Minutes not yet approved.
Approval and any edits to be made in succeeding minutes.

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TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD, CT
INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES COMMISSION
April 20, 2026

The Town of Bloomfield Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission held their regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, April 20, 2026, scheduled for 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held remotely on the ZOOM meeting platform.

I. Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Shipman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Roll Call:

Commissioners Present: Alan Budkofsky, Chairman (joined at 7:36pm); Paul Shipman, Vice Chairman; Glen Breland; David Laiuppa (joined at 9:12pm); Stephen Millette; Adam Ryczek; and Kevin Wilcox.

Commissioners Absent: Byron Lester

Also present were: Peter Castaldi, Civil Engineer and Wetlands Agent; and Rebecca Jones, Recording Secretary.

A quorum was established with five members present.

III. Old Business

1. Wetlands Map Amendment application
141 Wintonbury Avenue – Unique ID# 1227
Applicant: CTEC Solar
Property Owner: Church Home of Hartford (Seabury)
PUBLIC HEARING ctnd.

It was moved by Commissioner Wilcox and seconded by Commissioner Millette to re-open the public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously by a 5-0-0 vote.

Kevin Costello, Jin Tao, and Michelle Ford were present on behalf of the applicant, CTEC Solar. This application was officially received at the January 20, 2026 meeting and was heard at a Public Hearing at the March 16, 2026 regular meeting. The Public Hearing was continued to the April 20, 2026 regular meeting.

Mr. Tao shared the proposed Wetlands Map Amendment Plan and highlighted the upland review areas. Mr. Castaldi stated that it is important to note that all remaining land on the site is wetlands. Ms. Ford, the Soil Scientist, did not attend the March 16th meeting and Mr. Castaldi requested that she provide an update to the delineation report.

Ms. Ford shared findings from her report. She identified about two more acres of wetlands in the central and southerly parts of the site than are shown on the Official Map. The Official Map

indicates 14.55 acres of wetlands on the site. Ms. Ford flagged 16.51 acres of wetlands, which is about 86% of the total property.

Mr. Castaldi requested that the information on the Wetlands Map Amendment Plan and the Property Survey submitted by the applicant be combined. He noted that the watercourse running parallel to the west property line, as indicated on the Official Map, was not observed in the field. The Official Map indicates fingers of wetlands between the houses on Candlewood Drive. Most of these areas are maintained lawn and did not appear to be wetlands.

The Delineation Report refers to NRCS designated soil types. The wetland soil listed is the Scitico, Shaker, Maybid series of poorly and very poorly drained soils. The undisturbed upland soils are listed as Elmridge fine sandy loam and the disturbed upland areas as Udorthents-Urban Land Complex. The report does not specifically state that these soils were found on the site as Ms. Ford noted that she does not evaluate upland soil types for this sort of application. The mapping of the NRCS soils in the Delineation Report indicates that most of the property is uplands.

Mr. Castaldi reviewed the proposed conditions of approval. He requested that the flagged wetlands line be resolved with the 2023 Official Map line along the western property line.

Chairman Budkofsky joined the meeting at 7:36pm, making a quorum of six Commissioners.

Questions from the Public
There were no questions from the public.

Questions from the Commission
There were no questions from the Commission.

Comments from the Public
There were no comments from the public.

Comments from the Commission
The Commission discussed adding a 90-day timeline to Condition No. 1. Commissioner Wilcox recommended incorporating this as a regular condition when the Wetlands Regulations are updated.

It was moved by Commissioner Wilcox and seconded by Commissioner Breland to close the public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

It was moved by Commissioner Millette and seconded by Vice-Chair Shipman to approve the Wetlands Map Amendment application for 141 Wintonbury Avenue – Unique ID# 1227 with the following conditions:

1. The permittee shall submit separate Wetland Map Amendment plans which incorporate all technical plan revisions within ninety (90) days of approval. Final plans are subject to the approval of the Wetlands Agent.

2. The permittee shall submit three (3) sets of paper prints and one (1) set of fixed lined mylars of the final Wetland Map Amendment plan(s), signed and sealed by the Surveyor and Soil Scientist, for signing by the Commission. The final plans shall also be submitted in a digital form that is compatible with the Town of Bloomfield GIS.
3. The permittee shall file the signed mylar of the final Wetlands Map Amendment plan(s) on the Bloomfield Land Records.
4. The Official Map shall be modified to reflect the delineated wetlands as presented at the April 20, 2026 regular meeting.

