

**TOWN OF HADDAM  
INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION  
TOWN HALL  
21 FIELD PARK DRIVE, HADDAM, CT  
FRIDAY, 13 MAY 2016  
SPECIAL MEETING  
UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

**ATTENDANCE**

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

**1. Call to Order & Attendance/Seating of Alternates**

Mr. M. Stephens, chairman, called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. and all regular and alternate members were seated.

**2. New Business - Continued**

**Lindsay Carroll and Aaron Golub, Applicant and Owner. Property Address: 1752 Saybrook Road, Haddam, Located at Assessor's Map 65, Assessor's Lot 019-2. Proposed Activity: Creation of Four Garden Plots next to Clark's Creek, to Include: Installation of Vegetative Drain Ways, Creation of a Driveway to Allow Access to Right-of-Way, Installation of Drainage Pipes Under Proposed Access Driveway and Installation of Geofabric Under Stone for the Proposed Access Driveway, and Tree Removal to Increase Sunlight.**

Lindsay Carroll and Aaron Golub, owners/applicants, were present.

This is a continuation from 9 May 2016.

Prior to the special meeting, a site walk was held at 7:00 p.m. In attendance: Commissioners Best, Chadwick, J. Stephens, Costa, and Reynolds; Wetlands Enforcement Officer Puska; and Ms. Carroll and Mr. Golub, owners/applicants. The site walk concluded at 7:20 p.m.

Mr. M. Stephens asked Mr. Golub what he had looked at to get the misrepresentation. Mr. Golub stated he looked at the Wetlands Regulations on the town's website; the as of right matter was confusing, and it didn't specifically say a permit was needed until further into the regulations. Mr. M. Stephens stated the regulations are very clearing about digging waterways and filling in wetlands which are not allowed by right. Mr. Golub agreed. Mr. M. Stephens read Section 4.3.

Mr. M. Stephens commented that hobby farming is well established in Connecticut as agriculture and the Wetlands Commission have considered it to be the same. Mr. M. Stephens also stated the state has been rather wide in their definition of what has been said; and he would have noted this at last meeting. Mrs. Reynolds stated agriculture doesn't have to be on a huge area. Mr. M. Stephens agreed.

Mr. Best stated he did some research and in order to get a farm plate for a vehicle and getting benefits to be recognized as a farmer, there has to be \$5,000 worth of sales in a year. Mr. M. Stephens stated that's farming as opposed to the usage of your property for agriculture. Mr. Best stated it's a question for hobby farming and believes it to be an unresolved issue.

Mr. M. Stephens asked Ms. Carroll and Mr. Golub if they had consulted with farms as to whether anything can be grown in that type of area. Mr. Golub explained the soil type (clay; holds a lot of nutrients) and the purpose of the drainage ditches as the area was very wet (more so when dug than now). Mr. Golub stated he consulted 10-12 different books and the best way to make the area suitable for farming was to dig ditches in order to drop the water table down to dry out the soil. Mr. Golub also stated their intent was for farming (can only be done in this area) and they intend on doing some farming even if there isn't enough product for a farm stand.

In regard to the farm name, Clark's Creek Farm, Mr. Best asked the location of the creek. Ms. Carroll stated the creek runs to the back of the property. Mr. Best stated it stops at the property and the creek is full of water, will be full of water when the tides come in, and a good storm will push the water further in. Mr. Best asked if they can drain and lower the water table, especially since it's the same as the river. Mr. Golub stated the majority of the water coming onto the property is from Route 154 and it has trouble pushing to the creek. Ms. Carroll stated the skunk cabbage is all to the right (when looking at the garden) and grass is growing to the left where it's raised and drier.

Mr. J. Stephens asked if there were any culverts in that area under Route 154. Mr. Costa stated there is one right there under the tracks. Mr. M. Stephens stated there's sheet flow. Mrs. Reynolds referred to it as overland flow.

Mr. M. Stephens stated he didn't understand how the driveway will work noting there was some piping installed; and asked Mr. Golub to show him there location in relation to the brush piles. Using a map and photos, Mr. Golub pointed out the location of the pipe (in the ditch), the driveway, and where they would like to have a greenhouse. Mr. Best asked if the State of Connecticut had been notified in regard to the proposed driveway location being so close to Route 154 (running parallel to one another). Mr. Golub pointed out the property line and Route 154.

