS, WATERCOURSES AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION HYBRID MEETING / PUBLIC HEARING 23 UNION STREET – LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM NORWICH, CT

A. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Richard Morell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

B. ROLL CALL and SEATING of ALTERNATES: Richard Morell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and stated a quorum was present

Present: Chairman Richard Morell, Vice Chairman Douglas Lee (ZOOM), Peter Chalecki (ZOOM) and Brandon Hyde.

Absent: Michael Lahan.

Also Present: Dan Daniska, City Planner; and Katherine Rose, Recording Secretary.

C. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Douglas Lee put forth a motion to APPROVE the December 1, 2022 regular meeting minutes. Brandon Hyde seconded. Douglas Lee, Peter Chalecki, Brandon Hyde and Richard Morell voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

D. COMMUNICATIONS: None.

E. OLD BUSINESS: None.

G. NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. SHOW CAUSE HEARING: Unauthorized Land Disturbance in a Regulated Area – 217 & 229 North Wawecus Hill Road (IWWCC #21-13) Norwich, CT. Assessor's Map 89, Block 1, Lots 14 & 15. Zone R-80.**

Dan Daniska reported the disturbance was brought to the Planning Office's attention by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Dan Daniska reported they had been to the site multiple times in the past and approval was given by the IWWCC a year prior for a single-family home with Erosion and Sedimentation controls. Dan Daniska reported he visited the site right before Thanksgiving of 2022 and witnessed a number of felled trees on the grounds, trees dropped into the wetlands, and a driveway cut toward the front of the property. Dan Daniska stated he met with the ZEO and City Engineer to work out a plan, which consisted of a letter to the property owner. Dan Daniska added that the silt fencing in place was not buried and that all of the downed trees were invasive growth. Dan Daniska stated that when the trees were cut down the silt fence in the front of the property was damaged and must be repaired, and the trees and branches removed by hand before construction for the foundation of the home could begin. Dan Daniska stated that stumps near the wetland areas would not be pulled and that other zoning and public works issues were being addressed at the site. Richard Morell asked how long the property owner would have to respond to the letter. Dan Daniska stated that some of the work on the property had already begun. Brandon Hyde asked when construction had begun to which

Dan Daniska responded he was unsure as the house is in a remote area. Dan Daniska discussed some of the history of the property and explained that the approved clearing limits were exceeded so the city wishes for the property owner to bring the silt fencing in even further than shown on the originally proposed plan by about 15 feet. Brandon Hyde asked if there was any value to the trees that were cut down to which Dan Daniska responded not in his opinion. Dan Daniska put an aerial GIS map of the site on screen for all to see. Richard Morell asked if there was a portion of the area that would require replanting for ground cover to reduce sediment or runoff. Dan Daniska stated that no grass coverings had been removed, only rocks and invasive growth. Dan Daniska stated that much of the wetlands were pre-disturbed by the gas line that ran through them. Dan Daniska showcased various photos of viewpoints of the overgrowth in the area on screen for all to see. Brandon Hyde noted it did not seem as though anything substantial had been removed, but that Erosion and Sediment controls needed to be maintained. Dan Daniska stated the city would be monitoring the property on a weekly basis and if any additional violations were found additional letters would be drafted and brought before the commission. Dan Daniska asked the commission if they wished to keep the cease and desist order in effect, revise it or withdraw it. Brandon Hyde made a motion to sustain the Cease and Correct Order as written in the Wetland Agent's letter dated December 27, 2022. Douglas Lee seconded. Douglas Lee, Peter Chalecki, Brandon Hyde and Richard Morell seconded, all in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

2. SHOW CAUSE HEARING: Unauthorized Land Disturbance in a Regulated Area – 36 Hammond Avenue Norwich, CT. Assessor's Map 111, Block 1, Lot 22. Zone R-40.

Dan Daniska reported that the city building official who discovered the disturbance was on the site on December 9, 2022 and clarified that the correct address was 36 Hammond Avenue. Dan Daniska explained that the backyard of the home is a wetland and showcased a photo of the home on screen for all to see. Dan Daniska stated that city officials were notified that the well in the wetland area were partially exposed and when the building official visited the site the power was turned off. Dan Daniska explained that the previous property owners had a stream that ran between the home and foundation and connected to the city drainage under the road and downhill. Dan Daniska stated the intermittent stream had pushed in the foundation over the years. Dan Daniska stated that between visits by city officials the previous property owner hid the stream with a pipe, garbage and dirt. Dan Daniska reported that the city engineer is requesting the area be uncovered and that the pipe may be able to remain, but the installation needs to be inspected. Dan Daniska stated the area was somewhat of an intermittent stream which presented wetlands issues. Dan Daniska stated he would order the property owner to stabilize the area along the watercourse, return the channel to its previous state and to work with the city engineer to develop a type of piping system to match what is under the road. Richard Morell asked if the channel was developed by the previous land owners or the city. Dan Daniska responded it was his understanding the channel was created by the previous property owners during the 1950's and the home had been in disrepair for some time. Dan Daniska stated the current property owner is looking to renovate and live in the home. Dan Daniska stated it was unknown if the pipe met the roadway drainage or would erode overtime which is why the city engineer requested it to be uncovered. Discussion ensued, Dan Daniska clarified that if any disturbance took place in the upland area or the wetlands on site further applications would need to come forward. Douglas Lee made a motion to sustain the Cease and Correct Order as written in the Wetland Agent's letter dated December 27, 2022. Brandon Hyde seconded. Douglas Lee, Peter Chalecki, Brandon Hyde and Richard Morell seconded, all in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

H. OTHER BUSINESS: None.

I. VIOLATIONS: None.

J. ADJOURNMENT: Brandon Hyde made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 PM. Peter Chalecki seconded. Brandon Hyde, Peter Chalecki, Michael Lahan and Richard Morell voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Katherine Rose, Recording Secretary