

Wallingford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, September 2, 2026, 7:00 p.m.
Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers
Town Hall – 45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT

MINUTES

Chair James Vitali called this Regular Meeting of the Wallingford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission to order on Wednesday, September 2, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers, Town Hall, 45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT.

PRESENT: Chair Vitali, Vice Chair Deborah Phillips; Secretary Nick Kern, Commissioner Michael Caruso, and Alternate Commissioners James Heilman, Aili McKeen, and Caroline Raynis. Environmental Planner Sebastian Velez was present via Zoom.

ABSENT: Commissioner Jeffrey Necio.

There were approximately 30 people in the audience.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge was recited.

B. ROLL CALL

As above.

Chair Vitali stated that the voters tonight would be Commissioners Phillips, Kern, Caruso, McKeen, and himself.

Chair Vitali welcomed the new Environmental Planner, Sebastian Velez.

C. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting, July 29, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

MS. PHILLIPS: MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 29, 2026 AS SUBMITTED.

MR. CARUSO: SECOND.

VOTE: MR. CARUSO – YES; MS. PHILLIPS – ABSTAIN; MS. MCKEEN – YES; MR. KERN – YES; CHAIR VITALI – YES.

D. OLD BUSINESS

1. #A26-6.1 / 60 Carpenter Lane / Thomas Rice – (site development plan: 3 light manufacturing buildings with associated parking on 4.96 acres.)

Appearing were Atty. Dennis Ceneviva, Ceneviva Law Firm, and David Carson, OCC Group.
Mr. Velez announced that he had notified the applicant that the submitted materials were late.

Atty. Ceneviva stated that the staff comments from Water & Sewer and the Town Engineer were not sent to the applicant. They were received on July 27th. So, they were not prepared to present at the July meeting. They met with the new environmental planner on August 24th where they were told that as long as the packet was in by Thursday, it could get into the packets by Friday. The packet incorporates the staff comments. He noted that the comments were mostly for stormwater management, which is the responsibility of Planning & Zoning. This application is required because it exceeds 25,000 sq. ft. of new impervious surface. There are no wetlands or watercourses on this site. He added that the impervious area will be more than 50 ft. away from any watercourses or wetlands.

Mr. Velez confirmed that the packets received were complete and were distributed to Commission members on Friday. He has not received any additional comments and suggested an extension to allow departments to review the submission.

Chair Vitali said that comments from other departments are not necessary. He verified that the Environmental Planner had reviewed the materials.

Atty. Ceneviva stated that this is not a complicated application. If approved, it will go to the Planning & Zoning Commission. He believes the plan is ready for approval.

Mr. Carson explained that the submission is based on the 25,000 sq. ft. impervious area regulation. He stated that there are no wetlands on the property. There are already two detention basins on the adjoining property. A 50 ft. Upland Review Area boundary line crosses the property, and there is no activity in that line. The closest development will be a septic system which is more than 100 ft from the wetlands.

Chair Vitali asked Commissioners for comments.

Commissioner Heilman stated that there is a regulation for a 200 ft setback from a watershed for a septic system.

Mr. Carson replied that they already have approval from the Health Department. He continued the presentation. There will be three buildings totaling 21,000 sq. ft. and another 25,825 sq. ft. of pavement. Runoff from the pavement area will go into a separate water quality system. The remaining area of the site is directed to two separate underground detention recharge facilities and connects to an existing stormwater system. The plans were reviewed by staff. The only thing they did not have was the Town Engineer's opinion on the hydrologic analysis of the three independent systems. He reviewed the stormwater management system in detail. Mr. Carson stated that the goal is to infiltrate as much water as possible. The soil is very permeable.

Chair Vitali asked for comments from the Commission.

Ms. Raynis stated concern about the impact of a septic system because it is in an Upland Review area.

Mr. Carson replied that this is a proposed system, but previously another system was approved on this site.

Chairman Vitali noted that Water & Sewer and the Health Department approved the plans.

Ms. McKeen noted that the large gray areas on the plans are to be planted with an aggressive alien plant species. She suggested a different seed mixture: northern sea oats.

Mr. Carson had no objection.

Mr. Heilman stated that he likes the concept. He noted that they are taking a lot of material from the upper review area to make room for the two buildings. The toe of the slope was extended extensively into the Upland Review Area.

Mr. Carson replied that they will actually only go 150 ft. into the area. He pointed out the toe of the slope on the plan. They plan to leave the stumps in the back where they will do the plantings.

