

**COVENTRY INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, February 25, 2026, at 7 PM

Town of Coventry, Town Hall Annex Building, 1712 Main Street Coventry, CT 06238
& Zoom Teleconference

	MEMBER	PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:	William Glenney, Chair	X	
	Lori Mathieu, Vice Chair	X	
	William Johnson	X	
	Richard Pearson	X	
	Stefanie Wierszchalek	X	
ALTERNATE MEMBERS:	Laura Heemskerk		X
	VACANT		

STAFF:	Lindsay Beutler, Environmental Planner/Wetland Agent
	Todd Penney, P.E., Town Engineer
	Andrea Vassallo, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER:

W. Glenney, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:

None.

3. ADDITIONS/CHANGS TO THE AGENDA:

None.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

A. **WP-26-3 – 129 Woodland Road** – Owner Richar Lenhardt; Applicant/Agent: Andrew Bushnell – Demo and rebuild a garage with no increase in footprint. **65-day deadline to act on this application is 4/03/2026.**

Representing the application was:

- Andrew Bushnell, P.E., Agent, Andrew Bushnell & Associates, LLC, Manchester, CT.

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Proposed Project Summary:

- To demolish and rebuild a garage with an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) with no increase in footprint.

Andrew Bushnell, Agent, presented the application last month to the IWA and summarized the proposed scope of work as well as additional modifications requested by the Agency and Town Staff.

- **Stormwater Management:**

- Added six-foot vegetated buffer on the subject property.
- Rain barrels included as stormwater mitigation features.
- Stockpile area removed due to lack of need.

Town Staff Concerns/Comments:

Lindsay Beutler, Coventry Environmental Planner/Wetlands Agent asked A. Bushnell what he newly calculated lot coverage percentage was. She further stated that all other comments and concerns were addressed.

Beutler, Lindsay. Town of Coventry Land Use Office, February 13, 2026, ***Review Memo, Coventry IWA Application WP-26-3 – 129 Woodland Road.***

- **Discussion Points:**

- Rain barrels mitigate but do not reduce impervious coverage per zoning.
- Maintenance of rain barrels is critical; annual inspections suggested.
- Vegetated buffer maintenance also to be tracked as part of stormwater mitigation.

MOTION: L. Mathieu **MOVED** to **APPROVE** permit **WP-26-3** – 129 Woodland Road, with standard conditions. S. Wierszchalek **SECONDED**;

Discussion:

Standard Permit Condition #8: The property owner shall submit to the Wetlands Agent proof of inspection for each storm water mitigation feature, ***rain barrels and vegetative buffers***, once a year in the spring on a form to be provided by the Town of Coventry.

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MOTION CARRIED; 5:0:0

Yea	Glenney, Mathieu, Johnson, Pearson, Wierszchalek
Nay	0
Abstain	0

- B. **WP-26-4 – 184 Avey Shores** – Owner/Applicant: Paul Guardino; Agent: Andrew Bushnell – Demo and rebuild of house and garage in 150-ft upland review area. **65-day deadline to act on this application is 4/03/2026.**

Representing the application was:

- Andrew Bushnell, P.E., Agent, Andrew Bushnell & Associates, LLC, Manchester, CT.

Proposed Project Summary:

- This application was previously withdrawn in 2025, redesigned, and submitted for application acceptance before the IWA.
- To demolish an existing house and garage.
- Rebuild a new house with an attached garage and deck in the 150-ft upland review area.
- An overall proposed reduction in lot coverage.

Andrew Bushnell, Agent, presented the application last month to the IWA and summarized the proposed scope of work as well as additional modifications requested by the Agency and Town Staff.

- **Lot Coverage:**

- Existing impervious: 27.5%; proposed: 21.8% (noted as a reduction).
- Permeable pavers and rain barrels used for stormwater mitigation.
- Additional planting beds and landscaping to improve permeability and water quality.

- **Erosion & Sediment Controls:**

- Adding additional E&S controls downgradient towards the lake.

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- **Stormwater Mitigation Features:**
 - Added four rain barrels to mitigate stormwater
 - Added planting beds along the east and west perimeter of the property adjacent to permeable hardscaping material.

Town Staff Concerns/Comments:

- Beutler, Lindsay. Town of Coventry Land Use Office, February 13, 2026, ***Review Memo, Coventry IWA Application WP-26-4 – 184 Avery Shores.***

Town Staff discussed with IWA Commissioners:

- Discussion of alternative driveway materials (e.g., loose gravel) as lower-maintenance options.
- Maintenance of permeable surfaces is vital; if neglected, lot coverage could effectively rise above existing levels.
- **Outstanding:** Permeability test required to confirm suitability of subsoils for infiltration.
- **Outstanding:** Maintenance plans for all stormwater features (pavers, rain barrels, plantings) must be clear and enforceable.
- **Outstanding:** The applicant must provide a Temporary Access Agreement from their abutting neighbor at 188 Avery Shores for permission of any proposed construction work to be conducted by the applicant from their property.

Commissioner Concerns/Comments:

Discussion between commissioners and town staff consisted of:

- Town wide maintenance, compliance, and inspection schedules.
- Prerequisite site permeability testing parameters.
- Existing and proposed lot coverage percentages and associated site features.
- Phosphorous mitigation calculation tools.
- Lack of maintenance details for the proposed stormwater mitigation features.

Application has been continued until March 25, 2026, Regular IWA Meeting.

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5. **NEW BUSINESS:** None.

