INLAND WETLANDS AND WATER COURSES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

CALL TO ORDER:

The Inland Wetlands and Water Courses Commission Meeting was called to order by Chairman Peter Nieman at 7:00 p.m. on September 12, 2023 in the Berlin Town Hall, Public Works Department (Room 120), 240 Kensington Road, Berlin, CT. Additionally, the meeting was accessible remotely through Zoom.

ATTENDANCE:

Chairman Peter Nieman, Commissioners: Rick White, David Rogan, Michael Cassetta, Bill Jackson, Gary Pavano and John Russo. Staff- Jim Horbal. Guests: Applicants/Presenters and neighborhood citizens.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS: None.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the July 11, 2023 meeting were previously distributed for review.

Commissioner White made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2023 meeting, seconded by Commissioner Cassetta. The motion was unanimously approved.

Additional Agenda Item:

Mr. Horbal requested that an additional item be added to the agenda immediately following the Public Hearing regarding a referral from the Planning and Zoning Commission for a judgement on 1906 Berlin Turnpike.

Commissioner White made a motion to add a discussion regarding 1906 Berlin Turnpike, seconded by Commissioner Cassetta. The motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC <u>HEARING:</u>

Chairman Nieman read the Legal Notice for the Public Hearing into the record.

Commissioner Rogan made a motion to open the Public Hearing for Application 23-05W, seconded by Commissioner Cassetta. The motion was unanimously approved.

Application 23-05W - Proposal by Little House Living, LLC to construct residential dwelling units and discharge drainage within an Upland Review Area on Lot 10, Block 114, #1676 Berlin Turnpike.

Attorney Christopher J. Smith, Alter & Pearson, LLC, Mr. Zachary A. Georgina (Project Engineer), Juliano Associates, LLC, Ian T. Cole, Professional Soil & Wetland Scientist, Ian

T. Cole, LLC, and applicant Pat Snow were present for the Applicant.

Attorney Smith requested to review the application from the July meeting. (summarized

from the submitted application letter).

The Applicant respectfully requests approval to either modify an existing wetlands approval and permit for regulated activities associated with an eighteen (18) unit multi-family residential community development of the subject property that was approved by the Commission on May 3, 2022 ("prior wetlands approval") or, in the alternative, approve a new wetlands permit for regulated activities associated with the modified site plan for a twenty (20) unit multi-family residential community development of the subject property ("modified site plan").

The regulated activities associated with the modified site plan are substantially and materially the same, or within the scope of, the regulated activities approved by the Commission with the prior wetlands approval. There has been no substantial change in circumstances concerning the regulated wetlands/watercourses, or upland review areas. The regulated activities associated with the modified site plan will not result in an adverse

impact to the wetlands or watercourse.

Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Commission: (1) find that the regulated activities associated with the modified site plan are within the scope of the regulated activities associated with the prior wetlands approval and, therefore, a new or modified wetlands approval of the regulated activities is not required; (2) find that the regulated activities associated with the modified site plan are substantially and materially the same as those regulated activities approved by the Commission with the prior wetlands permit approval; or (3) find that the regulated activities associated with the modified site plan are substantially and materially the same as those regulated activities by the Commission with the prior wetlands approval and, therefore, approve the subject application as a new wetlands permit.

Attorney Smith asked Mr. Georgina to continue with the application.

Mr. Zachary Georgina, Juliano Associates, LLC, (Project Engineer) further summarized the Stormwater Report (on file):

The subject site is an 82,758 Sq. Ft. (1.90 Acre) parcel located on the west side of the Berlin Turnpike (CT Route 15) in Berlin Connecticut. The property lies within both the Berlin Turnpike (BT-1) zone and the Planned Residential Infill Development (DD) district. The presently existing site consists of a vacant parcel but was historically used as a motel featuring eight (8) standalone rental units and two larger buildings.

The proposal is for the redevelopment of the property as a planned residential infill development. The proposal calls for eighteen (18) residential buildings consisting of twenty (20) units to be constructed on the property with a looped driveway providing access to the units as well as unit specific parking provided by an interior garage and driveway parking. All dwellings

will be served by municipal water, municipal sewer, and electric services.

The construction of the proposed building and parking area increase the total amount of impervious surface on the parcel when compared to both current site conditions and historical site conditions. As such, the need to mitigate the increase in stormwater runoff is required. The proposal to mitigate that increase consists of three underground stormwater systems. Due to the volume of water collection and the depth to ground water all systems are designed with infiltration in mind while utilizing outlet control structures to manage peak flows. The two minor systems located to the southwest of the property are designed to address the roof runoff from

five (5) of the buildings (seven (7) of the dwelling units). These two systems utilize an existing stormwater swale to receive water from their outlet systems. The third larger unit located in the northwest corner of the property is designed to collect stormwater from driveway via a network of four (4) catch basins as well as ten (10) of the residential dwellings. This system uses a level spreader to reduce the velocity of the flow leaving the system.

All three systems as proposed handle storms up to and including the 100-year storm while decreasing the peak flow leaving the site when compared to its previous development. All systems maintain a minimum separating distance from groundwater of three (3) feet to ensure water quality of infiltrated run off. The largest system does utilize an isolator row which will require regular maintenance as outlined in the stormwater maintenance plan to keep the system functioning optimally. The two smaller systems do not feature isolator rows as only roof runoff is being directed into the system which is assumed clean.

In sizing the volume of the detention system water quality volume was calculated to assure a minimum retention. In doing so the total proposed site impervious (including sidewalks paved areas, and concrete pads) was determined to be approximately 48.2%, when pairing this value with the site area in the following equation a retention volume of 3,324.3 cubic feet is required.

WQV = Din)(12)(A)1/(12inift) = [(1in)(0.05+0.009(48.2%))(1.90acres)/(12inift) = 0.0763 acre-ft = 3,324.3 cubic feet

Our three proposed systems provide a total storage volume of 3,342.5 cubic feet, which exceeds the required water quality volume.

*The full stormwater drainage system report is on file with the application.

Mr. Georgina further explained the most recent revisions on the site plan. Units 1,3,5,7, and 8 are within the Wetlands Upland Review Area. There are three underground stormwater systems proposed which exceeds the required water quality volume. All dwellings will be served by municipal water, municipal sewer, and electric services. A looped driveway provides access to each unit with specific parking and interior garage. There is a Sediment & Erosion Control plan for construction on file and a silt fence will be installed during construction.

Commissioner White questioned the location of the units that the Commission is concerned with, and Mr. Eugenia answered that they are 15' from the property line. The stormwater system will delay the water leaving the site and will infiltrate at a higher rate.

Commissioner Cassetta questioned what has changed since the last approval and Mr. Eugenia answered that the units are small bungalows, parking the same, the stormwater system now has three detention basins as opposed to one large system.