The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

2. Wetlands Permit application
141 Wintonbury Avenue – Unique ID# 1227
Applicant: CTEC Solar
Property Owner: Church Home of Hartford (Seabury)
PUBLIC HEARING ctnd.

It was moved by Commissioner Millette and seconded by Vice-Chair Shipman to re-open the public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

The application was officially received at the January 20, 2026 meeting and was heard at a Public Hearing at the March 16, 2026 regular meeting. The Public Hearing was continued to the April 20th regular meeting.

The subject property is 19.25 acres and is located on the south side of Wintonbury Avenue, east of Candlewood Drive. The parcel is about 406 feet wide and 1700 feet deep with a 2.5 acre 'square' attached at the northeast corner. The lot for the single-family house at 151 Wintonbury Avenue is surrounded on three sides by the subject property.

This proposal is to construct a photovoltaic (solar) array in the central and southerly parts of the property, two stormwater management basins, an 18-foot-wide gravel driveway in from Wintonbury Avenue, concrete pads for equipment, and trenching for conduits. This proposed construction will require the removal of about 7 acres of woods, mostly in wetlands, and the removal of forested uplands.

The proposal also includes the clear-cutting of about 8 acres of additional forested wetlands vegetation on all four sides of the array. Buffers are retained on the north and south ends. Clear cutting of the forested wetlands is proposed to the easterly property line.

The site plan was reviewed. Mr. Castaldi had requested additional information from the applicant, which had not yet been received. Mr. Castaldi stated that there are discrepancies in the information included in the site plans, the Permit Application form, the plans and the other supporting documentation. Mr. Tao provided an updated report describing the actual proposed development. Mr. Tao offered to submit this information to Mr. Castaldi before the next meeting.

Mr. Castaldi stated that he does not agree with the conclusion of the Environmental Assessment. The overall impact to the wetlands from this proposal will permanently degrade the functions and values of the wetlands. The proposed mitigation measures will not restore the ecological benefits lost through the installation of the solar array.

Ms. Ford stated that the Environmental Assessment was prepared to assess the general impact of a previous iteration of the plans. Mr. Castaldi requested an updated Environmental Assessment report that reflects the impact of the actual proposed development. He recommended that the Public Hearing be continued to the May 18th meeting to allow the applicant time to provide additional information. The Commission discussed alternative locations for the solar array.

Mr. Castaldi stated that the fundamental question that the Commission needs to consider is whether the proposed regulated activities required for the removal of most of the existing forest vegetation from the wetlands and replacing it with ground cover, and the construction of the solar array and gravel road is the most prudent and feasible alternative. The obvious alternative is to not build the solar array and retain the wetlands in their present wooded and partially wooded conditions. Another alternative is to build a smaller array that would have less impact to the wetlands.

Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public.

Questions from the Commission

Chairman Budkofsky confirmed with Mr. Tao that the solar arrays will be 3.5 feet off the ground. The applicant is willing to plant trees to replace the trees that will be cut down during construction. An 11-acre mitigation area is proposed and will be seeded with a wetlands mix. Mr. Castaldi noted that all the proposed mitigation areas are already wetlands and that no new wetlands will be created. Ms. Ford offered to provide an updated functions and values analysis.

Chairman Budkofsky asked if the applicant had changed their plans to address feedback received from abutters at the last meeting. Mr. Tao proposed creating an earth berm using fill to better manage stormwater runoff.

Commissioner Breland asked who benefits from the electricity generated from the solar array. The property owner will not benefit from the energy generated by this array as it will go directly back to the State.

Vice-Chair Shipman asked what materials must be submitted by the applicant. Mr. Castaldi confirmed that a revised narrative report that describes the project as presently proposed, a revised functions and values report and revised storm drainage calculations must be submitted for review before the next meeting.

Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Wilcox stated that the heritage tree noted on the map should remain as this is evidence that this area was once deforested years ago. Ms. Ford was unable to provide the species. He also expressed concern about the impact of truck traffic during construction.

