

Wallingford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

Special Meeting
Wednesday, April 22, 2026, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall, Room 315
45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT

MINUTES

Chair James Vitali called this Special Meeting of the Wallingford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission to order on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, at 7:02 p.m. in Room 315 of Town Hall, 45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT, indicating the purpose of the Special Meeting was to hold a Cease & Desist Hearing.

PRESENT: Chair Vitali, Secretary Nick Kern, Commissioner Michael Caruso, and Alternate Commissioners James Heilman and Mrs. Caroline Raynis, and Environmental Planner Erin O'Hare.

ABSENT: Vice Chair Deborah Phillips, Commissioner Jeffrey Necio, and Alternate Commissioner Aili McKeen.

There were 2 persons in the audience.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge was recited.

B. ROLL CALL

As above.

C. CEASE & DESIST ORDER - 250 Cook Hill Road - violation - (unpermitted alteration of wetlands, installation of structures in or near wetlands, deposition of significant amount of fill material in Upland Review Area)

Chair Vitali opened the Hearing and announced this Cease and Desist Order which was issued on April 14, 2026.

Appearing were Mr. Jeison Paredes, Owner, 250 Cook Hill Road, and his daughter Ms. Angelyn Paredes.

Ms. O'Hare said, The Commission got copies of the Certified Letter to the Owner, Jeison Paredes, which was delivered April 14th by State Marshal and later by Post Office. As background, the man next door at #248 wanted to apply for a fence at the wetlands. I went out to look there, and then I saw the neighbor's property at 250 Cook Hill Road. You have these pictures already on the C&D Order e-mailed to you, but I will pass them around. There were about 15 fill piles to the rear. Also, there was a side pen built within 50 feet of the wetland on the eastern side. And there was a chicken coop and a big wood pile--both structures were elevated by about 2 feet above the wetlands. So they are located in the wetlands. Also in the wetlands, I saw two giant stumps. The photos I took were taken from 248 Cook Hill Road. I didn't enter at 250 that day, but I have gone there since then. Other vegetative debris is in the wetlands. There's a parking lot in the back.

Ms. O'Hare continued, The primary violation is the filling without permitting. I don't know where the

real wetlands line is. It's filled into the wetland. The chicken coop and wood pile are in wetlands. We served the Notice around 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 14. The neighbor told me that the next day, he started activity on the site. Tonight I went out there. I had told him I would be there at 4:00. But I got out there later, and I took photos for the Meeting.

Ms. O'Hare passed the photos to the Commissioners and continued, Two days ago, I explained everything to the Owner. He wants a garage. The Building Department said he could as long as it was five feet off the property line. But you have to account for wetlands. The scope of work I sent out said it needs a Professional Soils Scientist to find where the wetlands were before all this filling took place. I put it out to four firms. My photos today show the earth has been graded. The patio is out of our 50-foot area. So it's the work of the Soils Scientist to establish the original wetland line, where it is today, and where it would bring the 50-foot wetlands line toward the house. Some activities are not in our jurisdiction, and we have to establish that. We have Contingency funds for Professional Services. So they can delineate the wetlands (within 3 feet) with a GPS device. More accurate would be to have a professional survey.

Chair Vitali asked, Your request for service--was one of the gentlemen on the Conservation Commission?

Ms. O'Hare said, No. It's his firm. We cannot use use him, Conor Makepeace, Conservation Commission Chair. He works for AECOM, which has a lot of Wetlands Scientists.

Chair Vitali asked for questions.

Commissioner Kern said, How do we determine where the URA is? It looks like the house is by the road, but out back it looks like there's wetlands.

Ms. O'Hare said, It would be 50 feet back from the wetland line toward the rear of the house. This gentleman bought two years ago. The activity would have happened in the last two years.

Commissioner Heilman said, Why would you put so much fill around trees? That's a great way to kill trees. I think whatever is done has to be undone, without further damage. I don't know why one would cut wood and store it above wetlands. It'll never dry. As soon as we can get information about the boundaries, the better.

Mr. Jeison Paredes said, I brought a couple of pictures. This is the house beyond. My neighbor asked why I cut the bushes, and said that I took out his privacy for his yard. He's got a beautiful garden, and my yard is terrible grass. He asked why I cut and said, "You no need to cut within your yard." I have pictures here (shown to the Commissioners and submitted).

Ms. Angelyn Paredes said, The letter came on Tuesday night.

Mr. Paredes said, The letter came on Tuesday. The Marshal came to my house and told me I have to stop everything.

Chair Vitali said, We see that the Marshal served you. So when were these pictures taken?

Mr. Paredes said, Last year. I got a little wood fence.

