

**INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES COMMISSION  
TOWN OF EAST HADDAM  
LAND USE OFFICE**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
February 16, 2016**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Randy Dill called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Grange.

**2. ATTENDANCE:**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Mary Augustiny, Jennifer Burton-Reeve, Randy Dill, and, Daniel Jahne.

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Bryan Goff, Laura Magaraci, and 1 vacancy

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mr. Ventres and one townsperson was present

**3. MINUTES**

**Motion by Ms. Augustiny, seconded by Mr. Jahne to accept the minutes from the December 15, 2016 meeting as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

**Motion by Mr. Jahne, seconded by Ms. Augustiny to accept the minutes from the January 19, 2016 meeting as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

**4. BILLS:**

|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| Nathan L. Jacobson | \$192.53 |
| Branse & Willis    | \$74.00  |
| East Haddam News   | \$27.00  |

**Motion by Ms. Augustiny, seconded by Mr. Jahne to pay the bill as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

**5. FIELD INSPECTION REPORT**

There were no field inspections this month.

**6. WETLANDS PERMIT REVIEW**

**A) New: Town of East Haddam, 45 Joe Williams Road (Elementary School), reconstruction of parking lot and build a storm water basin. Assessor's Map 65, Lot 67  
First date: February 16, 2016 Last date: April 20, 2016**

Mr. Ventres noted that the engineers will be conducting soil borings to determine what stormwater treatment system will work best and submit revised plans. Presently there is no treatment of the stormwater from the school parking lot.

## **7. IWWC Enforcement Officer's Report**

### **A) Urban property – Bashan Lake Road**

Mr. Ventres reported that he discussed the planting plan with Mr. Urban and Mr. Urban agreed to replace the few trees that did not succeed. Mr. Ventres felt that the file could be closed.

## **8. DISCUSSION**

### **Shagbark**

Mr. Ventres informed the commission that Attorney Jezek asked to be added onto tonight's agenda for discussion of the solar array project at Shagbark.

Attorney Jezek said that he was joined by Fred Hunt (owner), Julia Leonardo (financial officer), Dennis Quinn (Biologist), and Roger Nemergut, P.E..

Attorney Jezek addressed the commission on behalf of the applicant. This is a solar project, a petition matter before the Connecticut Siting Council. The plan will be over 1.4 megawatts of power, which puts it into the Connecticut Siting Council's jurisdiction. The size of this project makes it too small for an actual application to the Connecticut Siting Council, which would require a public hearing, but too large for the local approval process. They filed an application for a declaratory ruling with the Connecticut Siting Council. Mr. Dill noted that the Wetlands Commission had no regulating authority.

On February 7, 2016 they went before the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance and received approval to participate in the power purchase. They were at the Planning and Zoning Commission last week.

This power will be returned to the grid for credits, and sold to the town for a discount. The project was designed to meet the utility needs for the three existing schools in town. It is anticipated that all of the power will be used by the three schools. There are two components to this plan. There will be surface-mounted panels. A few will be dual purpose panels which will also be lumber ports. The raised panels are placed above the outside stored lumber. They will both shield the lumber as well as produce electricity. The project will have limited visibility. Most of the panels will be located in the back. This site has easy access to the grid and is a suitable site. It will not be readily evident to people traveling through town.

Mr. Roger Nemergut, project engineer, distributed a handout for the location of the solar panels. Mr. Nemergut stated this focuses on the area of construction. The plan showed the Shagbark complex. The two most easterly and northerly buildings are located on the plan in gray. On the map, the light green shaded areas are wetlands. The blue is Succor Brook. There is a CL&P easement that runs through the property. The long beige rectangles represent the rows of solar panels.

The units will vary in size from 130-feet to 100-feet, about 16-feet high, and open on sides as lumber ports. All of the panels are free-standing. The others will basically be in the hay fields, so they can remain as mowed grass underneath.

Mr. Nemergut explained that Wetland Area #1 has been degraded over time. As part of this project, they will remove the filled material and seed the area with a wetland native plant mix to restore the wetland. They are not required to obtain local land use permits, but that does not mean they are free to design it any way they want. They have to respect the environment, and be sure no construction is in the wetlands. They worked with their environmental consultant, Davison Environmental on this project.

Mr. Nemergut explained the following: 1) In terms of construction and sediment, the panels in a row have a drip edge. They are treating them as impervious surfaces. Underneath the drip edge will be an open swale with a small stone lining. The site grades from east to west. The dark lines shown on the plans represent the swales on the drip edge. The swale will lead into a detention basin. The detention basin will serve as a sediment basin during construction. After construction, it will be a four-way detention basin. 2) Runoff – this project was designed to have no increase in the rate of surface runoff compared to pre-existing conditions. There may actually be a little less runoff. The post construction flows will be collected through an outlet device. There will be no construction of facilities within the 100-year flood plain or the wetlands. There will be some tree clearing in the wetlands for construction. 3) With input from Davidson Environmental, this will serve as a bioretention basin. The bottom will be prepared with appropriate materials and seeded with the appropriate mix. The panels will have limited visibility. If made an effort and were looking for them, could probably see them from driving down the road. From Town Street, it will be a bit more visible.

Roger Nemergut noted that the new septic system is to the South of the panels.

The commission discussed the vegetation under the panels. There was a question as to whether the grass would grow. Mr. Nemergut responded that it should and there is a specific maintenance schedule for the cutting. He said that the project area was over five acres and there will be some clearing in the wetlands.

Mr. Jahne asked if the project requires a State of Connecticut stormwater permit. Mr. Nemergut said if one was needed, he would follow through.

Chairman Dill asked about the distance separation for the vernal pool. Mr. Nemergut said the vernal pool is 600 feet away to the North and there is only 1.5% disturbance in the 750 foot view zone.

Chairman Dill asked what was to happen to the trailers and materials stored in the back where the panels are proposed. Mr. Hunt said the trailers will be taken off site. The panels in the front will be raised and will shade the lumber.

Mr. Jahne asked about maintenance. Attorney Jezek stated the Shagbark would be responsible for maintaining the property.

Dennis Quinn, Biologist, stated that the solar panels are not located in a primary breeding area for birds nor is it a travel corridor. He also noted the site was away from the vernal pools and the stream.

Attorney Jezek stated there is no action required by this commission. However if they are generally disposed that this is a good plan, the commission could prepare a letter that could go to the Connecticut Siting Council. If things go as anticipated, they will be under an extremely tight schedule, and hope to be up and running by September.

Chairman Dill noted that this was a significant project. If the Inland Wetlands Commission has this before them as an application, more information would be needed. A project this large would require a public hearing and a field walk. The project would have been vetted through the regulatory process. He said it was not a negative comment on the project but on the process. Attorney Jezek said that he would have come sooner but they are on a tight timeline. Attorney Jezek thanked the commission for their time.

## **9. CONSERVATION COMMISSION INPUT**

Todd Gelston noted that the bridge over the Eightmile River is complete

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Ms. Augustiny, seconded by Ms. Jahne, to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Talbot