

**TOWN OF HADDAM
INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING – CONFERENCE ROOM
30 FIELD PARK DRIVE, HADDAM, CT 06438
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, 21 JUNE 2021
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

A	Paul Best, Secretary
A	Curt Chadwick
X	Jeremy DeCarli
X	Dan Iwanicki, Vice Chairman
X	Joe Stephens
X	Mark Stephens, Chairman
X	Thomas Worthley
X	David Costa, Alternate – Seated
A	Gail Reynolds, Alternate
X	Jim Puska, Wetlands Enforcement Officer
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

Due to a scheduling conflict created by the First Selectman’s assistant, this meeting had to be relocated from Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive, to the Town Office Building, Conference Room, 30 Field Park Drive. Chairman Mark Stephens waited at the Town Hall to notify the applicant’s representative and any public interested in attending the meeting of the change in location.

1. Call to Order & Attendance/Seating of Alternates

Mr. M. Stephens, chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. All regular and alternate members were seated.

2. Additions/Corrections to the Agenda

There were no additions/corrections to the agenda.

3. Public Comment

There was no public present.

4. Old Business

There was no Old Business to discuss.

5. New Business

1. Timber Harvest

Don DuBois, Owner/Forester of DuBois Forestry and Land Management Professionals, representing Rogene Gillmor, applicant/owner, was present.

Mr. DuBois reported that Mrs. Gillmor is the recipient of a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service through their Environmental Quality

Incentive Program (USDA/NRCS EQIP). Mr. DuBois stated there has been almost 100 percent mortality in the standing oak in the forest (2015 and 2016 gypsy moth infestation) and this program will pay Mrs. Gillmor to remove and salvage the trees as a non-commercial operation.

Mr. DuBois reported the operation will involve the removal of approximately 37,000 board feet of sawtimber and 100 cord of firewood. Trees to be removed have been marked in blue. The contractor will be using a designated access road that historically has been there for a long time to access the property and get to the log loading area. There will be a temporary stream crossing is designated on the map as a little red canoe. There is a stream in Stand 2. Stand 2 defines the drainage and a temporary bridge crossing will be installed - a portable mat, to be installed prior to the operation and removed at the completion of the operation.

The operation will begin 1 November 2021 in order to protect migratory bird habitat and habitat for the long eared bat, and work must be done by 1 April 2021. Stanley Burr, Jr. from Higganum has been contracted to do the work. Mr. DuBois stated he's very pleased with Mr. Burr's workmanship.

Mr. DuBois stated the NRCS also provided funding for upgrading the access road as it comes up a little steeply as it comes off the road. Upgrading will be done with processed gravel with geotextile fabric that will remain in place and will be covered with class B stone to prevent the truck from bottoming out when exiting the site. At the shoulder of the road a tracking pad of rip rap stone will be installed to prevent soil from reaching the roadway.

Mr. DuBois stated it's a straightforward operation and he is looking for a jurisdictional ruling as a Permitted Use as of Right.

Mr. M. Stephens asked if this is a select cut. Mr. DuBois stated no, the operation is a salvage regeneration - going after mostly dead and dying oak, but are also taking out some black birch with neck tree canker (fungus). Mr. DuBois also stated he will be concentrating on the growth potential of the site onto the residual stand noting there is still some very good trees remaining - sugar maple, some red oak (those that look healthy are staying), and hickory - and by creating various size openings in the canopy the goal is to bring about some natural regeneration. Mr. DuBois stated regeneration is already taking place as there's a lot of opening in the canopy due to the number of dead trees.

Mr. DuBois stated when the job is completed, the bridges will be removed; and pursuant to NRCS requirements, they will establish a shade tolerant conservation grass seed mixture in the trail system to prevent any future runoff and erosion.

Mr. Worthley asked Mr. DuBois his thoughts on advance regeneration. Mr. DuBois stated not a whole lot yet, but there is some noting where the oak has died there is some oak coming in. Mr. Worthley stated there seems to be abundant oak coming in where most of the canopy has been lost. Mr. DuBois stated he's hoping to get a little bit of tulip poplar throwing some seed noting that gypsy moth do not like them. Unclear as to why they do not like it. Mr. DuBois stated tulip poplar is fast growing and great for pollinators and they threw a large number of seeds.

Mr. Worthley asked Mr. DuBois if tree branch tops will be scattered around to protect new growth from deer browsing. Mr. DuBois stated it is not a NRCS recommended tactic, but recommended the area be left kind of messy so the deer have a hard time getting to the regeneration. Mr. DuBois stated with his experience over the years, if the deer want to get to the food, they will. Mr. DuBois also stated this client in particular is more concerned with aesthetics so the residual branching will be knocked down to within a couple of feet of the ground not only to improve aesthetics, but also to promote regeneration and decomposition.