Commissioner Caruso asked (referring to the photo showing 248 Cook Hill Road), It's cleaned out in

his yard to the back, and there's a garden. Isn't it really in the neighbor's yard where it's grassed and where he wants to put the fence?

Ms. O'Hare said, Everybody in the neighborhood has wetlands in the way-back yards. Yes, there's a small clearing in the neighbor's yard. It was done years ago, you can tell. He has a koi pond. But there's some yard improvement in the back--and everyone has wetlands all across the back. And some was done by the developer back in the '80s.

Commissioner Caruso said, So it looks like the neighbor already cleared his yard. And he's not happy that he (reference is to Mr. Paredes) is clearing and taking the privacy away. You should look at their yard, too.

Ms. O'Hare said, I was there.

Mr. Paredes said, I have a couple of videos by my house.

Chair Vitali asked, In your picture, who is the person mowing the lawn?

Mr. Paredes said, My mother.

Ms. Paredes said, We're putting dirt on the grass to level it up, but we didn't put it in the wetland. There was grass before, but it got destroyed and we want to level it up and plant our grass.

Mr. Paredes said, Maybe you can come and see one day. I can't explain. I do a little parking in the back. I don't have space in the front. My family is me, my wife. She (my daughter) is 20 years old, and one baby is four months old. I have a plan, for I'm not sure when, for maybe buying one camper and one little boat for use for the river or the ocean or lake. The problem is on the front I don't have space for parking. I need a space to put it in back where I do everything. I put stones for division and for the materials, put it for the little parking for everything. I never have the business about for the commercial vehicles for this day, call me. Hey, for you neighbors tell for you parking the the back commercial vehicles--I never have it. I have only my regular vehicles, no have for the big truck, no have for tractor, no have for nothing.

Chair Vitali said, O.K. We understand you're trying to get an area in the back. But you can't fill in a wetland, and you can't fill 50 feet from the wetland. Is it 50 feet between the wetland and your house? You need a permit for a lot of things you have done. That's an issue. On some of these pictures, it looks like you did fill a wetland by the tree there, and you filled on some of the grass with material. The problem is to determine where the wetland line is and what was actually done. But the chicken coop and the woodpile are in the wetland.

Mr. Paredes said, I need a permit for where to put my chicken coop?

Chair Vitali said, You may not have a spot to put it. It depends on the Commission. But we'll look to find a Soils Scientist to find what's designated wetland and where the line is. Or, you can hire them yourself. I think these pictures show some areas have been filled that shouldn't have been filled.

Commissioner Caruso said, The grass is all overgrown on the side of the house.

Commissioner Kern said, Has anybody shown you where the wetlands were when you bought the house?

Mr. Paredes said, No.

Commissioner Kern said, So you have to have somebody to show you where the wetlands were or where they are. Your parking is definitely in the wetlands.

Mr. Paredes said, At some point, I want room for storage, for a garage. I want extra room for my kids. I asked the Building Department for a garage 20' x 24', and they told me, "You can do nothing on the front or the sides or on this area. Whatever you want in the back, you need 5 feet from each line." At some point I need storage. Right now, I put my parking in the back.

Commissioner Kern said, You're going to have work with a Soils Scientist to flag it so we know where the wetlands are. And, if there's a buffer between the wetland, the (URA) Upland Review Area, you may not be able to use it unless you have permission from the Commission.

Mr. Paredes said, No foundation. I put it in the back on stones. In the back yard, everything is crooked. I have it crooked.

Commissioner Kern said, The picture shows a foundation.

Mr. Paredes said, That's not a foundation. You can come and see. It's only that I put the chicken coop by where there's my firewood. I have 12' x 12' area and I put a tarp. I never put concrete. If I need to tomorrow, I can put everything in a different place.

Commissioner Kern said, There's a chance you may have to remove all of it because it's in the wetland area.

Ms. O'Hare said, What's under the chicken coop? What's the gray stuff?

Mr. Paredes said, I put stone from the yard.

Ms. O'Hare said, And no concrete between the stones?

Mr. Paredes said, A little bit.

Chair Vitali asked, What's our interest, Erin, to get a Soils Scientist out and to take measurements for a fence?

Ms. O'Hare said, I retire on May 1. The Soils Scientists I named on the RFQ are all reputable and quick and will do a good job.

Chair Vitali said, Your pictures are very valuable. You should get another set to Erin O'Hare for the Soils Scientist.

Ms. O'Hare said, Can we keep these?

Mr. Paredes said, No problem. I have these pictures on my computer.