6. **ENFORCEMENT:**

A. **77 Tall Oak Drive** – Owner: David Frechette - Material Deposition in Regulated Area. Letter requesting site visit sent 6/21/24. Site visit to be conducted 7/22/2024. Cease and Desist verbally issued by IWA 7/29/24, mailed Certified Mail 8/1/2024. Referred to Town Attorney 7/23/2025. Stipulation agreement for temporary injunction signed by Judge 10/30/2025. *Phase 1 of restoration is complete. Trial date is set for 10/20/2026.*

Lindsay Beutler, Coventry Environmental Planner/Wetlands Agent distributed to the IWA a supplemental materials packet which included nine (9) month herpetology monitoring schedule.

- Schedule of Monitoring Activities, December 12, 2025: **77 Tall Oak Drive, Coventry, CT Vernal Pool Restoration 2025-2026 Schedule of Monitoring Activities.** Town of Coventry.

L. Beutler summarized for the IWA a February 2026 status update meeting held among town staff, consulting external experts, and the property owner, which included and not limited to:

- **Monitoring Plan:** Covers groundwater monitoring, egg mass counting, removal of silt fencing, and augmentation of amphibian habitat.
- **Responsibilities:** Split among agency staff and external experts.
- **Timeline:** Coverboards to be installed by April; ongoing data collection and adaptive management.
- **Discussion:**
 - Long-term monitoring (ideally 10 years) is scientifically recommended, but actual commitment may be shorter due to funding and administrative constraints.
 - Obtaining permission from abutting neighbor with an adjacent wetland system. Potential efforts may include harvesting bio-mass material for feeding.

Commissioner Concerns/Comments:

Commissioners hypothetically questioned what/if any consequences would there be if the vernal pool restoration and rehabilitation failed. Discussion among commissioners and town staff ensued where; at end of the 5-year permitted timeframe if the efforts fail then a second notice-of-violation could be considered and possibly be re-issued. During the discussion, it was stated that

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H. Gruner and G. Logan have a high level of confidence that the vernal pool will function due to the presence of obligate species that tried to colonize puddles in ruts during the 2025 breeding season.

7. ADOPTION OF MINUTES: January 28, 2026 – Regular Meeting Minutes

MOTION: R. Pearson **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2026, as amended. L. Mathieu **SECONDED**;

Discussion:

- Page 2 of 14; Commissioner Concerns/Comments; First Bullet – change to: “[...] water aeration on ***other areas of the lake.***”
- Page 6 of 17; Commissioner Concerns/Comments; Second Bullet – correct spelling to: **“intermittent”** watercourse.
- Page 8 of 17; Agenda Item 5A; fifth (5th) paragraph – remove: [...] **“to stay on the call”**.

MOTION CARRIED; 5:0:0

Yea	Glenney, Mathieu, Johnson, Pearson, Wierszchalek
Nay	0
Abstain	0

8. CORRESPONDENCE:

“Nickel-per-Nip” Bottle Program:

Funds from the state program municipal environmental cleanup efforts. Coventry Public Works recently utilized the recycling funds to purchase storm drain medallions.

- **Storm Drain Medallions:** Public works used recycling funds to purchase medallions reading "Only Rain Down the Storm Drain" for installation around catch basins, aiming to raise awareness and reduce pollution.
- **Volunteer Involvement:** Community volunteers to assist with medallion installation.

9. DISCUSSION:

A. IWA – Low Impact Development Working Group Update

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Commissioner L. Mathieu and R. Pearson reported out the latest efforts by the LID Working Group.

UConn Student LID Internship Projects:

L. Mathieu reported out that efforts were made to collaborate with UConn's Academic Land Use Extension Center (CLEAR – Center for Land Use Education and Research) having a discussion with Director Dr. Michael Dietz and Extension Educator David Dickson.

They have identified the following initiatives, including but not limited to:

- **GIS Tracking Tool:** For stormwater and LID infrastructure.
- **Lake Smart/LID Recognition Program:** Modeled after programs in Maine, NH, and VT.
- **LID Design Tool:** Framework for evaluating and planning low-impact development.
- **LID Public Demonstration Projects:** Potential LID infrastructure installation at publicly accessible property.

Goals: Develop practical tools and playbooks; present results to the agency and town council.

Timeline: 10-week undergraduate internships; results to be showcased in April.

Lake Management Planning & Funding – Town Council Presentation (April 20):

- Purpose: Advocate for a professionally written lake management plan, estimated cost \$50,000–\$100,000.
- Strategy: Present clear needs, cite examples from other towns, and emphasize lost funding opportunities due to outdated plans.
- Recommended Approach: Appoint a focused task force to oversee plan development and budgeting.
- Discussion: Importance of formal vs. informal cost quotes; need for accountability and implementation structure post-plan adoption.

Upcoming Events – Native Plant Workshop:

- Saturday, May 16, 2026, 9AM-11:30 AM,
- Patriots Pak Lodge, 172 Lake Street, Coventry, CT
- Promotion of event with potential registration cap.
- Coordination with local nurseries and outreach to neighboring communities.

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B. Patriots Park Beach Water Quality Monitoring:

IWA discussed town staff reporting monthly to the Commission on water quality and equipment operations to track E. coli & water aerator power usage trends.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

W. Johnson **MOVED** to **ADJOURN** at 8:40 PM. L. Mathieu **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 5:0:0**

The next regular scheduled meeting is: **Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 7 PM.**

Respectfully submitted by Andrea Vassallo, Recording Secretary

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for approval of these minutes and any corrections hereunto.