

**GLASTONBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
(INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY)  
MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2023**

The Glastonbury Conservation Commission (Inlands Wetlands & Watercourses Agency), along with Ms. Suzanne Simone, Environmental Planner, in attendance held a Meeting via ZOOM video conferencing.

**ROLL CALL**

**Commission Members - Present**

Frank Kaputa, Chairman  
Mark Temple, Vice-Chairman  
Kim McClain, Secretary  
Anna Gault Galjan

**Commission Members – Excused**

Brian Davis  
James Parry  
Jim Thompson

Chairman Kaputa called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. and explained the public meeting process to the applicants and members of the public.

**I. INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY**

**Application of Amer & Carrie Skopic for an inland wetlands and watercourses permit to allow for single-family house construction within the upland review area at 119 Ledgewood Drive – Residence AA Zone WITHDRAWN**

**II. CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**Recommendation to the Town Plan & Zoning Commission for subdivision approval concerning the proposed 1-lot subdivision of 63-65 Woodland Street – Rural Residence Zone – Bushnell Associates, LLC – Paul Cavanna, subdivider**

Mr. Andrew Bushnell of Bushnell Associates, LLC introduced himself for the record. He explained that his clients have a 177-acre working farm with Christmas trees, strawberries and other activities. He noted that the new 2.68-acre lot is for the client's daughter. The existing paved driveway and access point were shown on the plans. Mr. Bushnell stated that there are no wetlands within the proposed lot and pointed out the disturbed area and explained that the gravel road traverses the farm. He stated that test pits were done. Mr. Bushnell pointed out the existing tree line and said that that the removal of trees will be very minimal. He explained that the proposed house will be a 4-bedroom, single family house with a two-car garage. Mr. Bushnell explained that the limit of disturbance corresponds with the location of the silt fence and added that well and septic were approved by the Health Department. He explained that 2 rain gardens

are proposed, one to catch the runoff from the roof and the other to capture runoff from the driveway.

Ms. Simone asked if the tree line bordering the proposed lot and the existing gravel road would remain. Mr. Bushnell replied that the majority of trees will remain. He said that many of the trees range in height between 2 and 6 feet and added that they are fast-growing trees. Mr. Bushnell stated that they anticipate a solid buffer and added that the trees grow about 2 feet a year. He explained that a small area of the tree line will be cut to put in the rain garden that would catch runoff from the driveway. Ms. Simone asked Mr. Bushnell whether the area of the rain garden would be lawn or revert to a woodland area. Mr. Bushnell replied that it would be lawn. Mr. Geno Giannelli, the client, stated that the wooded area will not be disturbed. Vice-Chairman Temple asked if the rain garden will be lined with mulch. Mr. Bushnell replied correct. Mr. Temple asked Mr. Bushnell to explain why mulch is being used. Mr. Bushnell responded that it is a landscape feature that takes in water and contaminates and helps the water infiltrate. Mr. Temple explained that mulch decays and noted that grass serves the same purpose and would require mowing. Mr. Bushnell agreed that it would require mowing, an added maintenance issue. Mr. Temple remarked that he is fine either way and asked about the maintenance of weeds that come with the mulch. Mr. Kaputa remarked that mulch floats in water. Mr. Bushnell replied correct and added that the mulch then settles down. Mr. Kaputa asked if the applicants addressed the comments made by the Town Engineer. Ms. Simone responded that a response was not provided and added that it will be addressed at the TPZ review. She directed the Commission to stipulation 4 on the motion which addresses this. Secretary McClain asked if the Environmental Planner would have to approve the final plans. Ms. Simone replied that language can be added to include that approval would be required by the Environmental Planner and the Town Engineer. Ms. McClain remarked that she is glad the trees will be kept. She said that the lot has an abundance of sunshine and asked the applicants to consider incorporating renewable energy into the plans which saves money in the long term. Mr. Giannelli replied yes. There was a brief discussion on the wording of the motion. The Commission agreed to add the following to condition 4: "Revisions and additions to be provided to and approved by the Environmental Planner and Town Engineer."

