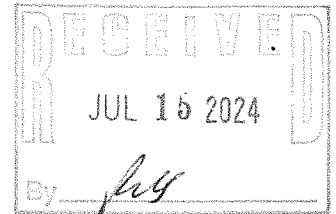


**MORRIS INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION
COMMUNITY HALL
MORRIS, CT 06763**



July, 2024

July 11, 2024. There was a hearing at 4:00 pm downstairs in the Community Hall. Present were Connie Trolle, Doreen Gagnon, Robin Viola, Clif Wheeler, and Mike Doyle; also present were Ben Paletsky, Betsy Gold, Rich Eddy, and Harvey Chalmers.

The hearing was called to order at 4:00 pm. The hearing is for activity at South Farms that occurred without the Commissions knowledge, review, or approval. This activity prompted a Cease and Restore Order. The hearing is to afford Mr. Paletsky the opportunity to be heard and to show cause why the order should not remain in effect.

Mr. Paletsky explained that they have planted flowers for a “pick your own” operation. The flowers are planted in Leicester soils, an important farmland soil, but poorly drained (wetland soils). A walkway was made using docking formerly used at Woodridge Lake. The docks are made of stainless steel and pressure treated wood. Water is drawn from the well, and pipes will run under the walkway, then north to the flower beds. It is proposed to have wood chip walkways between the rows of flowers. The pumps in the well require access, and there was an existing route vehicles traveled from the commercial areas off Route 63 downslope and south to the well. Because of the wet conditions wood chips were used to make the route passable.

Included in the Agency regulations is a process for when an as-of-right activity is planned the property owner is required to inform the Commission on an application form so the project may be reviewed, determinations of rights made, and concerns for wetlands impacts considered.

Mike Doyle said that if all the activities are clearly as-of-right the order should be withdrawn and the avoidance of the process review did not affect the wetlands. However if an activity is not clearly an as-of-right, would the wetlands reasonably have benefited from a review process? Is the “walkway” constructed in a manner that would be reasonably expected for a walkway? Is it over designed?

The members discussed the use of the docks, with objection to the use of pressure treated lumber in the construction. Also discussed was the use of wood chips to make the wetlands passable. In the end it was felt that the use of the docks should have been reviewed and likely would not be allowed.

The avoidance of the process by implementing the activities without the process of review is itself a violation of the regulations and on a motion by Connie Trolle, seconded by Doreen Gagnon, it was **VOTED** to revise the ORDER to require only the removal of the docks, with Robin Viola abstaining and all others voted “aye”. Recognizing the importance for the use of the area for farming, the review form (application form) will be received at the meeting and will be on the agenda for the next meeting when Mr. Paletsky can present details to be reviewed by the members.

The hearing was closed at 4:45 pm. Mr. Paletsky did not stay for the meeting.

The regular July 11, 2024 meeting was called to order by the chair at 4:45 pm downstairs in the Community Hall.

The minutes of the regular June 8, 2024 meeting were accepted as written.

**MORRIS INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION
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MORRIS, CT 06763**

July, 2024

On a motion by Connie Trolle, seconded by Clif Wheeler, it was **VOTED** unanimously to add Applications 24-12 and 24-13 to the agenda.

Old Business

The 24-11 Review Form from Ben Paletsky for “pick-your-own” flower farming at South Farms was received and will be on next month's agenda.

Application 24-12 from Betsy and Ron Gold to rebuild and expand a house at 436 Bantam Lake Road was received. Also submitted was a copy of a surveyor's map by Sam Berticini dated 1991; and house plans by Stephen Lasar Architects with sheets dated 7-7-24 and 7-8-24. The basement plan will be placed in the file. This will be on next month's agenda.

Application 24-13 was received from Harvey and Virginia Chalmers for septic repair at 6 Evans Passway. A sketch on a portion of a surveyor's map shows the existing tank just below the house with the fields below that. The existing tank will be removed, and a new tank placed below the fields, and a pump tank added to pump up to the the fields. The plan has not yet been approved by TAHD. As septic repairs are considered the immediate primary concern, on a motion by Connie Trolle, seconded by Clif Wheeler, it was **VOTED** unanimously to approve this repair, noting that TAHD will inform the commission if any wetlands concerns are encountered.

New Business

The Ordinance for dock addresses will be on the agenda for a special meeting of their committee on Monday.

Mike Doyle suggested that our commission might endorse the the Ordinance regarding wakes, and the resulting wave action that erodes the shoreline and scours the lake bottom. On a motion by Clif Wheeler, seconded by Connie Trolle, it was **VOTED** unanimously to send a letter of support to the Ordinance Committee.

The Town Crew plans to do maintenance to fire ponds at 83 Isaiah Smith Lane and opposite 90 Looking Glass Hill Road. In a previous meeting it was agreed that the routine maintenance of fire ponds will not require individual permits, just a notification to the Commission of the ponds as the work is scheduled.

Other Business

There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Doyle