

**COVENTRY INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 2025**

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

By: Glenney

Place: Town Hall Annex

Time: 7:28 p.m.

		PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:	William Glenney, Chair	X	
	Richard Pearson, Vice-Chair	X	
	William Johnson	X	
	Lori Mathieu	X	
	Stefanie Wierszchalek	X	
ALTERNATE MEMBERS:	David Epstein	X	
	Laura Heemskerk	X	
STAFF:	Lindsay Beutler, Environmental Planner/Wetlands Agent	X	
STAFF:	Todd Penney, Town Engineer/Wetlands Agent	X	
STAFF:	Heidi Leech, Zoning Enforcement Officer Substitute Recording Clerk	X	

2. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:

Laura Heemskerk of 305 Shore Drive recused herself to speak as a private citizen of Coventry. She read a prepared statement regarding moving the needle on impermeable surfaces in the lake area. Her full statement is attached to these minutes.

Penney pointed out that the slide that she referenced stating the impervious coverage in the Coventry Lake watershed is 29% was incorrect. The actual impervious coverage is about 12%. Mathieu said she would like the chance to discuss Heemskerk’s statement but Glenney said that is not the intention of Audience of Citizens.

Heemskerk re-sat herself at the table as a member of the IWA.

3. ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA:

Item 6B. - 89 Flanders Road was added to the Agenda under Enforcement by Glenney.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **WP-25-13 – 184 Avery Shores** – Owner/Applicant: Paul Guardino; Agent: Andrew Bushnell. – Foundation replacement, add deck, and demo and rebuild of garage within the 150ft upland review area. (e) *The 65-day deadline to act on this application is 8/29/2025*

Owner Paul Guardino and Andrew Bushnell, PE, LS of Bushnell Associates were present to discuss the application.

Guardino explained that they originally intended to rebuild certain areas of the house and enlarge the detached garage but have now decided not to go ahead with the garage construction. The plan now is to rebuild the existing house with the same size footprint but to tilt it slightly to bring it away from the property line with the Cropleys at 198 Avery Shores. The only addition would be the deck. There would be no additional lot coverage.

Penney said that they need a revised site plan in order to properly evaluate the proposed plan. Even with the revised scope of work his comments are still germane. Glenney had requested a cross-section view. Bushnell said Glenney requested a cross-section of the raingarden but he questioned if that is still necessary since there will no longer be an increase in lot coverage. They didn't think the raingarden was needed. Beutler said she didn't think that was the intent of Glenney's comment. The intent was to get a cross-section of the house in relation to the land and the lake.

The Agency is requesting a revised plan incorporating the revised scope of work and addressing Staff comments. Penney also noted that, in his opinion, it is irresponsible not to incorporate some sort of water quality measures into the new design with an existing lot coverage of 27%, even if it isn't required. Bushnell and Penney determined that there is time to continue this application to the next meeting without needing an extension. If necessary they can grant an extension after the next meeting. Bushnell will send a revised plan to Staff for review next week so they will have time to review it before the next meeting. Heemskerck said she loves Penney's questions. Her questions is why can't they do rain barrels. She thinks that could be a great solution if they could put rain barrels on the four corners of the structures. Epstein said he has raingardens and rain barrels at his house and he looks forward to seeing the revised plan. Mathieu asked about the reduction in lot coverage on the original proposed plan which is no longer being reduced. Bushnell said they were originally taking up some of the driveway but no longer plan to do that. Mathieu said the Staff memo from Beutler asked them to address stormwater runoff and she would still like to see that addressed.

Continued to the next meeting

- B. **WP-25-15 – CT Route 44/ Boston Turnpike – List No: R04732** – Owner: Margaret Reid; Applicant: Charles Brown; Agent: Andrew Bushnell, P.E. – Proposed 3-lot subdivision. (e) *The 65-day deadline to act on this application is 8/29/2025*

***William Johnson recused himself for this application**

Andrew Bushnell, PE, LS of Bushnell Associates and Charles Brown, Applicant were present to discuss the application.

Bushnell explained that they were before the Agency last month. They received review comments from Staff and are back with revised plans. He said one comment was that the Agency wanted to see the entire 19-acre parcel, so they have that map. Brown said that Staff requested that a Soil Scientist

prepare a wetlands report. Brown explained that John Ianni did the wetlands flagging but has since retired. Since they are staying fully outside the wetlands which have been delineated, he is hoping to not need to start over with a new Soil Scientist and not need to prepare a wetlands report.

Mathieu asked when the wetlands were delineated. Brown said in 2021. He said many of the wetlands flags are still visible on the property.

Bushnell reviewed Staff comments and changes to the plan. He said they met DOT at the property to review site line concerns. He said they also incorporated lidar information supplied by Penney to update the regulated area. Penney said this caused there to be more activity in the Upland Review Area.

Brown reviewed the plan for the Agency. He explained that the entire parcel is 19-acres. They have preliminary plans for the remaining land which is not included in this application. Mathieu pointed out that the map doesn't match what is on the screen. Brown realized that an incorrect Free Split map was sent in error. They will send the correct Free Split map to Staff to send it to the Agency for review.