***Motion by:*** Secretary McClain

***Seconded by:*** Vice-Chairman Temple

MOVED, that the Conservation Commission recommends to the Town Plan & Zoning Commission approval of a subdivision, in accordance with plans entitled "Cavanna Subdivision, 63-65 Woodland Street, Paul Cavanna Owner & Subdivider, Glastonbury, CT. Dated March 17, 2023, Revised June 23, 2023". 5 Sheets, with the following recommendations:

1. Clearing limits shall be identified by field survey and flagged, prior to cutting trees.
2. Erosion controls shall be installed and maintained in proper working condition and shall be repaired and replaced and inspected a minimum of once per week and within 24 hours prior to a forecasted rain event, and within 24 hours of the end of a weather event producing a rainfall amount of 0.5 inch or greater, to be conducted throughout the construction phase and until the site is vegetatively stabilized.

3. Trees identified to remain in the landscape shall be preserved and protected with the use of high visibility construction fence during construction or otherwise protected as required by staff.
4. Rain garden dimensions, calculations and maintenance schedule shall be revised to be consistent with the proposed design. Revisions and additions to be provided to and approved by the Environmental Planner and Town Engineer.
5. The plot plan submitted in support of a building permit will be consistent with the details shown on the subdivision plan.

**Result:** Motion passes unanimously. (4-0-0)

### **III. SHOW CAUSE HEARING**

#### **Violation of conservation easement agreement at 150 Chatham Hill Road – Rural Residence Zone – Paul Gondek, contractor - James D. Jusko, owner. CONTINUED**

Mr. Kaputa noted that there is no one here and explained that Mr. Webb could not make the meeting due to a family emergency. He asked Ms. Simone if she has heard from Mr. Jusko and Mr. Gondek. Ms. Simone responded that email invitations to the Zoom meeting were sent, a certified mail notice was not sent for tonight's meeting, as other certified mail invitations have been returned to sender. She briefed the Commission on the show cause hearing process. She explained that the show cause hearing is the Commission's opportunity to determine if violations are present and then decide on the course of action. Ms. McClain said the show cause hearing will be closed when the Commission has enough information to determine if a violation exists and explained that a plan has to be presented to the Commission. There was a brief discussion on the last meeting and the lack of a plan to address the violations. Mr. Temple asked if construction had started regarding the permit application that was approved. Ms. Simone replied that the work is complete and verified that she saw Mr. Webb on site managing the work for 2.5 to 3 days. Mr. Temple asked if there were any rainstorm problems. Ms. Simone replied that the dewatering of the farm pond stirred up the fine sediment in the stone-lined watercourse. The dewatering was stopped and had to be rerouted to the wetlands and grass area, not a direct discharge, which worked well. Commissioner Gault Galjan asked for details on how the conservation easement violation was brought to the Commission. Ms. Simone responded that it was during the permit application that conservation easement violations were observed.

There was a discussion on Ms. Simone's historical attempts to contact the owner, Mr. Jusko, and the applicant and contractor, Mr. Gondek, via certified mail. Ms. Simone explained the next steps of the process and noted that it would be preferable if the property owner proposes something. She said that after the Commission determines if violations exist and the violation order is upheld then the Commission could discuss and order a remedy to the violations. If the Commission's order is not followed then it would be referred to the Town Attorney. Ms. McClain suggested giving Mr. Webb a copy of the minutes and having the applicant bring any proposals before any meeting takes place. Ms. Simone explained that she reached out to Mr.

Webb and notified him of the deadline to submit materials for the August meeting. There was further discussion on the process to close the show cause hearing. Ms. Simone explained that once the Commission closes the show cause hearing, discussion of the violation can be undertaken as an enforcement matter, and will be listed as an enforcement action item on the agenda. She explained that an order with the findings and violations will be sent to the property owner with a list of actions. Mr. Kaputa remarked that this is new for them and added that most of the time these issues are resolved. Ms. McClain noted that as a Commission, they try to be reasonable.

