

Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission
40 Old Farms Road, Willington, CT 06279
October 28, 2019 – 7:30 PM
Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Dave Schreiber
Tess Gutowski
Patrick Lord
Mark Drobney

Also Present:

Mike D'Amato- Zoning Agent
Emily Perko- Asst. Zoning Agent

Public Hearing

IW-19-10 Adopt Amendments to Town of Willington Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Forest Practices Regulations

D. Schreiber opened the public hearing.

The Commission went through the proposed changes to the current adopted Forest Practices Regulations.

Jacqueline Kulig read and entered an exhibit into the record requesting tree removal be allowed along crossings, questioned the bond requirement of erosion and sedimentation control. Along with restrictions on hours of operations due to weather unpredictability. Spoke to the regeneration harvest requirement, believes only a qualified person should be allowed to inspect the property. Additionally, asked for clarification regarding notification to abutters, requirements for a silviculture plan and the process for denying a permit.

Westford Lirot stated the property value in timber is at risk with these regulations. Concerned with the fees, additional time/cost factor with regulations along with bonding and insurance cost. Believes the regulations make a small timber harvest more impractical.

Tom Walker believes there is no one qualified on the commission to make these regulations or recognize if a silviculture is being followed accurately. Believes the regulations promote development of land. Timber prices are the same since 1987 with the cost of harvesting and taxes increasing. Depending on the size of the project the regulations could add an addition \$2,500 cost to the landowner. Questioned requirements of erosion and sedimentation control, grades being restored to original after harvest complete, harvesting hours, stabilization requirement. Stated regeneration harvest cannot be guaranteed. Feels the regulations are too open ended. Stated the liability insurance requirement should not fall on the landowner. Further explained the timber harvest process from start to finish and recommended the current regulations be removed and revert to a simple 2-page document that was presented (exhibit 3).

The buffer requirement around property lines was questioned and asked if there is a buffer when a lot is going to be clear cut for development.

P. Lord explained the property line buffer was to ensure trees were not cut on an adjacent landowner's property.

Scott Person stated the hours of operation should be more flexible due to unpredictability in weather. Questioned regeneration harvest specifics and stated it should be reworded because it is not accurate, also questioned the landowner liability requirement.

Charlie King, landowner with a silviculture plan stated the process he went through with the town cost him a lot more money in the end.

A letter from Eric Hansen a certified forester was entered in as exhibit 4.

J. Kulig spoke about MassConn sustainability forester partnership which offers a free two hour visit with a forester.

T. Walker spoke about the Quiet Corner Initiative by Yale University, students will mark trees and write management plans for free.

T. Gutowski outlined issues brought up during the public hearing, specifically hours of operations, buffers, regeneration, liability/insurance coverage, bonding, and fees.

T. Walker entered his notes in as exhibit 5.

Discussion occurred regarding silviculture plans, fee schedule and regeneration harvest.

T. Gutowski made a motion to continue the public hearing. M. Drobney second. All in favor.

New Business

IW-19-10 Adopt Amendments to Town of Willington Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Forest Practices Regulations

Tabled until next meeting.

Approval of minutes

P. Lord made a motion to approve the August 26, 2019 minutes, M. Drobney second. D. Schreiber in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 PM

TOWN OF WILLINGTON, CT
Received for record 11-01-2019
At 1:40pm Amy R. Fawcett