Chair Vitali said, I think there's no question that the wetland got built on. That's why the Soils Scientist is important, to find the wetland. I think previous homeowners did more than they should have. So I

think the Cease and Desist Order should remain in effect. I think the Soils Scientist should come in as soon as possible and try to determine where the line is and say what's involved. And the chicken coop and a couple things have to go.

Ms. O'Hare said, Typically, everything stays until the Soils Scientist comes out and marks it all out. But to understand: No activity out there, and for him to do the measurements. The consultant can do the work in two weeks with a report. First, I have to get the money approved by the Town Purchasing Department for that.

Ms. Paredes asked, Why do we have to wait two weeks to plant grass, etc? I can't move nothing?

Chair Vitali said, Unfortunately, nothing. Erin, I'm hoping you'd get the money for the Soils Scientist out and to have the report done by May 6, by our next meeting.

Ms. O'Hare said, It could be later.

One gentleman entered the meeting at 7:35 p.m. He did not speak.

Chair Vitali said, You should come to the May 6 Meeting. A new person may be in here to lead us.

Commissioner Heilman said, If the Applicant wants to get the violation satisfied, he can get the Soils Scientist and get report in. We have to wait for the Town to get a Soils Scientist. If time is not a concern to you, you have a month. But, if time is a serious concern, you could get your own Soils Scientist and probably get your report in by the week before the next meeting.

Chair Vitali said, When the report is done, either by our man or your man, then the Commission will figure out what needs to be done. Then you'd have to get an engineer to tell you what you're pulling back and how much. You'll need a permit for what to do. You're not just going to go back to work and get it done. It's involved.

Mr. Paredes said, I need—

Chair Vitali said, Your time frame? You may want to talk to Erin O'Hare in the office about the whole thing, your timeline. If you need material in the URA where your wetland line is, you'll need a permit for that. You will have to move the chicken coop and the wood pile.

Mr. Paredes said, I can wait to see what happens about this. If I need to move my chicken coop or the wood storage, I'd move it. I need to know where I can put it.

Chair Vitali said, That's one thing. The Soils Scientist will tell you where you can't put it. And then you have the rest of your yard to deal with.

Mr. Paredes said, The only thing is where I'd put more topsoil in the nice grass. Where I cleared, I never put nothing. In the back, where there's no grass, now there's nothing, only clear as in the picture. In the front I have two big trees that I'd cut out, very close to my neighbors. After work, I work in the front yard, put nice grass. I love this home and this neighborhood. People say, "Good job." Right now, I'd like to clear everything and take out the stone.

Chair Vitali said, We'll have to get you through this. I'd ask for a Motion.

Ms. O'Hare said, On this one of your pictures, I don't understand. This back yard looks nice.

Mr. Paredes said, It's bumpy in the front.

Chair Vitali said, Can he send you his video, to the Wetlands computer?

Ms. O'Hare said, To me, that's not a problem. But to enter that into the hearing, it's sort of a problem.

Chair Vitali said, So the Soils Scientist can deal with him on with that.

Ms. O'Hare said, Mr. Paredes, If you want to get your own Soils Scientist, I'll give you a copy of these directions to give to the Soils Scientist that we want him to do.

Mr. Paredes received the copy. He said, I have one picture for you, Ms. O'Hare. On this picture, this wood is for the chicken coop.

Ms. O'Hare said, Is the Commission giving specific directives of what the Owner can and cannot do in the next month?

Chair Vitali said, He did say he will not do anything. I agree that he cannot do anything until this gets resolved.

Mr. Paredes said, I am not doing anything in the back yard. I only put food and water for my chickens.

Ms. O'Hare said, Don't mess with the gravel parking lot. Don't increase that. Don't make it bigger. That might have to come out. We don't know yet. Just wait.

Mr. Paredes said, O.K.

Chair Vitali said, Based on the discussion tonight here, I think a Motion should be made whether this Cease and Desist Order will remain in place.

MR. CARUSO: MOTION THAT THE CEASE & DESIST ORDER ON 250 COOK HILL ROAD SHOULD REMAIN IN PLACE.

MR. HEILMAN: SECOND.

VOTE: MRS. RAYNIS – YES; MR. KERN – YES; MR. CARUSO – YES; MR. HEILMAN – YES; CHAIR VITALI – YES.

Chair Vitali said, So we'll be in touch.

Mr. Paredes agreed to return at the next IWWC Meeting.

Chair Vitali added, The next Meeting will be in the Auditorium of the Town Hall, May 6th, Second Floor, at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Paredes acknowledged that.

D. ADJOURNMENT

MR. CARUSO: MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

MR. KERN: SECOND.
VOTE: ALL FIVE COMMISSIONERS VOTED "AYE" IN A VOICE VOTE.

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen L. Burns, Recording Secretary