

COVENTRY INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

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:

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

Laura Heemskerk, Alternate, was seated.

Stefanie Wierszchalek attended the meeting via Zoom.

2. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS: None.

3. ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

A. WP-25-30 – 124 Lake Street - Owner/Applicant: James Drumm, Town of Coventry; Agent: Benjamin Rach, GZA GeoEnvironmental. – As of right application for proposed surface water circulator to reduce concentration of bacteria in the swimming area at Patriots Park. (e) *The 65-day deadline to act on this application is **12/26/2025***

Representing the application was:

- Alex Taylor, Town of Coventry, Special Projects Coordinator
- Lesley Munshower, Town of Coventry, Director Parks & Recreation Department (via Zoom)
- Benjamn Rach, Consulting Engineer, GZA GeoEnvironmental,
- Robert Miller, M.P.H., R.S., Director, Eastern Highlands Health District,

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Documents presented to the Commission:

- Town of Coventry. Town of Coventry Public Works Department, Office of the Town Engineer, December 11, 2025, **Direct Power Plan, Patriot's Park – STEAP Grant, Water Quality Aerator.**
- Reuf, Mike. Town of Coventry Water Pollution Control Authority, December 11, 2025, **E. coli Levels Patriots Park Beach Memo, Coventry IWA Application WP-25-30 – 124 Lake Street.**
- Miller, Robert. Eastern Highlands Health District, December 17, 2025, **Coventry Lake Swimming Water Monitoring Program Presentation.**

Project Summary

Alex Taylor, Special Projects Coordinator, Town of Coventry, summarized the design specifications for the water aerator, designed by GZA, GeoEnvironmental, as well presented:

- The Town of Coventry was awarded a STEAP Grant (Small Town Economic Assistance Program) which is funding the proposed project, specifically the water aerator.
- A safety light has been added to the aerator's final design per IWA's request.
- Previously considered power source options included solar panels but upon further evaluation the Public Works Department determined a land-based, fixed power source was the appropriate infrastructure implementation method.
 - The land-based power is supplied from Coventry's Senior Center and transmitted via an underground electrical cable encased in a 2" diameter 40 PVC conduit approximately 142' in length.
 - A marine grade outlet is fixed to a 6"x6" power pedestal where a marine grade power cord interconnects.
 - The marine grade power cord, approximately 150' in length is laid along the existing stone jetty into the lake.

Addressing Commission Concerns/Comments:

Alex Taylor further addressed the Commission's concerns whether the known E. Coli contaminants may be sourced from an existing underground sewer main within Patriots Park. A. Taylor presented a memo from Coventry's Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) technician Mike Reuf stating that:

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- The last known inspection occurred April 19, 2021, and was determined to be in “good to excellent condition”.
- The sewer main was preemptively lined with structural epoxy-resin to prevent potential leaking and reinspected for verification.
- M. Reuf’s memo stated that the source point of a potential E. coli contamination, if it would occur, is more likely to originate from manhole sewage overflows from blocked pipes. However, Coventry’s WPCA has a regular cleaning and inspection program and further stated has not observed such issues during his employment originating in 2008.

Reuf, Mike. Town of Coventry Water Pollution Control Authority, December 11, 2025, **E. coli Levels Patriots Park Beach Memo, Coventry IWA Application WP-25-30 – 124 Lake Street.**

Robert Miller, M.P.H., R.S. Director, Eastern Highlands Health District, addressed the Commission’s concerns with a presentation explaining the health district’s monitoring program, sampling protocols, data collection and testing methods, and closure/advisory notification practices.

Miller, Robert. Eastern Highlands Health District, December 17, 2025, **Coventry Lake Swimming Water Monitoring Program Presentation.**

Health District Monitoring Program

R. Miller stated the Health District's (EHHD) monitoring program aims to protect public health e.g. at swimming areas such as Patriots Park. The program detects contamination early to prevent illness and provides timely advisories. Sampling involves collecting water samples from designated locations and analyzing them for E. coli. EHHD has monitored Coventry Lake for over 30 years, with data showing beach closures due to high E. coli levels.

Sampling & Monitoring Protocols

- EHHD conducts weekly water sampling to monitor E. coli levels, with an action threshold of 235 E. coli organisms per 100 mL (state), 320 (EPA).
- Weekly water sampling at 10 sites around Coventry Lake, with 27 total across the district.

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- One (1) water sample is taken at each sampling site and brought to the CT Department of Health laboratory and tested for various indicator organisms, e.g. E. coli, where then EHHD is provided testing results within 24 hours.