Mr. J. Stephens asked if a chipper will be brought in for the slash. Mr. DuBois stated no, any residual branches less than four inches will be lopped closed to the ground and allowed to decompose on the ground. Noted the trees on site have been dead for a number of years. Mr. DuBois also stated Stanley Burr who will be taking care of the sawtimber and the fire wood and Mr. Burr is thorough with his work.

Mr. Worthley and Mr. M. Stephens commented about the installation of wood duck boxes. Mr. DuBois stated habitat is missing for them and the NRCS will be paying for the wood duck boxes and bluebird houses. Mr. Worthley stated he has a source for boxes if needed. Mr. DuBois noted that the boxes have to be cleaned out each season.

Mr. Costa asked how many trees comprise the board feet previously mentioned. Mr. DuBois stated 187 sawtimber trees (average about 200 board feet per tree) and 40 feet of cord standing firewood. M. J. Stephens asked if better quality wood comes out of a dead tree than a live tree. Mr. DuBois stated no, most commercial vendors do not want dead timber. Discussion followed.

Prior to the vote, Mr. Iwanicki asked if the adjacent property owners had been notified of the impending operation. Mr. M. Stephens stated there is a listing of those property owners who received notification. Mr. DuBois stated he did not send the letter via certified mail as it is not required by law. Mr. DuBois stated he did not have any letters returned and he provided a sample of the letter to the Commission.

MOTION: Tom Worthley motioned to approve the Silvicultural Operation involving the removal of dead and dying oak trees, the result of recent gypsy moth defoliations, one temporary stream crossing to be installed. Existing access road to be hardened with rip-rap stone to form a tracking pad at log loading area as shown on Site Plan **DATED RECEIVED June 11, 2021 LAND USE OFFICE.** See map on file in the Land Use Office. **Conditions:** 1. Standard Permit Conditions. 2. Special Conditions/Modifications: No. Jeremy DeCarli second. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Iwanicki asked Mr. DuBois if he had any issues with the town's regulations. Mr. DuBois stated most towns do not require full wetlands applications, but it was what was required for Haddam and he did it.

Mr. M. Stephens asked Mr. DuBois if he had to submit an application to the State (DEEP). Mr. DuBois stated no, as part of the Commission's application would go to the State. Mr. Iwanicki asked Mr. DuBois if he sends anything to the State. Mr. DuBois stated no.

6. Forestry Regulations Discussion

Mr. M. Stephens spoke in regard to a recent email from Nick Zito, Forest Practices Act Forester, Division of Forestry, Bureau of Natural Resources, CTDEEP, and the suggestions he had made pertaining to the Commission's regulations. Mr. Worthley felt it may just take some tweaking of what the Commission currently has.

Mr. Iwanicki reviewed the draft regulations he had compiled noting his approach was that the document would be something for the future if something were to become an issue environmentally. A brief discussion followed in regard to definitions, attempting to obtain information from the Gateway Commission (no response; Mr. DeCarli will assist in this matter), and the application fees (unclear what is appropriate). Mr. Iwanicki stated if the Commission moves forward with new regulations, a public hearing, a Board of Selectmen's meeting, and potentially a town meeting will be required. Mr. Worthley spoke in regard to advocating for doing clear cuts in wetlands for regeneration in some places (cited red maple swamps; small patch cuts (up to five acres) to stimulate resprouting of specific growth. Mr. Worthley made it clear that this would not be appropriate for all areas. Once the Gateway information and fees are available, a copy of the

draft should be sent to Mr. Zito for his review and comments. Mr. Worthley suggested Mr. Zito be advised that the Commission is close to submitting a document for his review.

Copies of revised/proposed Forest Practices Regulations draft date 10/10/20 as well as the regulations with Nick Zito's notes/recommendations in red were distributed to the Commission for their review/comments.

The forestry regulations are to be a standing agenda item until completed.

7. Wetland Enforcement Officer's Report

Agent Approval - Mr. Puska reported that he had approved two above ground pools.

968 Killingworth Road – Mr. Iwanicki asked for an update regarding the clear cutting and limbing of trees near the body of water that has taken place behind the building. Mr. Puska stated he has not seen anyone doing any further work, but he did hear that a Dunkin Donuts will be going on the site.

8. Approval/Correction of Minutes

MOTION: Tom Worthley motioned to approve the 19 April 2021 minutes as submitted. Joe Stephens second. Motion carried with Dan Iwanicki and Dave Costa abstaining.

MOTION: Dan Iwanicki motioned to approve the 17 May 2021 minutes as submitted. Joe Stephens second. Motion carried with Mark Stephens and Tom Worthley abstaining.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

Bunny Hall Batzner
Recording Clerk

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, 19 July 2021.