



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK
**Inland Wetlands & Watercourses
Commission**

J. Colin Heffernan, Chairman
Chuck Savage
Laura Parker Gray
Peter DeLisa (Conservation)
Mark Caldarella (Zoning)
Paula Kay (Planning)
Sandra Roberts (Economic Development)

www.oldsaybrookct.gov

Alternate Members
Elizabeth D. Steffen, Secretary
Janis Esty

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, January 20, 2022
Via Hybrid Meeting
Town Hall 1st floor conference room
302 Main Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: C. Heffernan, C. Savage, L. Gray (remote), P. DeLisa, M. Caldarella, P. Kay, S. Roberts (arrived at 7:02), E. Steffen (not seated), and J. Esty (remote, not seated)

Members Absent: none

Staff Present: L. Wacker, Assistant Town Planner; C. Maharbiz, Recording Clerk

Audience Present: Nicholas Foster, Robert Lemire, Matt Mesite, Joseph Wren (remote), Ray Allen (remote), Susan Esty (remote), Nancy Gatta (remote), Jim Henderson (remote)

III. NEW BUSINESS

22-001 “Foster” Application to Conduct a Regulated Activity

Deposit fill to close off basement opening and restore original grade, remove blacktop driveway and install Bilco door within the 100’ upland review area.

110 Sheffield Street (Map 31/Lot 3)

Owner: Nicholas and Inger Foster

ACTION: Receive application, Review for completeness, Accept application and Determine if regulated activities are significant.

Owner Nicholas Foster explained that a prior owner excavated the south side of the house, breaking through the foundation and installed a garage door, concrete retaining walls, and a blacktop driveway for access. The current owners discovered that when it rains, because the driveway is sloped, the water goes into the basement. As a result, they want to close the foundation wall, take down the concrete walls, remove the blacktop, restore the original grade,

install a Bilco door where the garage door is now, and seed and grass the area. The plan that was submitted has a small mistake regarding the location of the Bilco door, so Mr. Foster brought a new plan that shows its correct location. The estimate of fill is about 134 yards, graded properly with a silt fence installed per the plan.

Chairman Heffernan asked whether the paved driveway to be removed connects with further pavement. Mr. Foster explained that the access to the house is through Sheffield Street, which is paved and passes the house, then turns left into the area to be removed. Chairman Heffernan further asked if the only blacktop to be removed is the shaded area in the plan, to which Mr. Foster responded affirmatively.

P. Kay asked whether the owners will be able to use the garage as they had previously or whether it will be filled in. Mr. Foster explained that there will no longer be a garage door, the Bilco door would be grade level with steps down to what is really a basement rather than a garage.

L. Gray asked where the fill will come from and whether it will be clean fill. Mr. Foster stated that he has contracted for clean fill from his masonry contractor, which is a local company that sells clean fill not from the dump.

L. Wacker asked when the owners plan to have the work done, to which Mr. Foster responded that they plan to do it as soon as they receive permits from IWWC and the Building Department. She further asked what the owners plan to do if it is not the appropriate time to plant grass. Mr. Foster stated that if it was early for seeding, they would place hay over the seeds and leave the silt fence up until everything grows in.

MOTION to accept the application as complete, subject to the amended plan submitted at the meeting, that the regulated activities are not significant and that no Ordinance 71 fees are required; **MADE:** by C. Heffernan; **SECONDED:** by M. Caldarella; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** C. Heffernan, C. Savage, L. Gray, P. DeLisa, M. Caldarella, P. Kay, S. Roberts; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

21-012 “Amos” Application to Conduct a Regulated Activity

Remove and replace an existing driveway culvert, dredge pond of sediment and debris, and remove dead or dying trees along north edge of pond within inland wetlands and 100’ upland review area. 273 Schoolhouse Road (Map 50/Lot 11-1)

Owner: Anita Amos Agent: Joseph Wren, P.E.

ACTION: Consider proposed activity, Deliberate, and Act (NLT 2/19/22).

Agent J. Wren stated that nothing has changed since the presentation at the last meeting. L. Wacker referenced a December 14, 2021 letter from Richard Snarsky, which includes statements about the work to be done that are not on the permit application or included in the site plan, and asked whether the Commission wished to add those statements to the approval as conditions. Agent Wren stated that the letter was submitted as part of the application and the owners consider it part of the application.