Closure/Advisory Notifications

R. Miller outlined EHHD's protocols for closing beaches due to high bacteria levels:

- If E. coli levels exceed the action level, 235 E. coli organisms per 100 mL, a resample is taken the next day.
- If levels remain high for two consecutive days, the beach is recommended for closure.
- The town posts closures and informs the community through various methods of communication.
- This protocol is the same for private area beaches, however EHHD does not have the same authority for closure as with public swimming areas.

Point Sources of E. coli at Patriots Park:

R. Miller stated the primary sources (point source) of E. coli include:

- Waterfowl (notably geese being a significant contributor),
- Swimmers (high bather loads),
- Exacerbated by precipitation events that can elevate bacteria levels in the water.
- Bacteria levels persist but do not multiply, but other variables such as water, wind temperature, sunlight are all mitigating factors to high bacterial loads.

Geese Population

- EHHD observations indicated a growing population of geese at Patriots Park, contributing to contamination, with a flock count of over 80 individuals.
- Geese feces directly linked to high E. coli readings.

Decades of Testing Data at Coventry Lake:

R. Miller stated that EHHD has been monitoring at Coventry Lake for approximately 30 years with recorded datasets going back to 2006. The data shows that Patriot Park has been an outstanding issue historically (beach closure/advisory days) and is a very busy public swimming area where high bather loads have been the primary source.

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Patriots Park has consistently experienced higher bather volumes compared to other locations. R. Miller presented to the Commission a map of Coventry Lake and the 10 testing sites and water sample test results:

- Lisicke Beach
- Water Front Heights
- Oak Grove
- Water Front Park
- Gerald Avery Shores
- Lakewood Heights
- Lakeview Terrace
- Waterfront Manor
- Patriots Park
- Hemlock Point

R. Miller discussed that in 2025 Patriots Park had a significant spike of 24 beach closure days during the swimming season. He stated he is confident it's the geese population. The Town has been working on efforts to mitigate the impact of the geese however there have been some delays.

Intervention Efforts & Future Solutions:

R. Miller and Lesley Munshower, Town of Coventry, Director Parks & Recreation Department, confirmed EHHD did close Patriots Park beach early on in the season, June 2025, due to persistent elevated bacterial levels.

L. Munshower stated a picket fence was installed along the border of the beach area extending in a northerly direction. These efforts did significantly reduce the goose population by approximately half however the remaining flock persisted and remained roosted on the water edge.

Both R. Miller and L. Munshower confirmed the observed fecal load and disbursement within the waterbody was overwhelming. EHHD and the Town had a meeting to determine next steps which included:

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- Installing a second fence along the water's edge, and
- Aerating (circulating) the water.

Proof of Concepts

Both Miller and Munshower confirmed that during August 7-8, 2025, water samples were taken at Patriots Park beach prior to installing the proposed solutions and after implementation.

Water sampling was conducted at approximately 2-foot depths and was recorded that certain sampling locations at Patriots Park exceeded the action level threshold at 1000 E. coli organisms/100 mL whereas the upper limit action level threshold is 235 E. coli organisms per 100 mL (state).

Localized Bacterial Contamination Issues:

The data illustrated significant variability in bacterial contamination levels at different locations and distances away from Patriots Park beach.

- Two (2) samples taken on August 8th showed 1,000 E. coli organisms per 100 milliliters (mL) close to the beach, while just 20 feet away in deeper water, levels dropped below the action level of 220 E. coli organisms.
- The data indicated that contamination is highly localized and lacks persistence, likely due to dilution or environmental factors such as wind or sunlight.
- Samples south of the jetty were significantly below the action level of 235 E. coli organisms per 100 mL.

Both Miller and Munshower confirmed the interventions combined remediated the problem and reduced bacterial loads. R. Miller stated aerating the water (circulation) mixed and diluted the water and does not push contaminants elsewhere and EHHD is endorsing the Town proposed water aerator in order to reduce the number of closure days at the beach and significantly reduce the number of potential illnesses of swimmers.

Town Staff Concerns/Comments:

Wetlands Agent, Lindsay Beutler, Town Engineer, Todd Penney, P.E., and consulting engineer, Benjamin Rach, GZA GeoEnvironmental, had no other concerns or comments.

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Commissioner Concerns/Comments:

Commissioners raised the following concerns/comments:

- Consider looking at other lakes where aerators have been installed to assess possible impacts on water quality
- Potential illnesses of swimmers outside of Patriots Park especially untested private beach areas (e.g., Woodland Road).
- Asked about EHHD collecting more water samples and including more testing site locations around the lake (in addition to the 10 currently sampled).