Mr. Heilman stated a concern with the 200 ft. setback. A lot of areas out there have shallow bedrock. The septic system will be below where you are infiltrating.

Mr. Carson replied that the distance between the infiltrations and septic is extreme. The septic is only 12 inches in the ground.

Mr. Velez noted that the silt fence sandwich will be on the 50 ft. line. The erosion control at the limit of disturbance seemed good. He stated that he has not yet been able to find the 200 ft. setback in the regulations. He stated that his concern is with the timing of the submission of revised plans, which gave staff very little time to review them and cross-check regulations.

Mr. Carson noted that the 200 ft. setback is for a public water supply, not a watershed.

Mr. Heilman disagreed.

Atty. Ceneviva stated that everything presented still needs to go to Planning & Zoning, where Water & Sewer, Engineering, and the Environmental Planner will provide comments. This Commission can put a condition on the approval regarding the recommended planting and a confirmation of where the septic system must be.

Chair Vitali agreed on a condition of approval to verify the 200 ft. setback from a wetland boundary. He asked if the septic system could be moved.

Mr. Carson confirmed that it can be redesigned and moved into the slope area.

Chair Vitali asked Commission members if that condition of approval is acceptable and received consensus.

No other Commissioners had comments.

Mr. Vitali called for a motion regarding significant activity.

**MS. PHILLIPS: MOTION TO APPROVE APPLICATION #A26-6.1 / 60 CARPENTER LANE /THOMAS RICE
BE DEEMED NOT A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ACTIVITY.**

MR. CARUSO: SECOND

VOTE: MS. PHILLIPS – YES; MR. KERN – YES; MR. CARUSO – YES; MS. MEKEEN – YES; CHAIR VITALI – YES.

MS. PHILLIPS: MOTION TO APPROVE APPLICATION #A26-6.1 / 60 CARPENTER LANE /THOMAS RICE BE APPROVED AS SUBMITTED, WITH THE CONDITION OF VERIFICATION THAT THE SEPTIC SYSTEM MEETS THE REGULATORY STANDARDS.

MR. CARUSO: SECOND

VOTE: MS. PHILLIPS – YES; MR. KERN – YES; MR. CARUSO – YES; MS. MECKEEN – YES; CHAIR VITALI – YES.

- 2. #A26-7.3 / 11 Shire Drive / Jason Adinolfi – (IG Pool placed in Upland Review Area) Request for Administrative Approval – *Granted 8/19/26 / Letter of approval written on 8/27/26***

Chair Vitali noted that Administrative Approval was approved, and Mr. Velez reviewed the site and reported no significant impact.

- 3. #A26-7.4 / 71 Schoolhouse Road / Janice & Kevin Albert– (shed placed in Upland Review Area) Request for Administrative Approval – *Granted 8/22/26 / Letter of approval written on 8/27/26***

Chair Vitali noted that Administrative Approval was approved, and Mr. Velez reviewed the site and reported no significant impact.

- 4. #A26-7.5 / 12 Grieb Trail / Neil Angelini – (Stairs and footings in Upland Review Area) Request for Administrative Approval – *Granted 8/21/26 / Letter of approval written on 8/27/26***

Chair Vitali noted that Administrative Approval was approved, and Mr. Velez reviewed the site and reported no significant impact.

E. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. # A26-7.1 / 110 Leigus Road – Metro Realty – (Multi-family apartment complex (83 units) with associated parking area under CT Statute 8-30g)**

Appearing were Atty. Andrea Gomes, Hinkley Allen, 20 Church Street, Hartford; Kyle Richards, Executive Vice President, Metro Realty; Tom Daly, Consulting Civil Engineer with SLR; and Matt Sanford, Wetland and Soil Scientist with SLR.

Atty. Gomes handed out printouts of the PowerPoint presentation they would be presenting.

Chair Vitali noted that due to this new documentation, they will not be able to act on the application tonight.

Atty. Gomes replied that all the information to be presented is already in the packets. She provided an overview of the site and the proposed plan and why the work proposed is not a significant impact activity. The application is for lot C of a subdivision. The proposal is for a multifamily development of 83

units in seven buildings that will affect a non-wetland upland review area. There are no adverse impacts expected to the value or function of the wetlands on the site.