Commissioner Jackson questioned the function of the isolation unit and the catch basins and Mr. Horbal suggested that perhaps an AbTech-type sponge be installed in them.

Mr. Ian Cole, Professional Registered Soil/Wetland Scientist, summarized his Impact Assessment (report on file) for the Application:

I [Mr. Cole] offer the following comments relative to assessing impacts to the freshwater inland wetlands and watercourses due to the proposed regulated activities.

The owner is requesting confirmation by our office as to whether the regulated activities associated with a new proposed multi-dwelling 8-30g residential development as illustrated on Juliano Associates' March 24, 2023, updated plan set, substantially and materially the

same as, and within the scope of, those regulated activities approved by the Town's Application 22-02W.

This revised application includes modifications and improvements to the proposal that was approved in 2021 by the IWWC. Conceptually this proposal is very similar to the previous application. The changes reflected in this proposal center on repositioning of the proposed structures from duplexes to standalone units. These modifications fall within the proposed building envelope and essentially have the same footprint and scale of what was previously approved by the

Commission. The redesign also includes stormwater management focused on infiltration to

provide stormwater water quality renovation.

The proposed development will not result in any direct permanent wetland impact. Avoiding direct wetland disturbance, maintaining erosion and sediment controls during construction and the inclusion of a stormwater management system to renovate water quality runoff are included in this proposal to mitigate both short term and long-term development related impacts.

The development and regulated activities will maintain the holistic functions and value of the adjacent wetland resources. The wetlands including their existing functions as well as the on-site drainage patterns will be maintained. The beneficial and functional service of the neighboring wetlands is the conveyance of seasonal flow and groundwater recharge, which the development will be preserving by maintaining overall existing drainage patterns and flow dynamics.

The proposed reconfigured layout makes reasonable use of the property. The redevelopment will revitalize the vacant property into a modern residential development compliant with today's regulatory standards and best management practices. In my professional opinion, the regulated activities associated with the residential community depicted on the subject site development plans are materially and substantially the same as, and within the scope of, those approved in the previously authorized Wetlands Permit. In addition, the regulated activities associated with the residential community will: 1. No result in an adverse impact to a wetland or watercourse; 2. Are consistent with and satisfy the statutory factors for consideration provided by Section 22a-41 of the Connecticut General Statutes; and 3. Are consistent with and satisfy the criteria for consideration provided by the commission's regulations.

Commissioner Rogan added that consideration should be given to the letter received from the Berlin Land Trust (included here):

Dear Chairman Neiman, Members of the Commission and Mr. Horbal;

The Berlin Inland Wetlands and Water Courses Commission ("IWWC") is charged with the protection of Wetlands.

Wetlands serve important functions:

- 1. Maintain water quality;
- 2. Reduce erosion;
- 3. Limit flooding;
- 4. Support marshal plants;

- 5. Offer aesthetic support to all us;
- 6. Control insect populations;
- 7. Provide a national habitat for local flora and fauna;
- 8. Assist scientific inquiry; (cf. William J. Mitsch and James G. Gosselink, Wetlands, p. 556.

To protect wetlands buffers, also known as upland review areas, are required.

When water flows into a wetland it carries chemicals that are detrimental. For example, inorganic herbicides, fertilizers and pesticides, as well as oils and salts from the developed area are chemicals harmful to the wetlands. Buffers allow these chemicals to be absorbed before they are transported into the wetlands. So, buffers shield the wetlands from harmful chemicals. Berlin protects its wetlands with a very limited buffer, a mere fifty (50') feet. Therefore, if this limited buffer is to protect the wetlands effectively it must not be utilized by the developer for any purpose.

The plans submitted by Little House Living, LLC disregard the intention of the buffer to protect the wetlands:

Our review of the Site Landscaping Plan (Sheet 5 of 10) indicates that Units 1, 3, 5,7 and 8 and the Cultec Recharger 180 1 + D all are all located within the buffer area. In fact, these five units and the large recharger unit obliterate the buffer area. In effect the buffer has been eliminated. The Berlin Land Trust ("BLT") objects strongly to this blatant misuse of the minimal fifty (50') foot buffer to the wetlands.

BLT requests that the wetlands in question be protected as follows:

- 1. That the buffer (upland review area) of fifty feet remain permanently undisturbed;
- 2. That the developer covenant with IWWC that neither it nor its successors will use inorganic herbicides, fertilizers, pesticides on the site. The Developer or its assigns should indicate to the IWWC annually that no inorganic herbicides, fertilizers and pesticides have been used on site for the last twelve (12) month period.
- 3. Proper siltation and oil/gas recovery protections must be incorporated into the plans where practicable.

Of course, these covenants are often honored in the breach. That is why the buffer must still be protected.

Each parcel of land is unique. Some have more limitations than others. The fact that wetlands are present at the northerly border of the site limits the potential development of this site. The wetlands and the minimal buffer of fifty (50') feet should not be affected by the development. The number of units this site affords a developer is not relevant to IWWC which is expected to protect wetlands. The IWWC should just say "no" to the placement of five (5) units and the Cultec

Recharger within the buffer area intended to protect the wetlands. Thank you. Very truly yours,
Dennis L. Kern

Attorney Smith addressed the Commission again. He explained that he served on a wetlands commission in the past. There is confusion between referencing a buffer and an upland review area. One can work in an upland review area and even a wetland with no adverse impacts. The proper authorization must be obtained. The existing drainage problems on Holly Court cannot be addressed in this application.

Commissioner Rogan requested a third party engineer to help address the problems.

Attorney Smith concluded that the Applicant respectfully requests that the Commission: (1) find that the regulated activities associated with the modified site plan are within the scope of the regulated activities associated with the prior wetlands approval and, therefore, a new or modified wetlands approval of the regulated activities is not required; (2) find that the regulated activities associated with the modified site plan are substantially and materially the same as those regulated activities approved by the Commission with the prior wetlands permit approval; or (3) find that the regulated activities associated with the modified site plan are substantially and materially the same as those regulated activities by the Commission with the prior wetlands approval and, therefore, approve the subject application as a new wetlands permit.

Additionally, Attorney Smith submitted the resumes of his professional team.

Commissioner White mentioned the recent rain events that we have all experienced. Chairman Nieman added that he would request no outdoor chemical use ever be allowed and notes added to the plans. Additionally, inspect and clean the manholes when there have been torrential rains. The snow storage should be kept on site. Mr. Cole answered that snow shouldn't have an impact.

Chairman Nieman asked if there were any further comments.

John, Berlin Auto Center, 1700 Berlin Turnpike (south side of property) referenced the prints and said they are discharging into the drainage system that he has on his property and it is not acceptable.

Nancy Gwozdz, 876 Lower Lane, has lived there 36 years, there is a lot of water there and the experts keep saying in their opinion the systems won't fail. What if they fail? Who will fix it?