R. Miller stated swimming in a waterbody is always a risk. Discussion ensued among Miller and the Commissioners regarding the addition of testing site locations that are privately owned along Coventry Lake (e.g. Woodland Road). Discussed further were the logistics and costs associated with increasing site testing locations and increasing the amount of water samples per site location without establishing consistent testing protocols and utilizing several additional resources. EHHD is willing to provide these additional services, however it is outside the scope of their mandated public swimming area site testing locations. R. Miller further stated that if there is a concern of potential high bacterial levels to in private swimming area locations to notify EHHD in order to determine the source point.

Additional Commissioner Concerns/Comments included:

- Once the geese have migrated away from Patriots Park, should the population reestablish itself elsewhere along the lake, is there is a plan to deter the geese.

L. Munshower replied that Parks & Recreation staff are trained to put up and take down the fence (net) every day. Currently the net is down for the winter season, however the plan is to reinstall the net for the 2026 summer season and those implementation efforts can be reproduced at other public swimming area locations.

Discussion further ensued about more localized efforts homeowners can take to deter geese from their private property. R. Miller stated that geese are a community wide issue.

Commissioner Wierszchalek commented the science speaks for itself. The disbursement numbers and clear. The water aerator (circulator) seemed to be the solution. She asked what electrical line installation process entailed.

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T. Penney stated:

- An 18” wide x 24” deep trench would service a 2” diameter PVC pipe from an electric panel from Senior Center building with an approximate 430 sq. ft. of proposed temporary disturbance.
- The marine grade power cord would be draped under the rocks in the jetty.
- Proposed Erosion and Sediment controls to be used are specified in:

Town of Coventry. Town of Coventry Public Works Department, Office of the Town Engineer, December 11, 2025, **Direct Power Plan, Patriot’s Park – STEAP Grant, Water Quality Aerator.**

Commissioner Glenney asked if the aerator would be running continuously.

A. Taylor stated:

- The data showed running the aerator for approximately 2 hours a day reduced bacterial levels.

Commissioner Discussion:

The Commissioners discussed a permit approval should come with additional and/or modified conditions but needed more legal guidance, discussed were:

- Addition of approximately three (3) new weekly sampling sites.
- 36-month permit duration.
- Annual reporting to the IWA.

A 65-day extension was granted and will resume on January 20, 2026, 7 PM, IWA Regular Meeting. The deadline is March 1, 2026.

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- B. WP-25-32 – 167 Geraldine Drive** – Owner: Todd Richardello; Applicant: James Lathrop. – Proposed 24’x24’ garage approx. 10.5ft from wetland. (e) *The 65-day deadline to act on this application is **01/23/2026***

Representing the application was:

- Todd Richardello, Owner
- James Lathrop, Applicant (via Zoom)

Lindsay Beutler, Environmental Planner/Wetland Agent stated that she and Town Engineer, Todd Penney, P.E. co-wrote a Review Memo summarizing outstanding information required, as well as additional information requested by the Commission at last month’s IWA Regular Meeting, November 19, 2025, for the Site Development Plan.

Beutler, Lindsay. Town of Coventry Land Use Office, December 1, 2025, ***Review Memo, Coventry IWA Application WP-25-32 – 167 Geraldine Drive.***

Town Staff Concerns/Comments:

L. Beutler stated that all outstanding information has been added to the Site Development Plan. Memo comments have been addressed. She has no further concerns or comments.

T. Penney, P.E., stated the applicant has obtained the required Encroachment Permit. He has no further concerns or comments.

Commissioner Concerns/Comments:

No concerns or comments from Commissioners W. Glenney, L. Mathieu, L. Heemskerk, S. Wierszchalek.

W. Johnson asked if Town Staff have followed up with the outstanding concerns regarding the abutting neighbor at 15 David Drive filling in the disturbed wetland along the eastern property line. L. Beutler stated she has not yet but will.

MOTION: W. Johnson **MOVED** to **APPROVE** permit **WP-25-32 – 167 Geraldine Drive**. Owner: Todd Richardello; Applicant: James Lathrop. – Proposed 24’x24’ garage approx. 10.5ft from wetland. **Standard Inland Wetland conditions shall apply.**

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L. Heemskerck **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 5:0:0**

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

c. WP-25-33 – 152 Cheney Lane – Owner: Anne C Toale Trust & Julie Anne Carion;

Applicant/Agent: James DiPreta, Spectrum Environmental LLC. – Demolition of garage approx. 32 feet from wetland. Foundation to stay. No expected ground disturbance. *The 65-day deadline to act on this application is 01/23/2026.*

Representing the application was:

- James DiPreta, Applicant/Agent

Lindsay Beutler, Environmental Planner/Wetland Agent stated Commissioners have been provided an Review Memo summarizing outstanding information required and requested by the Commission at last month’s IWA Regular Meeting, November 19, 2025.