Mr. Daly noted that the property is actually off of Miles Drive. He explained that the Wetlands Scientists went back out to remap the wetlands, which make up 34% of this former farm field. The rest is either wetlands or woods. The property has utility easements going through already. The proposed development is for seven buildings with 135 parking spaces, sidewalks, and a single road off Miles Drive. They will be adding a walking trail. The property is served by public water and sewer. He noted two regulated activities. The first, on the north end of the site, is a stormwater basin installed by the hotel that discharges onto this property. They will need to pick up the end and extend it to the other side of the new road. The second activity is a proposed retaining wall at the end of the turnaround in the new roadway. The retaining wall will restrict the activity in the Upland Review Area. This Upland Review Area is associated with a small wetland pocket. He explained the stormwater management system, which is designed for both quality and quantity. Water & Sewer has confirmed the plan complies, and the Town Engineer is satisfied with the design. Any additional engineering comments are related to the Planning & Zoning approval. Mr. Daly added that the applicant has met with the neighbors and suggests a conservation easement or restriction over the wetlands. They are willing to work with the Corporation Counsel to put 52% of the property into a conservation restriction. He noted that some neighbors would like the land deeded to the Town as open space. The applicant is committed to preserving that area with a permanent restriction on the land.

Mr. Sanford stated that the site has a history. They reevaluated the wetland boundaries and re-hung the wetland flags. These are consistent with the known boundaries. He explained the difference between the two wetland areas. One is a wetland meadow that covers a little over 6.8 acres and starts as a wet meadow and transitions to forested wetland. There are two intermittent watercourses in that one, with a confluence with a perennial watercourse that is a tributary of the Muddy River. The smaller wetland area is a shrub wetland of about 6,000 sq. ft. and is probably man-made by the farming activity. He showed photos of both. He explained how he applied functions and values to the two areas. Regarding the regulated activities, there is no direct impact to the wetlands or watercourses, and the Upland Review Area activities are minor in nature. The placement of the retaining wall will be 21 feet from the wetland. Mr. Sanford noted that there is an old stone wall and large trees along the wetland which will be protected. He explained how they looked for evidence of endangered species living or nesting on the property and found none. He noted that they will be clearing very few trees to protect the habitat. He reviewed the criteria for significant activity and concluded that, in his professional opinion, the proposed development will have no adverse impact.

Atty. Gomes concluded that they see no adverse impact from this project and staff has agreed, so they are legally entitled to an approval.

Chair Vitali asked about the maintenance package for the retention pond.

Mr. Daly replied that the maintenance package is in the utility plan. Staff comments included more information on the sand filter, which they did.

Ms. Raynis noted that even though one wetland area is smaller, all wetlands matter. She asked about the disturbance caused by the retaining wall.

Mr. Sanford replied that not all wetlands are created equal from a scientific perspective. His comments are based on science regarding the quality of wetlands and what the protections should be. Regarding the impact of the retaining wall, there will be a 21 ft. wide strip between the wall and the wetlands.

Mr. Kern referred to page 12 of the printout of the presentation. He stated that the intermediate stream looks like a pretty active watercourse. He asked what will be done to protect it and the spring that feeds it after the development.

Mr. Daly replied that is why the neighbors proposed a conservation easement. The stream is fairly deep into the wetlands. He added that much of the stream is off of this property. It originates near Rt. 68. He agrees that this watercourse is important. There is no development near the watercourse.

Mr. Kern asked how it will be protected from Rt. 68 down to your property.

Mr. Daley replied that they can only protect what's on their property.

Atty. Gomes added that legally they can't do anything on property that they don't own. She clarified that Metro Realty only owns this lot. How the watercourse will be protected will be decided whether it is an easement or something else. Metro Realty feels strongly about protecting this watercourse.

Mr. Heilman asked about the soil type.

Mr. Sanford replied that the larger wetland has poorly drained soil and the smaller one has disturbed soil due to farming.

Mr. Heilman stated that he is happy that there is significant effort to protect the wetlands and hopes Planning & Zoning will have concerns for humanity. There is nothing here addressing children. He asked if this project is designed for senior housing, as there seems to be no place for children to play, other than in the wetlands.

Mr. Richards replied that this will not be an age-restricted community, though there is a likelihood that it will be largely seniors.

Mr. Heilman asked who will be responsible for the maintenance program for the detention ponds.

Mr. Daly replied that Metro Realty will be responsible. The maintenance plan includes that Water & Sewer has the right to inspect. He added that Metro Realty has a good reputation for maintenance.

Mr. Richards added that they take maintenance seriously. They have built communities in other towns and are always invited back to build more.

Atty. Gomes stated that from a legal perspective, the town retains enforcement discretion.