MOTION to approve the application as submitted and to include the conditions set forth in the December 14, 2021 letter from Richard Snarsky; **MADE:** by C. Heffernan; **SECONDED:** by M. Caldarella; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** C. Heffernan, C. Savage, L. Gray, P. DeLisa, M. Caldarella, P. Kay, S. Roberts; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0.

V. DISCUSSION

- A. **Disc golf course at Clark Community Park** – Ray Allen, Director of Parks and Recreation, explained that the Parks and Recreation Commission approved the Strategic Plan, which includes a disc golf course. Several holes are in the wetlands area. Robert Lemire, who has been a lead on the project, gave a PowerPoint presentation about the disc golf course. He explained that the course is made by creating natural lines through trees with narrow fairways. There is no need to cut down any trees, just small saplings and dead trees. Platform T-pads would be installed at some locations, which involves either using rock supports or wooden supports that are installed into 8-inch holes drilled about a foot deep (typically a total of 6 holes per t-pad). The baskets involve drilling 12-inch holes about 24 inches deep and concreting a sleeve that locks to the basket. The first four holes of the course are in the wetlands area. Mr. Lemire explained the path of these four holes and showed pictures.

Chairman Heffernan asked if there would be a need to cut new trails. Mr. Lemire answered that new trails would not be cut because the course uses natural paths as well as existing trails. He also asked if trash cans would be installed to which Mr. Lemire responded that they would not. The course would be carry-in and carry-out trash, community-run, and self-policed. He then asked if there would be signage to that effect and Mr. Lemire stated that there would be a kiosk with rules and an effort to educate about trash pickup.

P. DeLisa asked if there would be any provisions for collecting wayward discs that end up in the lake. Mr. Lemire explained that in other courses with ponds there are certified divers that remove discs from the water a couple times a year. L. Gray then asked if the discs float and Mr. Lemire stated that some do, but the majority do not.

C. Savage asked who would pay for and conduct ongoing maintenance. Mr. Lemire explained that almost all public courses are volunteer driven by the local community of disc golfers and scouts. Ray Allen stated that the Parks and Rec Department has volunteers as well as Public Works crew to cut trees, and volunteers and paid staff to maintain the course.

S. Roberts asked if Mr. Allen would oversee checking for trash and Mr. Allen responded that he would and he would also oversee the cutting of trees and monitoring for any dangers. S. Roberts also asked if people bring their own discs, to which Mr. Lemire responded affirmatively. She further asked if it costs anything to play and Mr. Allen responded that Old Saybrook plans to make it a free course unless there is a special program taking place.

M. Caldarella asked if there would be tournaments or large numbers of people at the course. Matt Mesite explained that the town would decide how many tournaments to hold a year and on which dates. He further asked how many people attend for a typical tournament. Matt stated between 72 and 90. M. Caldarella also asked if the fairways are kept in their natural state or covered with wood chips. Mr. Lemire answered that fairways are left with leaf cover without wood chips.

L. Gray stated that her biggest concern is how close the course gets to the lake and asked if it was possible to take the course away from the lake, and also if the course would interfere with the fish ladder. Mr. Lemire stated that being close to the lake protects its integrity through trash pickup and keeping the fish ladder clean so as not to see backup of water. The course would also make the lake more accessible as an amenity to fishing since currently there is no good access around the lake.

C. Heffernan asked if there is a tool to retrieve discs from the lake and whether there would be some available to use. Mr. Lemire said that generally if a disc falls in the water, you concede that it is lost. Retrieval tools do exist, but because of the way the course is designed, there should not be many discs in the water.

J. Esty asked if basket locations were calculated in the spring when vernal pools are visible since there are a lot of vernal pools in that area. Mr. Lemire explained that the green dot on the plan near hole 4 represents a vernal pool and that it is 100 feet from the vernal pool. She asked what map was used and Mr. Allen stated that the map came from town hall.