Beutler, Lindsay. Town of Coventry Land Use Office, December 1, 2025, ***Review Memo, Coventry IWA Application WP-25-33 – 125 Cheney Lane.***

Town Staff Concerns/Comments:

L. Beutler stated she received information regarding the installation of an approximate 90 linear foot temporary physical barrier, i.e., orange mesh 48” height construction fencing, along the eastern perimeter of the existing gravel driveway. The intent of the physical barrier is to visually demarcate and physically protect an existing wetland system, adjacent to the existing gravel driveway, located in the southeast portion of the property.

J. DiPreta confirmed the installation of the construction fencing has occurred and photos were sent, via email, to L. Beutler the week of December 15, 2025. He asked for confirmation that she received the photos. L. Beutler confirmed that she had.

J. DiPreta further stated that the 275-gallon AST (above ground storage tank) has been removed from the subject site, alleviating the Commission’s concerns about the potential

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damage of said AST and/or leaking of residual petroleum products onto the ground once demolition and removal of the existing garage begins.

Town Engineer, T. Penney, P.E., has no further concerns or comments.

Commissioner Concerns/Comments:

The Commission had no further questions and appreciated the efforts by J. DiPreta to fully remove the AST off the property.

MOTION: L. Heemskerk **MOVED** to **APPROVE permit WP-25-33 – 152 Cheney Lane.**

Owner: Anne C Toale Trust & Julie Anne Carion; Applicant/Agent: James DiPreta, Spectrum Environmental LLC. – Demolition of garage approx. 32 feet from wetland. Foundation to stay. No expected ground disturbance. **Standard Inland Wetland conditions shall apply.**

L. Mathieu **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 5:0:0**

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

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Timber Harvest – 1266 Cedar Swamp Road – Owner: Richard Toth; Forester: Austin Harmon, Hull Forest Products, Inc. – Notification of Selective Timber Harvest with one wetland crossing and two intermittent stream crossings.

Representing the notification was:

- Austin Harmon, Forester, Hull Forest Products, Inc. (via Zoom)

Timber Harvest Proposal Overview:

Aerial imagery and an inland/wetland/watercourse crossing location map of the subject property was presented to the Commission.

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Austin Harmon, Forester, notified the Commission of proposed selective timber harvest on the property of Richard Toth, 1266 Cedar Swamp Road.

A. Harmon stated there are various differing temporary crossings and best management practices (BMPs) associated with this harvest and explained each of the crossing types and/or BMPs and their locations:

- Existing culvert, northern most landing – Temporary timber bridge mats will span and protect the culvert discharging direct weight.
- A pre-existing crossing installed from a previous timber harvest will be utilized.
- Intermittent stream crossing #1. Corduroy & temporary timber bridge mats – This intermittent stream connects a persistent wetland system. Previous timber harvest BMPs for this location include temporary timber bridge mats over the existing corduroy.
- Intermittent stream crossing #2. Temporary timber bridge mats – Further into the property a temporary installation of timber bridge mats over the intermittent stream.

Other Significant Information Presented:

A. Harmon stated his previous observations of the watercourses (streams) on the subject property have varied in significant volume of waterflow and further stated he and Wetland Agent, L. Beutler conducted an onsite field visit, a few weeks ago, where after a significant weather event the streams were observed with considerable waterflow – confirming them as intermittent.

A. Harmon stated harvesting will occur up to the edges of the wetlands, and the edges of the streams.

Timber Harvest Description:

The thinning of the timber stock is intended to be selective, and extraction will only occur across the designated crossings. Approximately 40K board feet and 70 cords are anticipated to be harvested.

Extraction Methods & Timeline:

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A. Harmon stated extraction is anticipated to utilize either a log forwarder or skid steer and to begin in the winter, within the next two months, depending on weather conditions and subcontractor schedules.

A. Harmon stated the subject property is observed to have moderately dry soil types and anticipates scheduling harvest activities when weather conditions are predicted as frozen or dry, which will determine what heavy equipment will be utilized.

Town Staff Comments:

L. Beutler confirmed an onsite field visit was conducted of the subject property. She and A. Harmon discussed timber harvest BMPs to be used onsite and is comfortable with the Timber Harvest application as submitted. She further stated A. Harmon has previously harvested other properties within Coventry and has walked these sites after extraction and confirms he does employ BMPs as presented.

L. Beutler referenced an aerial photograph and orientated the Commission to the local area road network surrounding the subject property, Cedar Swamp Road, Bread & Milk Street, and Satori Drive.

Town Engineer, T. Penney, P.E. asked A. Harmon for the directional waterflow of the wetland system on the subject property. A. Harmon stated the water flows from the northeast downgradient to the southwest portion of the property towards Cedar Swamp Road.