Chair Vitali noted that there should be a fence along the Upland Review Area so it can't be destroyed. He asked for clarification that the cul-de-sac is within 21 feet of the wetland. He asked about the height of the retaining wall.

Mr. Sanford replied that the retaining wall is in a piece of the Upland Review Area and will be 21 ft. up-gradient from the smaller wetland.

Chair Vitali noted that when the first building was built in that area, the soil was very heavy with gravel underneath.

Mr. Daly noted that the retaining wall will be 6 ft high.

Chair Vitali stated that a fence would be needed to protect the wetlands.

Mr. Daly added that there is a central grass area, an amenity space, as well as the walking path.

Ms. McKeen stated that it will need to be fenced. She added that she will contact Planning & Zoning about the lack of parking. She is concerned with overflow parking ending up on the grass.

Mr. Daly replied that Metro Realty is confident of the parking ratio. He noted that 20% of the units are designed for adults with disabilities who will not be driving.

Chair Vitali noted the receipt of a petition to call a public hearing. He asked for a vote on calling a public hearing.

Atty. Gomes noted that the regulations state that a petition for a public hearing has to be received within 14 days of the receipt of the application. Since the petition was received this week, legally it is too late to trigger a public hearing.

Chair Vitali stated that the application will be tabled and he will let the town attorney decide.

Hearing a disturbance in the audience, Chair Vitali asked members of the public to leave the chambers.

Frank Stelado, 36 Broadview Drive, reported that an individual was using offensive language and shouting from the audience.

Chair Vitali replied that he didn't see the altercation in the audience and suggested asking for a law enforcement presence at the next meeting.

Craig Fishbein, Grieb Road, stated that he met with Metro Realty and suggested a conveyance that would include the tributary for the Muddy River. He agreed that there is a spring on the property.

F. REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS

- 1. Letter to IWWC from Stephen and Deborah Saronick, submitted 8/24/26.**
- 2. Environmental Planner's MEMO (8/27/26) to the letter submitted to IWWC dated 8/24/26.**

Mr. Velez reported that he received everything on time for the new application for 528 Cherry Street. Regarding the second application for 358 Hall Avenue, a drainage report was missing. It's a decent-sized parking lot expansion within the Wetland Review Area.

G. VIOLATIONS – discussion, hearing, and/or action

Chair Vitali mentioned 360 Woodhouse Avenue and a letter from the abutting homeowner that the agreed-upon work has not been done.

Mr. Velez stated that he spoke to the homeowner on August 27th. The approval was received in June, and he will start work this month and finish in October. The owner will send a timeline and plan of remediation to the office within a week.

1. **Cease and Desist Order Remains – 250 Cook Hill Road – (unpermitted alteration of wetlands, installation of structures in or near wetlands, deposition of a significant amount of fill material in Upland Review Area) – issued 4/14/26; Order affirmed 4/22/26**

Mr. Velez reported that he sent an updated notice of continuous violation. He requested a professional remediation plan and a timeline.

2. **Cease & Correct Order Remains – 67 Schoolhouse Road – Karl Kieslich – (new filing over prior filing) issued 4/25/23; Order affirmed 12/3/25; violation has been remediated and can be lifted.**

Chair Vitali stated that the violation has been straightened out and cleaned up. The violation can be released.

MS. PHILLIPS: MOTION TO LIFT THE CEASE AND CORRECT ORDER FROM 67 SCHOOLHOUSE ROAD.

MR. CARUSO: SECOND

VOTE: THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY ALL IN A VOICE VOTE

H. VIOLATIONS – pending (no action requested at this time)

1. **Notice of Violation Remains – 1245 Old Colony Road & Quinnipiac River – Jerzy Pytel – (unpermitted clearing & filling near river) issued 6/4/19; NOV to be recorded on Land Records per 10/4/23 action; NOV affirmed 12/3/25**
2. **Notice of Violation Remains – 24 Maplevue Road – Patricia Clarke c/o James W. & Patricia Clarke, Trustees of the Clarke 2022 Living Trust – (alteration & filing within wetlands and in Upland Review Area on 24 Maplevue Rd. & on 13 Rolling Meadow Dr.) issued 4/21/23; NOV affirmed 12/3/25**

Chair Vitali stated that no action is needed at this time.

I. NEXT SCHEDULED REGULAR MEETING: October 7, 2026

J. ADJOURNMENT

MS. PHILLIPS: MOTION TO ADJOURN

MR. CARUSO: SECOND

VOTE: THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY ALL IN A VOICE VOTE.

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl-Ann Tubby
Recording Secretary