Andrew Mroczkowski, 859 Lower Lane, referenced the 2004 run-off calculations and questioned the design calculations. There are swales on either side of his property and they have progressively gotten worse over time.

Michael Kiely, Berlin Land Trust Director & Governmental Liaison, reported that they have looked at the guidelines, and DEEP recommends a 100' or larger review area and this application started at 50' and is now down to placement within 15' of the property line. It must not be allowed.

Petra Riley, 100 Peter Parley Row, read her letter (attached) and said it is always wet in her neighborhood.

Linda Ahlstrand, 48 Holly Court, read her letter (attached) and in the course of the letter referenced maximum building coverage of 21.7% with 47% total impervious surface coverage. She said she asked Mr. Horbal if engineering could check these figures and he stated that 'they just take the word of the applicant'.

Mr. Horbal wanted stated in the minutes that he did NOT state that. Among other questions, Ms. Ahlstrand completed her requests.

Joseph Porcaro, 22 Robbins Road, Berlin Land Trust, licensed engineer agrees with the others that the placement of the units should not be within 15' of the property line.

Patty Burgio, 27 Holly Court, (via Zoom), previously submitted packets to each of the Commissioners with their packets prior to the meeting in hopes that they would review the material before she spoke. She proceeded to read a statement (attached) explaining that the packets were to promote informed discussions and deliberate decision-making.

Sam Rice, 38 Holly Court, wanted to thank the Berlin Land Trust for coming out and explaining the difference between a buffer and a review area (they're one in the same), and he stands behind his neighbors and their concerns for the well-being of their properties. These units are not little houses, but two-story monstrosities.

Chairman Nieman expressed that he feels 'buffer' is an incorrect perception and not found within EPA or DEEP regulations except for spraying of herbicides. Commissioner Jackson added that the upland review area is subject to review and not automatically a buffer.

Attorney Jennifer Coppola, Corporate Counsel, read from the State of CT Dept. of Environmental Protection Guidelines for Upland Review Area Regulations Connecticut's Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Act (June, 1997) Berlin Wetlands Regulations regarding upland review areas/buffers and regulated areas from 1997.

In a number of municipal inland wetlands regulations, upland review areas are referred to as setbacks or buffers. We chose the term upland review area to describe the non-wetland or non-watercourse area in which certain activities would be regulated because it best conveys the regulatory scheme under the wetlands statutes wherein a wetland agency reviews regulated activities case-by-case, and approves, or disapproves them on their merits. The inland wetland statutes do not authorize a blanket prohibition of all activities either in the wetlands, or in upland review, buffer or setback areas.

Attorney Smith added that this application is before the Commission for the units that are in the regulated wetlands area on the northerly side and the other areas of concern for the neighbors are likely a planning and zoning question.

Mr. Georgina further explained the roof leaders, the direction of stormwater run-off to the retention systems, that there were 5 test pits previously used for data and they used those again.

Mr. Cole further explained that in his opinion, the proposed development will not result in any direct permanent wetland impact. Avoiding direct wetland disturbance, maintaining erosion and sediment controls during construction and the inclusion of a stormwater management system to renovate water quality runoff are included in this proposal to mitigate both short term and long-term development related impacts.

Mayor Mark Kaczynski spoke and suggested that perhaps a 3rd party review would be a solution to understanding opinions of both sides and concerns with the neighbors. It's the common-sense thing to do.

Attorney Smith wanted to clarify that the Applicant is proposing the same regulated activities as the prior approval and an improved stormwater system. Mr. Georgina added that the Applicant has given a different alternative to the storm system to improve the site drainage. Mr. Cole added that he feels the drainage system is better than the first approval, as well.

Chairman Nieman questioned the Berlin Auto concerns and Attorney Smith again mentioned that the property there is not in the regulated area of their application. Mr. Horbal mentioned that the property has a private system that he maintains.

Commissioner White commented that it is recognized there is an existing stormwater problem in the neighborhood below, and nothing in this application is going to change that. Nothing would worsen the issue. It seems that the new development would only make it better with the added stormwater systems being added to the property.

Ms. Sherry Rice, 38 Holly Court, requested to keep in mind that there is a wetlands issue and the Berlin Land Trust position.

Chairman Nieman asked if there were any further comments.

Commissioner Russo made a motion to close the Public Hearing for Application 23-05W, seconded by Commissioner Cassetta. The motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Jackson made a motion to table Application 23-05W for further review, seconded by Commissioner Pavano. The motion was unanimously approved.

Added Agenda Item: 1906 Berlin Turnpike, LLC

Attorney Chris Smith, Ian Cole, Soil Scientist, and Mr. Pat Snow were present to explain.

Attorney Smith explained that Flynn & Cyr Land Surveying, LLC, located an area on the easterly side of the property flagged as wetlands (January 17, 2022). The wetland flags

were faded and didn't have legible numbers on them. When Mr. Snow recently went to the surveyors for mapping, the wetlands markings were missing from the print.

Commissioner Jackson requested that Mr. Cole discuss his report with them. Mr. Cole visited the site and his report states that he did not see anything that qualifies as a wetland.

Mr. Horbal suggested that perhaps a 3rd party review would be best. He will research to see if a soil conservationist could be obtained.

Attorney Jennifer Coppola, Corporate Counsel, reported to the Commissioners that a third-party Consultant (Brandon Handfield, PE, Civil Engineer- Yantic River Consultants, LLC) presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission in June [2023] and he provided no contradictory information about the flag colors [being pink] and felt the [Planning and Zoning] Commission should request that the Applicant provide a written explanation as to why the drainage area is not a regulated area along the frontage of the property. Attorney Coppola is additionally looking for a conservationist for the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Mr. Zachary A. Georgina (Project Engineer), Juliano Associates, LLC, and Ian T. Cole, Professional Soil & Wetland Scientist, both stated that Mr. Handfield is not an 'expert' on the subject.

Commissioner Rogan made a motion to table the 1906 Berlin Turnpike, LLC discussion to obtain an independent review, seconded by Commissioner Russo. The motion was unanimously approved.

Application 23-06F - Proposal by Joseph Cascio, to construct improvements within a Flood Hazard Zone on Lot 2B, Block 127, 586 Deming Road.

Mr. Charlie Talmadge, President, Development Planning Solutions (DPS), was present for the Applicant. He explained that Mr. Joseph Cascio is looking to lease the vacant building located at 586 Deming Road. This 20,000 square foot building has not been occupied for the last decade (BT-2 Zone) and he would like to open a destination location and state of the art virtual golf facility by December of this year. There will be no changes to the exterior of the structure.