T. Penney further stated that the applicant and owner intend to employ silviculture BMPs, which meets the definition as an agricultural as-of-right activity, and stated determination is ultimately decided by the Commission.

Commissioner Concerns/Comments:

L. Mathieu asked for clarification of the overall Timber Harvest notification process and expressed concern of activities being conducted within regulated areas. L. Beutler stated what is before the Commission is not a permit but a determination whether the proposed timber harvest activities are an as-of-right activity as defined in Section 22A-36 through 22A-45 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

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T. Penney acknowledged L. Mathieu’s concern and validated that proposed activities will cross a series of regulated and upland review areas but there is no direct impact due to the proposed BMPs as established by the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) Forestry Division.

Further discussion ensued among L. Mathieu and Town Staff of other examples and scenarios of as-of-right and regulated permissible activities.

Commissioners Glenney, Heemskerk, Johnson, and Wierszchalek had no other concerns or comments.

MOTION: W. Glenney **MOVED** to **APPROVE** selective Timber Harvest actions to commence at 1266 Cedar Swamp Road as an as-of-right activity.

W. Johnson **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 4:0:1**

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

Informational Discussion:

An informational discussion ensued after the formal vote regarding the obligation of a wetland agent to notify the Commission of as-of-right activities determined under CGS §22A-36 through §22A-45 when proposed activities present potential impacts within or near a regulated inland/wetland, watercourse, or upland review area.

W. Glenney stated that if a selective timber harvest were to occur on property with wetlands whereas there was no engagement/interaction with the wetland system, L. Beutler as the acting wetland agent could have issued an as-of-right permit without notifying the Commission. This application proposed activity and engages/interacts with several regulated areas, i.e. stream crossings, felling of timber within upland review areas. W. Glenney stated L. Beutler was correct to notify the Commission of this application for determination.

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Town Engineer T. Penney recommended for future timber harvest applications that foresters provide images and specification details of their proposed temporary bridges and BMPs for Commission consideration.

L. Mathieu stated what would be helpful is a process flow chart of determination when it comes to agriculture as-of-right activities. She further stated that she is concerned that the proper processes and procedures are followed, specifically mentioning declaratory rulings.

ACTION: W. Glenney asked L. Beutler to present to the Commission by February 2026, a process flow diagram.

- L. Beutler stated she will reach out to the CT DEEP's Forestry Division and confer with the head forester for guidance documents.

A. Harmon contributed further to the discussion stating that Nick Zito, Forest Practices Act Enforcement Forester, CT DEEP, has a flow chart that he distributed at a recent Professional Timber Producers Association meeting and would be the correct state agency professional to contact. A. Harmon stated he would be happy to give L. Beutler the flow chart and any other resources that would assist the Commission in effectively making future determinations.

Discussion further ensues among A. Harmon and Commissioners regarding CT state commercialization of agricultural products and threshold requirements.

B. WP-25-27 – 2991 South Street – Owner/Applicant: Douglas Bynes; - Proposed retaining wall and legitimize previously installed drainage improvements around Mill building.

Representing the application was:

- Douglas Bynes, Owner/Applicant

The nearest crossroads to the property are located easterly at the intersection of South Street and Bishop Lane. The Skungamaug River abuts the subject property to the east and south.

Douglas Bynes, Owner/Applicant, 2991 South Street, stated the 1740 mill building had various occupational uses over the decades with the last known use as a dental office.

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D. Bynes further stated that in the 1970's a curtain drain and foundation were installed and over the last 50 years water damage has occurred to the north and west side of the structure due flooding caused by significant deterioration of the existing gravel driveway upon years of snow plowing and a failing curtain drain.

D. Bynes showed the Commission photos of the damage, specifically the rotting sill plate of the mill building.

D. Bynes discussed the drainage improvements made to a building to prevent flooding and maintain structural integrity.

- A new curtain drain was installed around building and connects to an existing drainage system, which drains through the building, and outlets on the south side of the building upgradient from the Skungamaug River. The improvements have addressed the flooding issues.

The project was initiated without a permit due to the applicant's belief it was an as-of-right maintenance activity given the improvements were of an identical drainage infrastructure type and location but was later brought before the Commission for a determination due to proposed improvement activities to install a retaining wall along the north and west façade of the building. Coventry Wetlands Agent, Lindsay Beutler, stated that she rather err on the side of caution with the implemented and proposed activities being approximately 34' the Skungamaug River and therefore encouraged the owner to apply for a wetland permit.

The proposed work includes the removal of an existing timber wall and replaced with a concrete retaining wall to prevent driveway erosion and further drainage issues. Whereas the retaining wall is proposed to be comprised of 2'x2'x3' concrete blocks buried approximately 16" in the ground (8" rise above grade).