Bushnell explained that there are culverts that drain to an infiltration trench to the wetlands. Mathieu asked who will own the drainage structure. Bushnell said it will be owned by all three lots though it will only be on Lots 1 and 2. All three lots will be responsible for maintenance of the culverts and trench. Bushnell said they would preserve any stonewalls and minimize disturbance.

Bushnell said that they received Eastern Highlands Health District approval for the subdivision this afternoon.

Beutler said she has not had sufficient time to review this updated plan since it was just received. She asked Bushnell to explain the right to drain. She also confirmed that Bushnell will sign the stormwater report.

Penney said he also has not had sufficient time to review the revised plan. He said Bushnell appears to have addressed some of his comments but he needs more time for review.

Mathieu asked what the boxes are that say "stormwater" near each house. Bushnell said that each house has infiltrators. Mathieu asked who will own the grass swale. Brown said it will be owned by the property it is on but an easement will be filed for it. Mathieu said she would like to see the easement/maintenance agreement because if the grassy swale is not properly maintained it will not function.

Epstein said that since Staff hasn't had time to fully review the revised plans, he isn't comfortable voting today. He would like Staff input.

Glenney cautioned Brown and Bushnell that, in the future, they need to submit materials to Beutler at least six days before the meeting to allow Staff adequate time to review and comment or face potential delays, like in this case.

Continued to the next meeting

***William Johnson was reseated**

C. **WP-25-16 – Brewster St – List No: R01683** – Owner/Applicant: Bonnie Edmondson; Agent: Andrew Bushnell, P.E. – Construction of gravel driveway in upland review area for single family home.

Andrew Bushnell, PE, LS of Bushnell Associates was present representing the Edmonson Family. He explained that this is a 6.93 acre, landlocked parcel behind the property of Matthew Sandberg at 57 Brewster Street. Rick Zulick delineated the wetlands. A driveway crossing of the wetlands is needed but they will not be building in the wetlands or regulated area. To summarize Zulick's report, he said that installing the driveway will actually reduce the impact to the wetlands by installing a stable driveway surface where there is currently a gravel farm road.

Bushnell said that the wetlands actually originate from the road culvert on Brewster Street and eventually go to Ash Brook. Bushnell commented that he included with the application the report from Zulick, a 20-scale plan, and a Letter of Permission from Sandberg allowing them to apply for this wetlands application on Sandberg's property. A site visit was also conducted with Beutler. Two dead ash trees were discovered and will be removed. Bushnell said that he met with the Edmonson Family, their Attorney and Jana Roberson, Director of Planning, and it was decided that a driveway easement across Sandberg's land was a better option than a lot line modification.

Penney said that the standard is a 20-foot apron at the road but they can apply for a reduction to 16-feet for environmental reasons.

Beutler said her comments have been addressed. Penney said the adjusted apron should hold the southerly edge. He said it is a single-family home with access across an existing farm road.

Mathieu said the letter of permission from Sandberg doesn't reference a particular site plan or date. She asked if we needed something more. Penney said it was no different than any other permission letter. If the activity changes, they will need to come back to the Agency.

Leech mentioned that Zoning will also require a formal Driveway Easement to be filed on the Land Records before a Certificate of Occupancy can be issued.

MOTION: I move to approve application WP-25-16 Brewster Street, R01683, with the standard permit conditions and the minor driveway apron configuration changes per Town Staff.

By: Johnson

Seconded: Pearson

Discussion: None

Voting:

For: Glenney, Pearson, Johnson, Mathieu, Wierszchalek

Against: None

Abstain: None

Motion Unanimously Approved

D. **WP-25-17 – 145 Edgewater Drive** – Owner: James Rotundo; Applicant: Rich Rotundo; Agent: Andrew Bushnell, P.E. – Placement of 22x22 garage on gravel within the 150-foot upland review area. *WITHDRAWN*

Beutler explained that she conducted a site visit to 145 Edgewater Drive and it was found that the raingarden that was previously installed was not functioning which needs addressing before they can even consider applying for further exceptions. She said they will be working with Bushnell on that. For that reason, they withdrew both their Wetlands Application and application for Variance from the Zoning Board of Application.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. **WP-25-19 – 211 Maple Drive** – Owner: Jacqueline Ruggiero; Applicant/Agent: Justin Wolf, E.A. Quinn Landscape Contracting. – Construct two stone walls parallel with edge of Coventry Lake. (e)

Justin Wolf of E.A. Quinn was present to discuss the application. He said the plan is to expand the beach area and update the lake wall. He said there will be a two-tiered lake wall and permeable patio areas. He provided a Scope of Work dated 7/15/2025 that included retaining walls, drainage, steppingstones, stairs, and a gravel path.