The Commissioners asked some questions, and explained that the nearby Mattabassett River is always a threat and the property is in the floodway. As conditions of approval, the Commission is requesting that the storage of materials and/or equipment (outside) is prohibited. A bio-swale must be constructed within the property along the Mattabassett River, and all of the conditions must be incorporated on a revised plan of approval.

Commissioner Russo made a motion to approve Application 23-06F, with conditions, seconded by Commissioner Rogan. The motion was unanimously approved.

Application 23-07W - Proposal by Sheppard Family Holdings, LLC to re-establish a wetland boundary on Lot 2A, Block 107, 758 Four Rod Road.

Mr. Charlie Talmadge, President, Development Planning Solutions (DPS), was additionally present for this application. He reported that he was hired to perform a feasibility analysis of the property for potential sale, and to develop several concept plans that would be used as marketing tools to further that goal. During the course of the

analysis, it became clear that one of the largest impediments to future development were several areas noted as wetlands on the Town of Berlin's GIS mapping system.

In the interest of further understanding the conditions, DPS engaged David Lord, Soil Scientist, with Soil Resource Consultants, LLC to do the necessary fieldwork to evaluate the two areas in question. The 'wet areas' are the result of years of silt and fine soil build-up as the result of storm water run-off from the roadway which has settled in the lower areas resulting in this condition rather than the presence of true wetlands soils.

Given this set of facts, DPS is requesting a boundary change to ensure the wetlands maps coincide with the field conditions, as described by our professionals. We understand this application is a little unorthodox given that there is no current plan of development, or future end-user known at this time. It is simply a request to clarify the field conditions which will in turn aid in the marketability of the property.

Mr. Talmadge then proceeded to explain the Wetland Delineation report by Mr. Lord that indicates the types of wetland soils on the property.

Mr. Horbal expressed his confusion with the request to delineation the wetlands for a boundary change but the report suggesting there are no functioning wetlands. Mr. Talmadge said that they were open to conditions of approval and would also request that Mr. Lord attend the next meeting to explain his findings.

Commissioner Pavano made a motion to table Application 23-07W, seconded by Commissioner Cassetta. The motion was unanimously approved.

Other Business to Come Properly Before the Commission

A. High Road Farms Residential Subdivision - Discussion

Mr. Bart Bovee, Harry E. Cole & Son, Plantsville, was present to tell the Commissioners about a proposed project. The design of the subdivision creates 11 frontage lots along High Road. While there are inland wetlands and a FEMA flood hazard area on site, these are not close to the development area of the proposed lots. The developer intends to clean up the mess the original developer left on the site, and intends to dedicate over 4 acres (about 40% of the site) as open space along the Mattabassett River. Reverse swales and level energy spreader will be installed along the lower perimeter of the project to minimize storm water impacts to the open space.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Bovee for sharing the information.

B. Notice of Violation - Old Brickyard Lane

The Commissioners were previously provided with a copy of the violation letters and pictures to the property owners of 212 Old Brickyard Lane and 245 Old Brickyard Lane. Mr. Horbal explained that he received a call from 245 Brickyard Lane of clearing on his property. Mr. Horbal visited the site and found clearing within the wetland upland review area, so issued the violation letters and asked that the owners come to the meeting.

Mr. Bradford Wainman summarized that they have trouble with people coming on to their property, so they wanted to grow vegetation to distract visitors. The print shows where a tree line and fence should be. The fence was removed by someone and area cleared without their knowing, so they filed a police report. The neighbor didn't approach him

about taking down the fence or clearing.

Mr. Thomas Coccomo, managing member of Coccomo Brothers, was present to explain that they also have people (coming from Rt 9, there is a trail) on the property and for the same reason the neighbor wanted it over-grown, Coccomo cleared the area so they could see what was going on. He weed-wacked the property and cleared some trees and vegetation from the fence and took down the fence that he thought was in the right of way. He felt someone else must have removed the fence, at the rear, years ago. There is a third neighbor.

Mr. Horbal mentioned that in this type of scenario, the Commission will require an asbuilt, topography map and a plan to restore the area (for both parcels).

Bob Martino, 245 Old Brickyard Lane, said they self-reported, they were innocent by-standers. Mr. Coccomo never reached out to them. Mr. Coccomo felt this was a civil matter, and Mr. Wainman or Mr. Martino should have reached out to him. Mr. Coccomo said he would install a silt fence, restore the trees and add whatever seed was required to restore the property line back to what was there. After Mr. Horbal visited, Coccomo added a woodchip berm.

Chairman Nieman stated that the Commission would require an as-built, topographic map of the property showing the disturbed areas, and a Vegetation Restoration Plan within 30 to 45 days.

Mr. Martino questioned why they weren't concerned about run-off. Mr. Horbal answered that the vegetative restoration plan will provide stability to the site.

Commissioner Pavano made a motion to request an as-built, topographic map of the properties, and a Vegetation Restoration Plan within 30 to 45 days, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Cassetta. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. #133 Silver Island Way - Discussion

Mr. Horbal explained that a letter to Staff was received from some concerned property owners about clearing and removal of vegetation on Silver Lake. Maureen Giusti was present and had a map for the Commissioners to see. She is looking at the condo restrictions, but Mr. Horbal requested that the Commissioners take a ride out and look across the lake to see the clearing before the next meeting. There seems to be a disturbance in the upland review area that will constitute a notice of violation. Additionally, there seems to be a conservation easement encroachment. Mrs. Giusti added that some of the area falls within the City of Meriden jurisdiction.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Pavano made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cassetta. The motion was unanimously approved.

Lecia Paonessa Recording Secretary

Attachments

RECEIVED FOR RECORD BERLIN TOWN CLERK

9/19/2023, 3:26:00 PM

Section 22a-42 and 42a of the Connecticut State Statutes adopted in 1988 states: "To carry out and effectuate the purposes and policies....it is hereby declared to be the policies of the state to require municipal regulations of activities affecting the wetlands.

"The inland wetlands authorized shall through regulation provide for the manner in which the boundaries of inland wetlands and water course areas in their respective municipalities shall be established, amended or changed."

The Town of Berlin Inland/Wetland regulations states that the "Uplands Review Area means the area of non-wetland or non-watercourse within 50' measured horizontally (perpendicularly) from the boundary of any wetland of watercourse."

Why was the 50' uplands buffer not addressed and upheld in 2022 when the 1676 berlin Turnpike application was in front of the Inland/Wetland Commission?

Attorney Dennis Kern who represents the Berlin Land Trust stated in his July 10, 2023 letter to the Commission: "When water flows into wetlands. it carries chemicals that are detrimental...Buffers allow chemicals to be absorbed before they are transported into the wetlands. Berlin protects its wetlands with a very limited buffer of a mere 50'."