Mr. M. Stephens asked Mr. Puska if there are regulations in regard to the DEEP right-of-way. Mr. Puska stated no.

Mr. Costa asked Mr. Golub how long he's lived on the property. Mr. Golub responded since December 2014. Mr. Costa asked how high the water has gotten through the culvert and back into the area. Mr. Golub stated it came up a decent amount, but did not overflow. Mr. M. Stephens noted they've only lived there a year. Mr. Costa noted that he has the same situation and explained. Mrs. Reynolds stated planting in a floodplain isn't necessarily a bad thing noting tobacco fields and farm land along the Connecticut River. Mr. Costa agreed.

Mr. Best stated in order for Mr. Golub and Ms. Carroll to accomplish their plan, they would need to fill in the garden beds. Mr. M. Stephens stated he was concerned they would wash away. Mrs. Reynolds asked why they would have to fill in. Mr. Golub stated he would only be adding a couple of inches of compost into the soil. Mrs. Reynolds asked if that would count as filling in. Mr. M. Stephens stated no while Mr. Best stated he didn't know. Mrs. Reynolds stated compost is considered an additive and not a top soil. Mr. M. Stephens stated that he's more concerned about the channels being ripped apart and then the sides of the plots falling in. Mr. M. Stephens asked about stabilization. Mr. Golub stated the recommendations outlined in a state document talked about a vegetated slope and angle of slope.

Mr. Golub stated he's planning on seeding with native grass and has purchased native plants from the Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District. Mr. Golub noted his background is environmental studies.

Mr. J. Stephens asked for a more detailed plan as it appears everyone is hoping for the best. Mr. M. Stephens stated discussion is taking place. Ms. Carroll asked if the farming was the concern or the waterways. Mr. J. Stephens stated his concern is that all the disruption is taking place and then it won't work. Mr. J. Stephens also stated he's not a farmer and it's unclear what plants are being considered for the area. Mrs. Reynolds asked Ms. Carroll what plants were being considered. Ms. Carroll stated standard vegetables – tomatoes, cabbage, etc.

Mr. M. Stephens stated the application indicates vegetated drain ways and that will be absolutely necessary if this is going to work. Mrs. Reynolds asked if the application indicates what type of vegetation will go in the drain way. Mr. M. Stephens stated no. Discussion followed in regard to the skunk cabbage taking over and the fear that the tomatoes will rot due to too much water.

Mr. M. Stephens complimented the Commission on being accommodating to the applicant in scheduling a site walk and special meeting. Mr. Golub stated they appreciate the consideration.

Mr. Costa stated the farming is at the applicants own risk and any environmental damage has already been done. Mr. M. Stephens stated the applicants are going to have to be vigilant in getting the slope stabilized to prevent runoff from eroding the area and he's more worried about the slope off the road.

Mr. J. Stephens asked if it would make any sense to place conditions on the application in regard to types of chemicals that could be used, runoff concerns, etc. Mrs. Reynolds stated the runoff from the road is out of the Commission's and applicants' control, but runoff into the creek can be controlled somewhat by what is applied to the garden. Mr. Golub stated they would be agreeable to conditions in regard to synthetic fertilizer as they do not plan on using it. Mr. M. Stephens stated the Commission has to think about future owners as well.

Mr. M. Stephens stated the Commission will hold the applicants to the vegetated ditches to help stabilize the ditches as well as helping with the absorption of nutrients that will slough off. Mrs. Reynolds stated it will help with anything that comes from the road.

Mr. J. Stephens asked the applicants their plan for installing the road. Mr. Golub stated he's not in a hurry to install the road, but his concern is in getting the garden plots tilled, additives in place, and planting the plants. Mr. J. Stephens asked if heavy equipment would be used in the installation of the road. Mr. Golub stated possibly a skid steer, but that would be the extent. Mrs. Reynolds asked if the soil has been tested in terms of what needs to be added. Mr. Golub stated yes, and explained what would be used (greensand that helps break up clay particles allowing the water to drain better).