Beutler asked if they planned to add beach sand. Penney said that the permeability of the materials is important and he is not a big fan of adding beach sand. He prefers reclaiming beach sand during the winter drawdown. Penney said that since there is long-term maintenance required for this type of infrastructure, the homeowners should be present at the next meeting.

Mathieu asked what is under the crushed stone. Wolf said it is non-mesh fabric that allows water to perc through it. Mathieu asked what the Lot Coverage is. Wolf said he doesn't know. Mathieu and Penney both told Wolf that this is something he should know.

Mathieu said that there is no vegetation to clean the water before running off/percing to the lake. Hard surfaces won't do that. She wants to see the spec sheet on the filter fabric and she wants to see more plantings between the hardscaping and the lake edge. Epstein said that is just aesthetics. Mathieu said it is science based on Dr. Kortmann and UConn's data presented at the Land Use Forum in June.

Glenney said that we need to see a Stormwater Treatment Plan for the whole property since they are adding another 500 sq. ft of impervious lot coverage. He said trying to incorporate naturalized landscape is important to protect the resource of Coventry Lake.

Johnson confirmed that the wall work would be done after the winter drawdown. Wierszchalek asked if the dock is existing. Wolf said it is. She agrees with Mathieu about the benefits of planting native plants by the lake.

Heemskerk said she wants to piggyback on the request for a site plan and state that it needs to include lot coverage.

Glenney said that he is uncomfortable adding beach sand to this permit application if they do decide they want to add sand. He would prefer to keep it separate.

Pearson asked what the life expectancy is of a sand dump. Wolf said it is normally quite long, but erosion is to be expected.

The application was accepted and continued to the next 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

MOTION: I make a motion that Lindsay (Beutler) work with the Town Attorney and Town Staff to execute enforcement action relative to 77 Tall Oak Drive.

By: Glenney

Seconded: Mathieu

Discussion: None

Voting:

For: Glenney, Pearson, Johnson, Mathieu, Wierszchalek

Against: None

Abstain: None

- B. **89 Flanders Rd** – Owner: Joshua Beebe – Unpermitted work in the Regulated Area and Wetlands.

Beutler gave an update. An injunction was awarded and lien has been placed against the property. Beebe is working on bringing the property into compliance. Staff met today to go over his draft Existing Conditions Plan. We will send it back to Beebe and his Surveyor for updating. Beebe and Mark Reynolds will attend the August IWA meeting.

7. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

- A. May 28, 2025 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Glenney had sent corrections to Beutler re: the Enforcement Section which was not reflected in the correction to the minutes. Glenney wants to get better at having the minutes accurately reflect the motions, etc.

Glenney said it is imperative that the actions of the Agency get filed within 7 days. He would like the May, June and July Minutes to be revised to reflect the corrections, not just making the person read the next meeting's minutes to understand the changes.

The Agency agreed to hold a Zoom only Special Meeting to review and approve meeting minutes. The Special Meeting will be Monday, July 28, 2025 at 11:30 a.m.

Postponed approval of May Minutes to Special Meeting

B. June 25, 2025 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Postponed approval of June Minutes to Special Meeting

8. CORRESPONDENCE:

NONE

9. DISCUSSION:

A. Low Impact Development Group Working

Mathieu gave an update on the progress of the Low Impact Development Working Group. She showed the group's webpage on the Town website and handed out the August 12, 2025 Agenda.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m. by Glenney.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heidi A. Leech

Heidi A. Leech, Substitute Recording Clerk

PLEASE NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Inland Wetlands Agency at the next meeting. Please see the next meeting minutes for approval or changes.

IWA as private citizen

Laura Heemskerck, 305 Shore Dr, Coventry

Talk about moving the needle on impermeable surfaces in the Lake watershed

I believe the Low Impact Design working group, as well as the work of this committee is admirable. I must point out that the term Design in LID means engineering desired results from the beginning of designing a building. Lori presented that the lake watershed zone is 29% impermeable which is far from goal. The blame seems generally pointed at individual homeowners in the congested properties layed out around the lake in the early 1940s. The fact is, there isn't much in the way of new design we can impact because most structures already exist. However, what we can do is focus on giving homeowners the tools to make improvements. Additionally, there was a study done in Fall 2021 that recommended 2 rain gardens on town property at the lake. Todd clarified that the plans were not suitable for various reasons. But wouldn't the town benefit by teaching by example to install run-off mitigation efforts on their lake properties, the same thing they are asking individual homeowners to do? So, beyond individual homeowners, how much do the cumulative properties of Lakeview, the flea market, the town senior center and state boat launch contribute to that 29% impermeable? I see those as the low-hanging fruit ripe for improvement.

In summary, if we want to move the needle on runoff, I propose the town lead by example. Next, we make it easier for homeowners in the lake watershed to do the right thing by providing them tools such as 1. Calculating and posting the % impermeability of their property; 2. Provide concrete, actionable remediation ideas that are cost effective, such as DIY instructions for rain barrels and rain gardens or other ideas; 3. Provide an expedited application approval process; and finally 4. Provide measureable results after mitigation efforts have been installed.

Thank you.