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Meeting of June 15, 2023**

The minutes were accepted as presented.

#### **V. COMMENTS BY CITIZENS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – None**

#### **VI. OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **1. Chairman's Report**

Mr. Kaputa said that the Town recently sent out an email about spotted water hemlock found at a residence. He explained that the plant is supposed to be pretty toxic, mainly if ingested, and is a skin irritant. Mr. Kaputa offered that there are varying reports on how toxic the plant is, and explained that he was part of an email thread with Connecticut Botanical Society members which describe the plant to be widespread and native. Mr. Kaputa said that the botanists mentioned that they did not hear about problems with the plant. The Chairman explained that the plant is a member of the carrot family and resembles Queen Anne's lace plants. He said that it is something to read up on. Ms. Simone noted that it was a resident from the Cedar Ridge area who called it in and added that a technician verified the plant species. Ms. Simone said that the complainant stated and the CT Agricultural Station staff confirmed that there was indication that an animal had eaten some of the plant. There are fact sheets about the plant species, with ranging claims of toxicity. She explained that the Town sent out the notice to inform people to keep themselves and their animals away from this plant. Ms. Simone added that the Patch picked up the press release. Ms. McClain asked if this should be a topic for an education opportunity. There was a brief discussion about education opportunities that inform the public. Mr. Kaputa said that the Town sent out a survey about open space management. Ms. Simone added that the survey went live today. Mr. Kaputa wanted to confirm that it was the JB Williams and MDC parcels. Ms. Simone replied yes. Mr. Kaputa asked when the survey wraps up. Ms. Simone responded that it is 30 days and ends on August 13.

There was discussion about the historic flooding of the Connecticut River. Ms. Gault Galjan said that the flooding impacted a development project in the Hopewell Road and Main Street area, with debris and contaminants ending up half a mile away. Ms. Simone explained that the stockpile on site was not properly secured and added that the developer cleaned the affected area.

## 2. Environmental Planner's Report

Ms. Simone stated that the Town sent out a public announcement on July 12 informing the public of rattlesnakes and included ways to ensure that people and pets are protected. She said that the press release also notes what to do in case of a rattlesnake bite as well as providing contact information. Mr. Kaputa commented that he saw the press release.

Ms. Simone updated the Commission on her meeting with Commissioner Thompson on their work updating the conservation easement language. She said that they are working on the outline to make the document streamlined, which will result in a more efficient process. There was a brief conversation on the ongoing project to compile the conservation easement agreements.

Ms. Simone informed the Commission that the Town Council made changes to the forestry regulations to ensure that they were in line with the State Statute. She explained that there are no changes to what the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency has the ability to do and added that this affects the TPZ regulations. Ms. Simone explained that review of protected wetlands areas is permissible under the State Statute. Commission members said that large tracts of forest often contain wetlands and watercourses.

There was a brief discussion on the staff-administered approvals sent out by Glynis. Ms. McClain noted that an approval for irrigation was on the list and explained that irrigation and drought are concerning. She suggested for the Commission to look into this. Ms. Simone suggested bringing up the issue to developers. Ms. McClain said that irrigation on private lawns is inconsistent with the State's drought management plan. There was a discussion on educating the public on the matter.

Ms. Simone said that the Town is one of the few in the State that has set up a composting initiative. She proposed that the Commission may want to suggest to developers that composting areas be set up in new subdivisions. Ms. McClain remarked that this is fantastic and added that this is being done in cities. Ms. Simone suggested speaking to developers about a compost collection point in neighborhoods that would be sent to the transfer station. She also suggested discussing the possibility of adding communal composting locations. Ms. McClain liked the suggestion and added that it is great to educate the public.

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Kaputa adjourned the meeting at 7:34 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Nadya Yuskaev*

Nadya Yuskaev  
Recording Secretary