"Upon review of the Site Landscaping plan (Sheet 5 of 10) indicates that Units 1,3,5,7. and 8 and the Cultec Recharger 180 HD are all located within the buffer area. In fact, these five units and the large recharger obliterate the buffer area. In effect, the buffer has been obliterated. The Berlin Land Trust objects strongly to this blatant misuse of the 50' buffer."

"The Berlin Land Trust requests that the wetlands in question be protected as follows: that the upland review area of 50 feet remain permanently undisturbed."

"The IWWC should say "no" to the placement of five units and the Cultec Recharger within the buffer area intended to protect the wetlands."

PETER PALLON MAN



July 10, 2023

Mr. Peter Nieman, Chairman
Members of the Inland Wetlands & Water Courses Commission
c/o James Horbal, Deputy Public Works Director
Town of Berlin
240 Kensington Road
Berlin, Connecticut 06037

Re: Little House Living, LLC Lot #10, Block 114 # 1676 Berlin Turnpike

Dear Chairman Neiman, Members of the Commission and Mr. Horbal

The Berlin Inland Wetlands and Water Courses Commission ("IWWC") is charged with the protection of Wetlands.

Wetlands serve important functions:

- 1. Maintain water quality;
- Reduce erosion;
- Limit flooding;
- Support marshal plants;
- Offer aesthetic support to all us;
- 6. Control insect populations;
- Provide a national habitat for local flora and fauna;
- Assist scientific inquiry;
 (cf. William J. Mitsch and James G. Gosselink, <u>Wetlands</u>, p. 556.

To protect wetlands buffers, also known as upland review areas, are required.

When water flows into a wetland it carries chemicals that are detrimental. For example, inorganic herbicides, fertilizers and pesticides, as well as oils and salts from the developed area are chemicals harmful to the wetlands. Buffers allow these chemicals to be absorbed before they are transported into the wetlands. So, buffers shield the wetlands from harmful chemicals. Berlin protects its wetlands with a very limited buffer, a mere fifty (50') feet. Therefore, if this limited buffer is to protect the wetlands effectively it must not be utilized by the developer for any purpose.

The plans submitted by Little House Living, LLC disregard the intention of the buffer to protect the wetlands:

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Our review of the Site Landscaping Plan (Sheet 5 of 10) indicates that Units 1, 3, 5,7 and 8 and the Cultec Recharger 180 1 + D all are all located within the buffer area. In fact, these five units and the large recharger unit obliterate the buffer area. In effect the buffer has been eliminated. The Berlin Land Trust ("BLT") objects strongly to this blatant misuse of the minimal fifty (50') foot buffer to the wetlands.

BLT requests that the wetlands in question be protected as follows:

1. That the buffer (upland review area) of fifty feet remain permanently undisturbed;

2. That the developer covenant with IWWC that neither it nor its successors will use inorganic herbicides, fertilizers, pesticides on the site. The Developer or its assigns should indicate to the IWWC annually that no inorganic herbicides, fertilizers and pesticides have been used on site for the last twelve (12) month period.

3. Proper siltation and oil/gas recovery protections must be incorporated into the plans where practicable.

Of course, these covenants are often honored in the breach. That is why the buffer must still be protected.

Each parcel of land is unique. Some have more limitations than others. The fact that wetlands are present at the northerly border of the site limits the potential development of this site. The wetlands and the minimal buffer of fifty (50°) feet should not be affected by the development. The number of units this site affords a developer is not relevant to IWWC which is expected to protect wetlands. The IWWC should just say "no" to the placement of five (5) units and the Cultec Recharger within the buffer area intended to protect the wetlands.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Dennis L. Kern

DLK/tt

Copy: Board of Directors

"Soil scientist" means an individual duly qualified in accordance with standards set by the federal Office of Personnel Management.

"Swamps" are watercourses that are distinguished by the dominance of wetland trees and shrubs.

"Submerged lands" means those lands which are immedated by water on a seasonal or more frequent basis.

"Town" means the Town of Berlin."

"Upland Review Area" means an area of land of non-wetland or non-watercourse within 50' measured horizontally (perpendicularly) from the boundary of any wetland or watercourse.

"Waste" means sewage or any substance, liquid, gaseous, solid or radioactive, which may pollute or tend to pollute any of the wetlands and watercourses of the Town.

"Watercourses" means rivers, streams, brooks, waterways, lakes, ponds, marshes, swamps, bogs, and all other bodies of water, natural or artificial, vernal or intermittent, public or private, which are contained within, flow through or border upon the Town or any portion thereof not regulated pursuant to Sections 22a-28 through 22a-35, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes. Intermittent watercourses shall be delineated by a defined permanent channel and bank and the occurrence of two or more of the following characteristics: (a) evidence of scour or deposits of recent alluvium or detritus, (b) the presence of standing or flowing water for a duration longer than a particular storm incident, and (c) the presence of hydrophytic vegetation.

"Wetlands" means land, including submerged land as defined in this Section, not regulated pursuant to Sections 22a-28 through 22a-35, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes, which consists of any of the soil types designated as poorly drained, very poorly drained, alluvial and floodplain by the National Cooperative Soils Survey, as it may be amended from time to time, of the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Such areas may include filled, graded, or excavated sites which possess an aquic (saturated) soil moisture regime as defined by the USDA Cooperative Soil Survey.

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To: The Inland Wetlands Commission Members:

From: Linda Ahlstrand 48 Holly Ct

According to the National Weather Service instruments located at Bradley Airport, on August 18, 2023, between 6:41am and 7:51am, 3.4" of rain doused the State. The stream/culvert(which is 4' deep) overran the embankment and flooded 27 and 17 Holly back yards. A child or a pet could have easily drowned in this rushing water. This surge flooded the family room, garage and both front and back yards at 859 Lower Lane.

The two catch basins on Lower Lane also backed up and flooded the street and yards at 872, 869 and 862 Lower Lane. Catch basins on Holly and catch basins on Peter Parley also dump storm water into the stream/culvert making the problem worse. Storm water also flows off the Turnpike and through the Antique property down to the wetlands.

What if there had been a greater storm? Additional yards and basements and garages would have been flooded. Thankfully, this deluge ended in 70 minutes. What would have happened if 1676 Berlin Turnpike was constructed with it's impervious surfaces of buildings and asphalt? The additional storm water runoff captured by the north infiltration system would have created more dumping into the wetlands. This would have led to even more storm water rushing through the stream/culvert.

This flooding has persisted for years and will only be getting worse with super storms and more development. We are requesting that a permanent engineering solution be instituted to prevent serious and more dangerous conditions. We ask that this issue be resolved before proceeding with any development at 1676 Berlin Turnpike.