L. Beutler stated the applicant has prepared a detailed Improvement Plan for the Commission's review. Additional proposed details include:

Proposed North Façade Improvements:

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- Concrete block retaining wall approximately 44' in length with a 10'x4' proposed entranceway into the building.

Proposed West Façade Improvements:

- Concrete block retaining wall approximately 9' in length with an 8'x4' proposed entranceway into the building.

L. Beutler stated the drainage replacement activities had previously occurred upon her intervening and she observed no significant impacts or sediment discharge downgradient to the Skungamaug River upon inspection.

L. Beutler stated despite the replacement activities being of 'low-risk', however, it was questionable whether the activity was deemed as-of-right and did not bring forth the owner for a wetland violation so as all new proposed improvements and previously installed drainage infrastructure replacement activities went before the Commission for a determination.

Town Staff Concerns/Comments:

No further concerns or comments from L. Beutler or Town Engineer Todd Penney, P.E.

Commissioner Concerns/Comments:

Commissioners Glenney, Johnson, and Wierszchalek had no other concerns or comments.

Commissioner Heemskerk asked the applicant what depth below grade the retaining wall would be buried. D. Bynes stated buried approximately 16" in the ground with an 8" rise above grade with an installed decorative concrete cap.

L. Mathieu confirmed with the applicant that the replacement drainage infrastructure, previously installed, was to restore damaged site drainage and opined an as-of-right activity occurred. L. Mathieu further confirmed with the applicant the southern facade drainage waters were discharging onto existing ledge.

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Commissioner Glenney stated the previous drainage replacement activities conducted are maintenance in nature.

MOTION: W. Johnson **MOVED** to **remand the application back to the Coventry Inland/Wetland Agent** to be processed as minimal impact permit.

Discussion:

Consensus among the Commissioners was that the activities previously implemented and proposed are deemed maintenance, with no observed impact to wetlands or watercourse by the Coventry Wetlands Agent.

L. Heemskerck **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; X:X:X**

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

c. WP-25-36 – 346 Stonehouse Road – Owner: Daniel Fowler; Applicant: Titan Construction; Agent: Mark Peterson of Gardner and Peterson. – Proposed two family home within upland review area.

Representing the notification was:

- Mark Peterson, P.E., Agent, Gardner & Peterson Associates, Tolland, CT

Documents presented at the meeting included:

- Soil Science Report, Rich Zulick, Soil Scientist/Certified Forester, 12/14/2025
- Improvement Location Survey, Subsurface Disposal Design Plan, Gardner & Peterson Associates, November 15, 2025

Project Summary:

The Commission received the application from the acting agent and were presented with for their consideration the following information:

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Mark Peterson, P.E., Agent, presented the general contextual location, site and drainage features of the subject property, draining from the north to the south. An existing roadside swale, delineated as an inland/wetland, is located along the southeast portion of the subject property parallel to Stonehouse Road.

M. Peterson stated the proposed project as a new construction two-family home. He further stated the proposed project, and subject property has received approvals and reviews which include those by Eastern Highland Health District and Certified Soil Scientist/Forester, Rich Zulick.

Proposed improvements within the 75-foot upland review area (URA) include:

- Driveway,
- Septic tank/pump chamber, and
- Propane tank.

The home will be serviced by a public water supply from Stonehouse Road.

The Improvement Location Survey detailed:

- Erosion and sediment control locations/types,
- Construction sequence, and
- Construction accessways.

Town Staff Comments:

L. Beutler stated she has yet to visit the site. She questioned why the existing site accessway, from Stonehouse Road, was not being proposed as the main driveway to the home. M. Peterson stated the existing grade of the property is steep and discussed the final grades of the proposed driveway and garage. The construction sequencing proposed utilizes the existing accessway to minimize onsite and roadway disturbance when initiating lot clearing and construction staging. L. Beutler confirmed an anti-tracking pad will be present.

Town Engineer T. Penney stated there may be opportunities for stormwater management systems:

- Around the proposed driveway.

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- The land between the septic tank and the existing drainage swale.
- He will present his formal comments/questions to the applicant within the next few weeks.

T. Penney recommended the applicant review the zoning regulations regarding the width of the proposed driveway for a two-family home.

Commissioner Concerns/Comments:

Commissioners Heemskerk, Johnson, and Wierszchalek had no other concerns or comments.

Commissioners Glenney and Mathieu confirmed with the applicant that the existing swale is the delineated wetland onsite and to prepare to explain impervious water flow volumes, directionality, and propose mitigation solutions.

A brief discussion ensued among the applicant, town staff, and commissioners regarding tree clearing yields, final seeding mixes, low/no maintenance lawns.