L. Gray confirmed that one of the holes involves throwing over the lake. Mr. Lemire stated that there would be an alternate t-pad location for beginners that do not want to throw over the water. He also explained that it is a small path over the lake, only about 150 feet, and most players can throw to 300 feet. L. Gray also asked about the length of the course, which Mr. Lemire stated was about 6,000 feet.

E. Steffen asked if the discs are ambidextrous. Mr. Lemire explained that there are no right or left-handed discs, but there are discs with different speeds, weights, and rims. Matt Mesite stated that a well-designed course will have holes that benefit both right- and left-handed players.

C. Heffernan asked if divers that pull discs from lakes keep track of how many discs are retrieved. Mr. Lemire stated that at the Page course, which is the most played in the state, he has never seen the number exceed two digits. The highest-ranked course in the nation in Massachusetts, which includes a hole that is difficult to throw over a lake, discs retrieved range no more than 50-100. Mr. Lemire anticipates that because Crystal Lake is so small in comparison, discs will fall in the lake infrequently.

P. Kay asked if individuals purchase their own discs. Mr. Lemire explained that they do and the discs range in price from approximately \$10 to \$50, which creates an incentive not to throw them in the lake.

S. Roberts asked whether it is easier to use a retrieval tool since the lake is small to which Mr. Mesite responded that if it is just beyond reach, then a retrieval tool can be used.

Susan Esty stated that most things that fall into the lake in the spring tend to graduate to the dam site. As a volunteer, she routinely takes out trash from the dam and she believes that the natural wash of the water would send discs to the dam from where they can be retrieved.

L. Wacker asked if the site was seen in the spring and whether they were looking out for vernal pools. Mr. Lemire stated that they want to stay away from the wet areas and vernal pools, and that the course stays out of very wet areas. She further asked if the layout is still in the draft stage or if it has been finalized. Mr. Lemire stated that the holes in the wet areas are defined although some of the other holes are still being finalized.

E. Steffen asked Ray Allen who maintains the fish ladder to which he responded that Public Works does.

Chairman Heffernan stated that the course will be a regulated activity so when the town is ready to proceed, it will have to fill out an application for approval from IWWC.

- B. **Discussion of change of meeting time** – Members discussed an earlier meeting time and decision made to keep the current 7:00 p.m. meeting time.
- C. **Discussion of educational workshop topics** – Discussion took place of possible workshop topics, and the suggestions included the following: (1) presentation about the definition of what is a significant activity and what flows from that decision; (2) procedural run-down of the process to determine if there is a way to streamline it; (3) presentation by a lawyer who handles these types of cases to discuss the kinds of cases adjudicated and to review the regulations; (4) presentation to explain topographical maps.

VI. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Meeting Minutes – 12/16/21

MOTION to accept the regular meeting minutes of December 16, 2021, as presented; **MADE:** by C. Heffernan; **SECONDED:** by P. Kay; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** C. Heffernan, C. Savage, L. Gray, P. DeLisa, M. Caldarella, P. Kay, S. Roberts; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0.

B. Correspondence & Announcements – none

C. Committee, Representative & Staff Reports – none

D. Election of Officers

MOTION to nominate Colin Heffernan as Chairman; **MADE:** by P. Kay; **SECONDED:** by P. DeLisa; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** C. Heffernan, C. Savage, L. Gray, P. DeLisa, M. Caldarella, P. Kay, S. Roberts **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0.

MOTION to nominate Charles Savage as Vice-Chairman; **MADE:** by P. Kay; **SECONDED:** by M. Caldarella; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** C. Heffernan, C. Savage, L. Gray, P. DeLisa, M. Caldarella, P. Kay, S. Roberts **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0.

MOTION to nominate Elizabeth Steffen as Secretary; **MADE:** by C. Heffernan; **SECONDED:** by C. Savage; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** C. Heffernan, C. Savage, L. Gray, P. DeLisa, M. Caldarella, P. Kay, S. Roberts **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m. to the next regular meeting on February 17, 2022, Old Saybrook Town Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room and via Zoom; **MADE:** by C. Heffernan; **SECONDED:** by P. Kay; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** C. Heffernan, C. Savage, L. Gray, P. DeLisa, M. Caldarella, P. Kay, S. Roberts; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carolina Maharbiz, Recording Clerk