If these infiltration systems had been built, the 3.4" of rain in 70 minutes could have easily overwhelmed them allowing storm water to careen down the 13' slope and into the lower levels of 51 and 48 Holly. For almost two years, the 1676 applicant and engineers have happily stated that there is no current drainage system on the property-they are now here to save the day by installing infiltration systems. They will be disappointed to learn that, once again, we had no storm water drainage in our yards. The original motel efficiencies were located between 22' and 30' from the western property line with plenty of space for the storm water to naturally be absorbed into the soil without landing in our yards or lower levels. There were no buildings on the north boundary which left the wetlands 50' uplands review intact. The additional runoff from the uplands buffer was minimal. We are asking that the 50' uplands review area remain intact and the BT-1 buffer of 25' on the southern boundary and 50' buffer when abutting residential remain in place. This is crucial to the soil absorbing the storm water runoff.

The drainage issue is difficult. We are requesting that the Town hire a consulting engineer to address this issue.

Attached is information from the National Weather Service and two Town maps showing the location of the stream/culvert and the topography of the land. Also attached is the plot plan of 51 Holly which shows the stream/culvert on the abutting Antique property housing the wetlands. Included are two pictures showing the stream behind 45 and 51 Holly.

Thank you.

August 25, 2023

Last year, we were told there was still an old foundation in the southwest corner and that's why the 2022 revised site plan had that one massive infiltration system on the northwest corner. Here's a copy of the map showing this foundation. How can a new infiltration system be installed over it? Won't the ground be destabilized if it is removed? What are the ramifications of installing an infiltration system by or over an old foundation?

The site plan shows that one infiltration system is to be located on the south side which will handle runoff from three units. That exfiltration will go into the swale and out to the second infiltration system at the southwest corner. Storm water from the two sets of duplexes will also go into that infiltration system. Then, magically, the exfiltration will flow up the incline to the swale. How is that possible when water flows downhill?

What will really happen in a major storm event is that the storm water will saturate the ground and bubble up to the surface and come rushing into 48 Holly's yard and lower level. In a serious storm event, the third infiltration system at the northwest corner could be overwhelmed and send storm water careening into the yard and lower level of 51 Holly. Those properties are sitting ducks because of the 13' to 12' drop in the terrain from the Turnpike to the house foundations. There is no emergency spillway for overflow.

Questions have been asked both at the April 5, 2022 and the July 11, 2023 Inland/Wetlands meeting with no answers being given. I am once again asking the following questions and would appreciate answers:

The developer has not provided enough test borings and information as to the present conditions. What is the present depth to groundwater especially in all the areas where storm water detention and recharge is proposed?

What is the permeability of the soil at these infiltration systems and which way will the saturated groundwater travel once it is piped into the ground?

Why are there no emergency spillways to control overflow of the proposed chambers should a storm frequency be higher than that which has been designed?

Shouldn't the developer be responsible for monitoring groundwater levels in the adjacent residential lots before and after installation of storm water infiltration systems?

Is the Town or developer going to guarantee in writing that storm water runoff will not flood lower levels and yards?

The site plan states maximum building coverage of 21.7% with 47% total impervious surface coverage. I asked Mr. Horbal if engineering could check these figures. He stated that they just take the word of the applicant. Can these percentages be checked?

We again request that the Town hire a consulting engineer to look at the total drainage issue, especially the utilization of the Cultec 180 HD infiltration system. According to Mr. Georgina, last year's Stormtech 4500 was the wrong infiltration system for this property. What is the right one?

The 2023 site plan has major differences from the 2021 site plan:

A different infiltration system with one different location

Different unit models

A 50' uplands review buffer that was ignored in 2022

We again request that the 50' uplands review buffer remain in place to protect the wetlands.

Thank you.

Linda Ahlstrand

48 Holly Ct





San Francisco, CA 🛕 76 °F Sunny

(/weather/us/ca/san-francisco/37.78,-122.42)

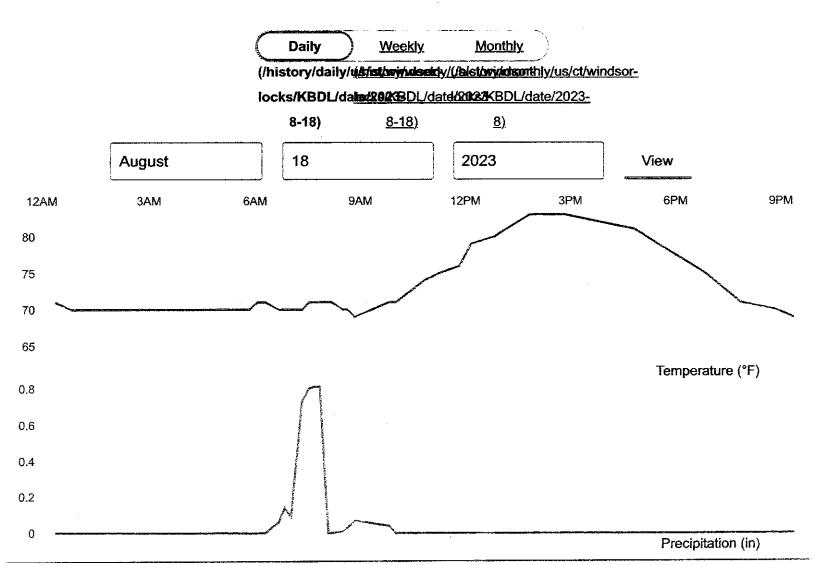
Manhattan, NY 78 °F Sunny (/weather/us/ny/manhattan/40.75,-74

41.93 °N, 72.64 °W

Windsor Locks, CT Weather History *

HISTORY (/HISTORY/DAILY/US/CT/WINDSOR-LOCKS/KBDL)

- TODAY (/WEATHER/US/CT/WINDSOR-LOCKS/KBDL)
- HOURLY (/HOURLY/US/CT/WINDSOR-LOCKS/KBDL)
- 10-DAY (/FORECAST/US/CT/WINDSOR-LOCKS/KBDL)
- CALENDAR (/CALENDAR/US/CT/WINDSOR-LOCKS/KBDL)
- HISTORY (/HISTORY/DAILY/US/CT/WINDSOR-LOCKS/KBDL)
- WUNDERMAP (WUNDERMAP?LAT=41.928&LON=-72.644)