It was moved by Commissioner Wilcox and seconded by Vice-Chair Shipman to continue the public hearing to the May 18, 2026 regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

It was moved by Commissioner Breland and seconded by Commissioner Wilcox to hear Item VII – Enforcement Actions before Old Business – Item 3. The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

Enforcement Actions

1. 69 Charter Avenue – update

Mr. Arthur Hardy, property owner, was present for discussion. The area was previously filled, which was the subject of the Notice of Violation. Mr. Hardy has since removed the fill.

Mr. Castaldi presented photos of the property, including stakes and flagging indicating property corners and wetland areas. He noted that Mr. Hardy was working with Ian Cole, soil scientist, to delineate the disturbed wetlands. The Commission agreed to uphold the Notice of Violation until the May 18th meeting, in hopes that the property survey and delineation report will be completed and available for review.

It was moved by Vice-Chair Shipman and seconded by Commissioner Breland to uphold the Notice of Violation for 69 Charter Avenue until the May 18, 2026 regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

III. Old Business

3. Wetlands Map Amendment Application
46 Rockwell Avenue – Unique ID# 7759
Applicant and Property Owner: Town of Bloomfield
PUBLIC HEARING

It was moved by Commissioner Wilcox and seconded by Commissioner Breland to open the public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

Chairman Budkofsky expressed concern that the Conflict-of-Interest form was not filled out in entirety. The Commissioners agreed to continue this to the next meeting to allow for the application to be completed correctly.

It was moved by Vice-Chair Shipman and seconded by Commissioner Wilcox to continue the public hearing to the May 18, 2026 regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

4. Wetlands Permit application
46 and 91 Rockwell Avenue
Unique ID#s 7759 and 101059
Applicant and Property Owner: Town of Bloomfield
PUBLIC HEARING

It was moved by Commissioner Wilcox and seconded by Vice-Chair Shipman to open the public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

Chairman Budkofsky stated that this application will be continued to the next meeting to allow the applicant time to complete the Conflict-of-Interest form correctly.

It was moved by Commissioner Breland and seconded by Vice-Chair Shipman to continue the public hearing to the May 18, 2026 regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

IV. New Business

V. New Applications Officially Received and determination of need for a Public Hearing

The First Cathedral Church has re-submitted their Wetlands Permit application for a multi-family residential development project at 1151 Blue Hills Avenue. The Commission agreed to schedule a public hearing for the June 15, 2026 regular meeting. The applicant is requesting a fee waiver as previously discussed at the January 20, 2026 meeting.

VI. Wetland Agent Permits received and/or approved

None.

VII. Enforcement Actions ctnd.

Mr. Castaldi has a meeting with Mr. Moore, property owner at 171 Mountain Avenue, regarding the willow re-planting plan requested by the Commission. Commissioner Wilcox provided guidance and recommendations.

VIII. Status of Ongoing Projects

Mr. Castaldi reviewed ongoing development projects including retail construction at Cottage Grove Road, residential projects at Watkins Road and Blue Hills Avenue, noting that several projects were experiencing delays due to the MDC approval process.

IX. Approval of Minutes

1. March 16, 2026 Regular Meeting

It was moved by Commissioner Wilcox and seconded by Vice-Chair Shipman to approve the March 10, 2026 Regular Meeting minutes with the following corrections:

-Revise the first sentence of the third paragraph on Page 1 to read 'Terry Plains Road'; and

-Revise the second paragraph on Page 2 to read 'for the wildlife habitat they provide'.

The motion was approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

X. Other Business

The Commission discussed the need to revise the vernal pool regulations. Mr. Castaldi will work with Commissioners Breland and Laiuppa on creating draft language for the next meeting. The Commission also addressed the issue of setting deadlines for permit corrections and Mr. Castaldi explained the difference between Commission approval and Permit issuance.

Commissioner David Laiuppa joined the meeting at 9:12pm, making a quorum of 7 members.

1. Election of Officers: Secretary

It was moved by Chairman Budkofsky and seconded by Commissioner Breland to elect Commissioner Kevin Wilcox as Secretary. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

XI. Public Comment Period

None.

XII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Wilcox; seconded by Commissioner Millette and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 pm.

The next regular meeting of the Wetlands Commission is scheduled for May 18, 2026.

These minutes may be amended by the Commission. See subsequent meeting(s) minutes for any revisions.