Mr. M. Stephens asked what will be keeping the soils from sloughing off. Mr. Golub stated the plants in the small plots and the weeds growing between the walkways. Mr. Golub also stated green manure will be laid during the off season and there will always be some type of plant stabilizing the soil during the season and during the off season.

In regard to the road, Mr. M. Stephens asked if fabric or stone would be used. Mr. Golub stated it's recommended that a geo-fabric be installed to keep the stones from sinking into the clay. Mr. Best asked how long a geo-fabric would last. Mr. Golub stated the road is not his first concern; however, he would probably get a third party recommendation. Mr. Puska asked how important the proposed road location is. Mr. Golub stated it's not important, but due to the wetness, he's unable to drive his lawn tractor to the far end of the property. Mr. Golub also stated the size of the road isn't important, but ideally he would like to drive his truck down it. Mr. Puska stated he believes Mr. Golub's concern is he will create a mess if he drives down to that point of the property without some form of access. Mr. Puska also stated the access way may only be seasonal. Mr. M. Stephens stated he wouldn't want to ask for a designed roadway. Discussion followed in regard to floating driveways and the longevity of geo-fabric.

Mr. Puska stated there are concerns in regard the farm stand noting it's not applicable to have traffic pulling in and out of the area; and noted that vehicles cannot park on the road. Mr. Puska also stated the farm stand would be limited by size and it would need to sit back a certain number of feet from the front property line. Mr. Golub stated Mrs. Reynolds had suggested taking part in the farmers' market.

Mr. M. Stephens took a straw vote as to whether or not the Commission agreed that the applicants have a right to farm. The majority of the Commission indicated yes with Mr. Best stating no. Discussion followed at length with Mr. Golub and Ms. Carroll stating they have the appropriate paperwork from the State declaring them a farm.

Mr. Golub stated he would like to install the drainage pipes to give the water coming from the road a path to flow through the clay. Mr. M. Stephens stated that would be re-routing the water and should be designed. Discussion followed in regard to the water table and the river and whether there are drainage ditches along the edge of the property. Using the photos, Mr. Golub pointed out the location of the ditches along the road side. Mr. J. Stephens suggested making the installation of the pipes and road a separate application. Mr. J. Stephens asked what will make the water come to the inlet side of the road. Discussion followed at length in regard to the need for an engineered design.

Mr. Golub asked what the Commission was envisioning the path to be (would he be allowed to place the geo-fabric and crushed stone). Mr. Best felt it would be filling of the wetlands; and that a separate application should be filed. Mr. Golub stated he wasn't opposed to coming back before the Commission.

Mr. J. Stephens asked about the black corrugated drain pipe. Mr. Chadwick asked if it were part of the vegetated drain way. Mr. Golub stated initially the pipe was for a road that would have gone directly through the center of the plots, but he has since abandoned that idea. Mr. Golub stated the pipe can be pulled and the area created into a vegetated drain way.

Mr. Costa asked if all the trees have been cut. Mr. Puska stated no, there are some trees that need to be cut as they are a hazard to the house and to allow addition sunlight (fall within the upland review area). Mr. Best asked why some of the trees are cut so high up. Mr. Golub and Ms. Carroll stated that the three trees that were cut high will be for a tree house.

**MOTION:** Gail Reynolds moved to approve the installation of four garden plots for farm activity that will include the installation of vegetative drain ways to lower the water table in the garden areas. Trees will also be cut for increased sunlight. Assessor's Map #65 Lot #19-2 per site plan submitted and discussed at the May 9<sup>th</sup> IW meeting. See map on file in the Land Use Office. **Conditions:** 1. Standard Permit Conditions. 2. Special Conditions/Modifications – Yes. a. Applicant will come back to Commission for a driveway/path to access southern property. b. Remove corrugated drain pipe. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Golub and Ms. Carroll thanked the Commission for their time on this matter.

### 3. Adjournment

**MOTION:** Joe Stephens moved to adjourn. Gail Reynolds second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Bunny Hall Batzner*  
Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

**The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, 13 June 2016.**