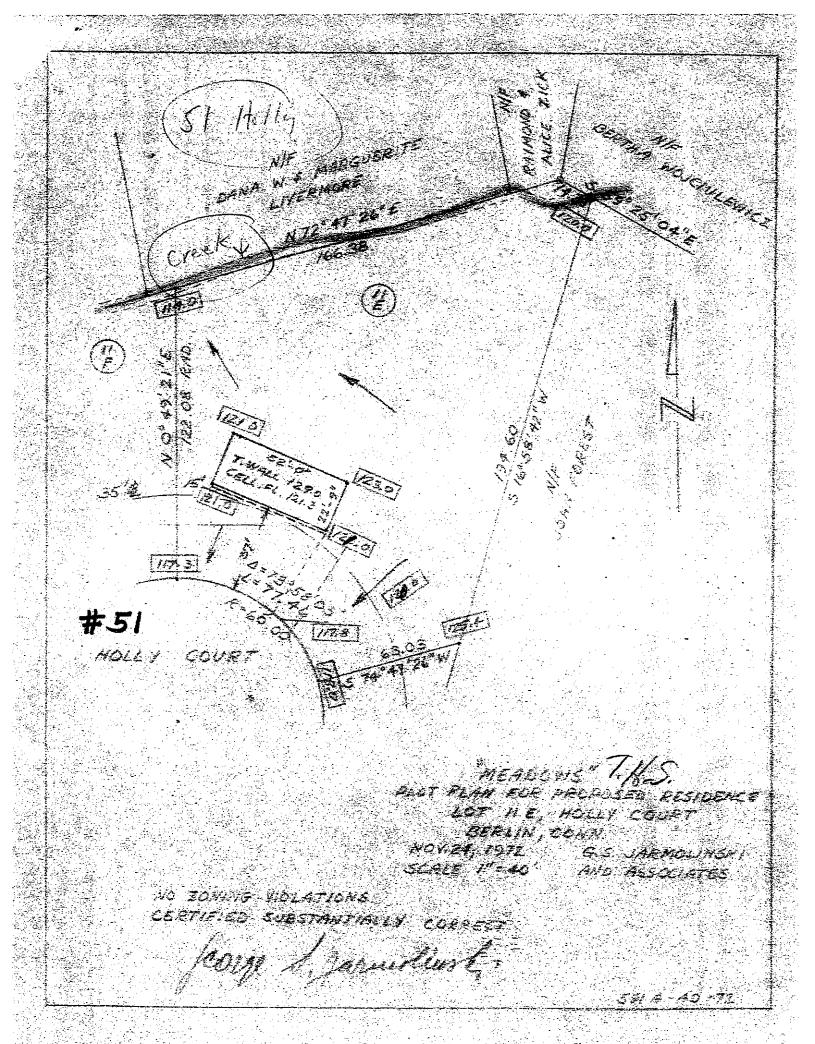


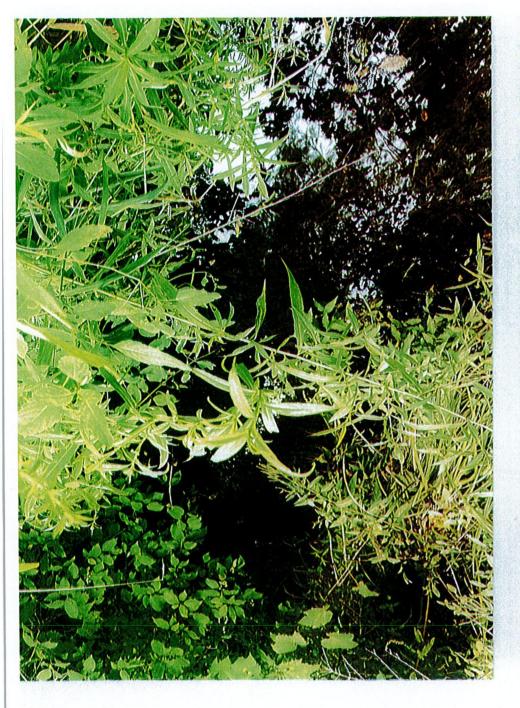
Temperature (*F)	Actual	ristone Avg.	Record	4
Nautical Twilight		4:56 AM	8:55 PM	
Astronomical Twilight		4:17 AM	9:34 PM	
Moon: waxing crescent		7:59 AM	9:02 PM	