Application WP-25-36 – 346 Stonehouse Road has been received by the Commission and **appear next month, January 20, 2026, 7 PM, IWA Regular Meeting.**

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 restoration to be complete by 12/17/2025.**

Present for the discussion:

- David Frechette, Owner
- Hank Gruner, Consulting Herpetologist

Documents presented at the meeting included:

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Beutler, Lindsay. Town of Coventry Land Use Office, December 17, 2025, **Wetlands Violation Timeline Memo, 77 Tall Oak Drive.**

Town Wetland Agent, Lindsay Beutler, presented to the Commission photos of the Phase 1 restoration efforts that commenced the week of December 8, 2025, at the subject property.

L. Beutler stated that the property owner assembled very qualified and skilled group of professionals to perform the restorative work and gave a brief description of all parties present.

Her presentation included a summarization of:

- Proposed and achieved excavation depths,
- Existing soil striation,
- Anticipated and achieved groundwater levels,
- Standpipe monitoring device locations and depths.

Restorative Infiltration Efforts:

L. Beutler stated that groundwater was observed at much shallower depths than anticipated by experts. Percolating groundwater and surface water runoff from a series of rain events in December have been infiltrating into the restored wetland.

Erosion & Sediment (E&S) Controls:

L. Beutler presented photos, December 11, 2025, of stockpile locations, onsite temporary and seasonal E&S control barriers and materials used such as silt fences and various types of plant seed mixes. She further stated the owner, D. Frechette, was informed not to remove soil stockpiles until after the obligate species make it out of the vernal pool, Fall 2026.

L. Beutler further presented detailed information on native floriculture seed mix types and application processes used onsite during the restoration process, as well as the seeding timeline from December 2025 through Spring 2026.

Future Restoration Phases:

Photos presented of the subject property from December 17, 2025, showed the final restored wetland demarcated in the snow. L. Beutler stated monitoring efforts are intended to

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commence once a week as well as prior and after major storm events. Phase 1 Restoration efforts have been completed, and the next steps are to monitor the overall wetland function, flora and fauna.

Hank Gruner, Consulting Herpetologist, presented to the Commission monitoring goals and milestones which he described as two measurable phases: 1) Hydrological Observations, and 2) Herpetological Observations.

Biological and hydrological information will determine if the reconstruction is successful.

1) Hydrological Observations:

H. Gruner stated the reconstructed wetland dimensions are approximately 6,600 square feet with an average depth of 18-20 inches and that standpipe monitoring devices installed in and around the restored wetland will be critical to monitoring the overall function and health of the ecological system. The standpipes will inform experts the actual depth of groundwater, especially during the driest parts of the year in June-July 2026.

H. Gruner further stated that monitoring precipitation data over the 2025-2026 winter season will also be critical to determine restorative success and the nearest weather station is located approximately 1000 feet from the subject property. Gruner theorized that should the wetland dry out and absent of surface water it may be fine – however monitoring precipitation data will be critical.

H. Gruner informed the Commission that within the contextual location of the subject property, up and down gradient, is a series of inland/wetlands. He will be reviewing available datasets of neighboring vernal pools and wetlands to interpolate historical biological and hydrological functions.

2) Herpetological Observations

H. Gruner stated that overall measurement of hydrological function and biological success would be that that individuals return, deposit eggs, tadpoles and larvae develop, and metamorphosis occurs during March-August 2026. Biological monitoring is anticipated to begin in March 2026 to determine the return populations of wood frogs and spotted salamanders during the breeding season as well as planned egg mass counts.

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Property Owner Concerns of Overland Water Flow:

Property owner David Frechette discussed with the Commission and town staff his concerns that water will remain retained in the reconstructed wetland and potentially overflow its banks.

D. Frechette further expressed concerns about an abutting town owned easement receiving impervious overland surface waters from upgradient neighboring properties and the road draining on to his property causing observed localized flooding. He asked town staff if his concerns would be addressed.

Town Engineer, T. Penney, stated that there is no historical waterflow analysis that exists for the easement except for visual inspection of an existing culvert which outlets into an existing wetland. T. Penney stated the outlet is determined to be stable.

Further discussion between D. Frechette and T. Penney ensued regarding the historical development of the neighborhood 30 years ago, responsible parties for the design and construction of the local road, drainage infrastructure inspection and maintenance.

Commissioners requested to view aerial photos of the adjacent properties surrounding the subject property to better understand the concerns of the property owner.

Discussion continued among the property owner, town staff, and H. Gruner regarding the hydrological watershed of the local area.

Commissioners thanked staff for their efforts to see through the remediation of the site and reconstruction of the wetland as well as the compliance efforts of property owner D. Frechette.

7. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

A. November 19, 2025 – Regular Meeting Minutes

MOTION: W. Johnson **MOVED** to **APPROVE** November 19, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes **with the following corrections/modifications:**

Page 2 of 15: Application WP-25-30 – 124 Lake Street:

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Modify the second bullet to include:

- The IWA must act prior to the permit application prior to December 26, 2025, from the date the application was received, **or grant up to a 65-day extension.**

Page 2 of 15: Application WP-25-30 – 124 Lake Street:

R. Zulick, Certified Forester/Soil Scientist, presented:

Correct the dimensional distance of the proposed garage **from 25' to 10.5'.**

- A disturbed wetland area exists, located east of the property, on abutting property, located at 15 David Drive, approximately within **25' 10.5'** of the proposed garage.

Page 4 of 15: Application WP-25-30 – 124 Lake Street:

Todd Penney, P.E., Coventry Engineer, stated:

Modify the first bullet to include:

- Overall, has no issues with the application, proposed project, or proposed impervious surface water runoff **to the Town drainage system.**

Page 5 of 15: Application WP-25-30 – 124 Lake Street:

Commissioner Questions/Discussion

Clarification that *James Lathrop stated* the following response:

- Relocating the proposed structure to the left side of the main home, frontage, along the western property line would propose more environmental impacts to the site, i.e. the structure would be upgradient, require reconfiguring and installing a new driveway, require the removal of four mature growth trees, and be farther away from the existing municipal catch basin.

Page 6 of 15: Application WP-25-33– 152 Cheney Lane:

Modify and correct bullet numbers 5 & 6 to include:

J. DiPreta, Applicant, stated the **proposed project** is:

- Removal methods include using a grapple truck **on an excavator and dump truck.**
- Debris is to be placed inside **two (2) or three (3)** 30-yard containers ~~s trucks~~ and removed offsite, and the site will be raked clean.

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Page 6 of 15: Application WP-25-33– 152 Cheney Lane:

Modify the second bullet to include:

- The main access to project site will utilize an existing **gravel** driveway between two (2) wetlands systems on the property.

Page 7 of 15: Application WP-25-33– 152 Cheney Lane:

Concerns:

Remove the first sub bullet number and replace it with:

- **Oil Tank:** A 275-gallon aboveground storage tank (AST) remains inside garage;
○ ~~It is unknown if the AST is completely empty.~~
○ **DiPreta indicated the AST sounded empty.**

Page 7 of 15: 6.A. ENFORCEMENT – 77 Tall Oak Drive

Correction:

Present for the high-level discussion:

- Ken Slater – Town Attorney
- Hank Gruner – Consulting Herpetologist *Town of Coventry*

L. Mathieu **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 5:0:0**

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

8. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

9. **DISCUSSION:**

A. IWA – Low Impact Development Working Group Update

The presentation and discussion was led by Commissioner Lori Mathieu and informed the IWA of the ongoing efforts by the LID Work Group to date:

Documents reviewed by the Commission:

- Coventry Inland/Wetlands and Low Impact Development Work Group, Agenda, December 9, 2025.

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Coventry IWA/LID Work Group & New Hampshire Lakes – NH Lakes Smart Program
Director, *Meeting Notes*, November 17, 2025.

- *Draft Resolution Adopting a Policy on Low Impact Development for the Town of Coventry Inland Wetlands Agency*, November 15, 2025.
- *Draft Coventry Lake Watershed and Water Quality Protection Policy*, December 9, 2025.
- *LID Spring Workshop Save the Date Flyer*.

Information Presented:

- **Draft Resolution** – Asked the IWA to review the draft resolution and provide feedback. Dr. Kortman in process of writing companion documents.
- **Lake Management Plan** – Coventry 2016 Lake Management Plan (LMP) needs updating. L. Mathieu recommends the Town hire a consulting firm to write the next version given the complexity of the task. References comparisons to successful LMPs in the state of New Hampshire and Columbia, CT.
- **Upcoming Spring LID Workshop** – May 16, 2026, Patriot’s Park, Coventry, CT. Spring event planned for local area and surround lake town residents, including presentations and a demonstration planting.
- **Legal review and coordination** with Town Manager and Council suggested.

Other Resources for Consideration:

- Environmental Protection Agency, [A Quick Guide to Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters](#), May 2013.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

W. Johnson **MOVED** to **ADJOURN** at 10:09 PM. L. Heemskerk **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED;**
5:0:0

The next regular scheduled meeting is: **Wednesday, January 28, 2026, 6:45 PM.**

- Aquifer Protection Agency Meeting at 6:45 PM with the IWA Regular Meeting to follow at 7 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Andrea Vassallo, Acting Recording Secretary

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