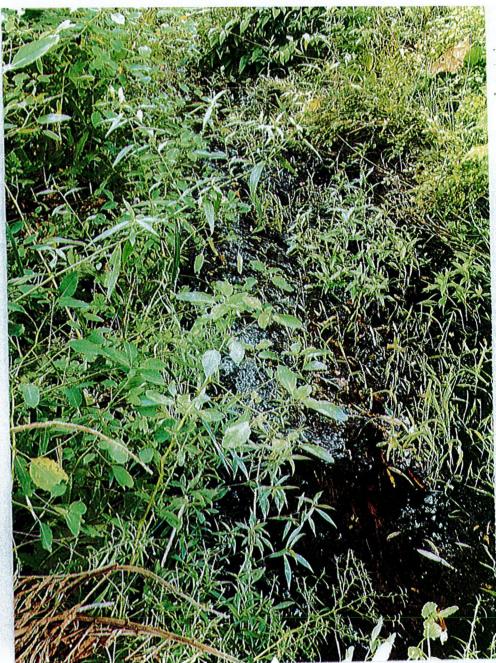
In 70 minutes we had

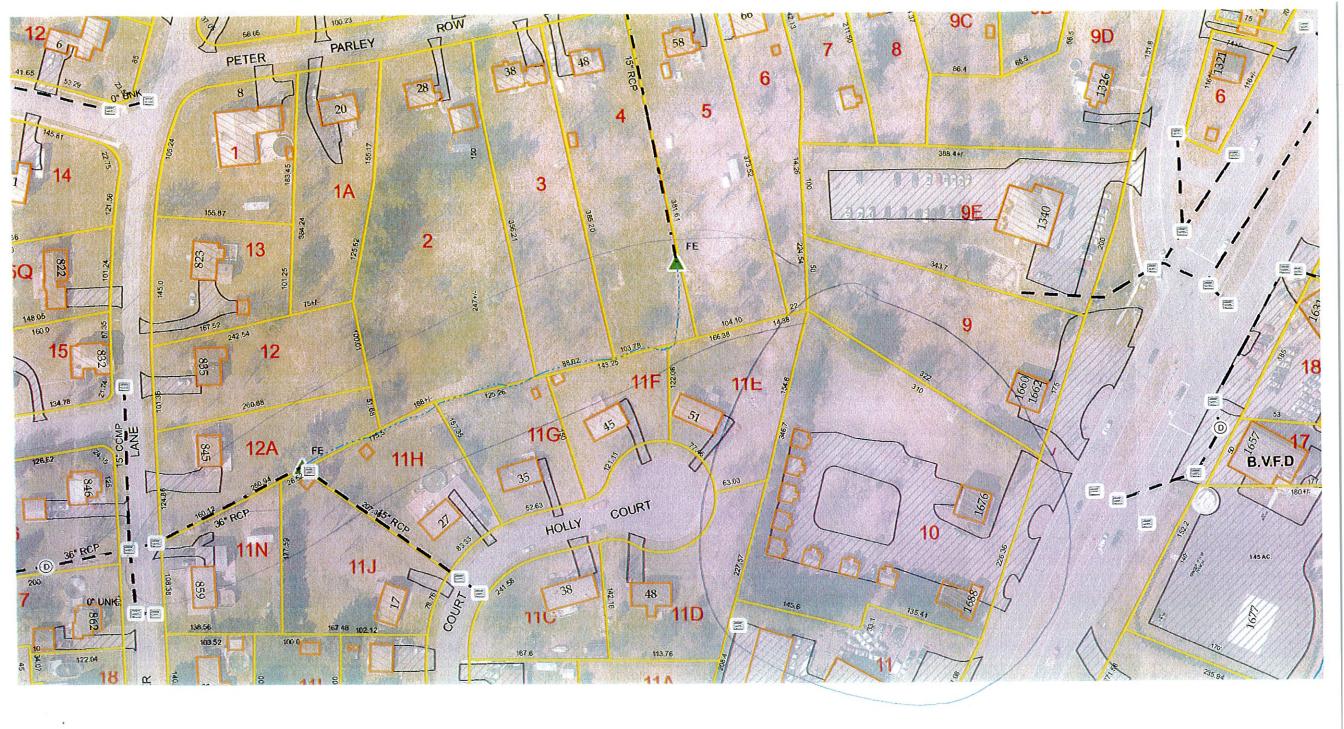
Daily Observations 3.4" fram

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Time	Temperature	Dew Point	Humidity	Wind	Wind Speed	Wind Gust	Pressure	Precip.
12:23 AM	71 °F	67 °F	87 %	SE	6 mph	0 mph	29.66 in	0.0 in
12:51 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	SE	5 mph	0 mph	29.65 in	0.0 in
1:38 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	E	3 mph	0 mph	29.63 in	0.0 in
1:51 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	SE	5 mph	0 mph	29,63 in	0.0 in
2:04 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	SE	6 mph	0 mph	29.63 in	0.0 in
2:51 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	SE	5 mph	0 mph	29.62 in	0.0 in
3:51 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	SE	3 mph	0 mph	29.60 in	0.0 in
4:29 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	SE	5 mph	0 mph	29.57 in	0.0 in
4:49 AM	70 °F	68 °F	94 %	ESE	3 mph	0 mph	29.55 in	0.0 in
4:51 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	ESE	5 mph	0 mph	29.55 in	0.0 in
5:05 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	CALM	0 mph	0 mph	29,55 in	0.0 in
5:31 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	E	3 mph	0 mph	29.52 in	0.0 in
5:51 AM	70 °F	68 °F	93 %	E	3 mph	0 mph	29.52 in	0.0 in
6:05 AM	71 °F	68 °F	90 %	SE	5 mph	0 mph	29.52 in	0.0 in
6:18 AM	71 °F	68 °F	90 %	ESE	6 mph	0 mph	29.51 in	0.0 in
6:41 AM	70 °F	69 ° F	97 %	CALM	0 mph	0 mph	29.51 in	0.1 in
6:51 AM	70 °F	69 °F	97 %	NNE	3 mph	0 mph	29.50 in	0.1 in
7:02 AM	70 °F	69 °F	97 %	SE	8 mph	0 mph	29.51 in	0.1 in
7:21 AM	70 °F	69 °F	97 %	E	10 mph	0 mph	29,48 in	0.7 in
7:33 AM	71 °F	69 °F	93 %	NE	6 mph	0 mph	29.48 in	0,8 in
7:42 AM	71 °F	69 °F	93 %	NW	8 mph	0 mph	29.49 in	0.8 in
7:51 AM	71 °F	69 °F	93 %	NNE	8 mph	0 mph	29.47 in	0.8 in
8:06 AM	71 °F	70 °F	96 %	NW	6 mph	0 mph	29.49 in	0.0 in
8:11 AM	71 °F	70 °F	96 %	NW	7 mph	0 mph	29.50 in	0.0 in
8:31 AM	70 °F	69 °F	97 %	NNW	12 mph	21 mph	29.50 in	0.0 in
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Dear Mr. Horbal,

I would like to address a matter of significant concern: the well-being and security of the tax paying residents that reside on Holly Court. In light of the recent storm events, I have taken the initiative to document the adverse impact of water runoff/drainage during the rainstorm on August 18th and 19th.

The land elevation on our street stands at approximately 133 feet at the north side of the Berlin Tpke. and drops significantly down to approximately 109 feet on my property. Along with the existing issues surrounding the culvert on the backside of Holly Court it has heightened our apprehensions. As I present these photos, it's important to underscore the genuine fear that the proposed development will intensify the water-related challenges we already face. We need significant engineering for a long term solution to this issue which is getting worse with each major storm.

The applicant's engineer has affirmed a substantial 3'-6' drop from the elevation of 1676 to the adjacent wetlands, exacerbating the issue of stormwater discharge, especially during the recent incident where 4" of rainwater was forcefully coursing down, further overwhelming the culvert and stream. Additionally, our property (27 Holly Court) rear elevation stands at 111 feet and drops down to 109 feet, highlighting the concerning topography that undoubtedly contributes to the prevailing problem.

Numerous neighbors in the effected area have unfortunately encountered flooding resulting from the recent storm, leading to submerged basements and irreparably damaged belongings. This significant inconvenience not only disrupts daily lives but also instills a genuine apprehension about the potential consequences that may arise from the proposed development.

The combination of fast-flowing water and the heightened water levels in the culvert poses a significant safety hazard for children and pets.

Following the most recent storm, many of us have been plagued by a notable increase in the bug population, attributed to the overflowing culvert that has saturated the soil with excessive moisture.

Exhibit A:

Is the backside of 27 Holly Court, showing in excess of 5 feet of eroding land due to the storm.

Exhibit B:

Is the basement of 27 Holly Court Flooded

Exhibit C:

Is showing the backside of 27 Holly Court, showing in excess of 5 feet by 197 feet of eroding land, again during the August 18-19 rain storm.

Exhibit D, E and F:

Is showing 27 Holly Court after the August 18-19 rainstorm completely infested with a zillions bugs, brought on by saturated properties on Holly Court.

I implore the commission to take these very real concerns into consideration as you deliberate on the proposed development. The photographs captured during the recent rainstorm on August 18th vividly demonstrate the immediate and tangible impact that water drainage issues can have on our homes and lives. With the land at 1676 Berlin Tpke already leveled and the pre-existing challenges linked to the culvert, the potential consequences of further aggravating these issues cannot be ignored. The fear of increased flooding and its subsequent effects on the health, safety, and welfare of our community is evident. Our collective plea is that you carefully weigh these concerns when making decisions that will shape the future of Holly Court and the neighbors surrounding this proposed development. Your thoughtful consideration of these matters will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in safeguarding the well-being of the homeowners and families who call this place their home.

Respectfully,

Patti and David Burgio 27 Holly Court Berlin, CT 06037

