

Inland Wetlands Agency says Landmark proposal requires permit to determine impact on wetlands

Published July 29, 2015

By Kimberly Drelich

East Lyme — Landmark Development's proposal for the Oswegatchie Hills "involves regulated activities" that would require a permit application in order for the Inland Wetlands Agency to fully evaluate them, according to a letter from the agency's chairwoman.

The Zoning Commission recently held public hearings on developer Glenn Russo's plan to rezone 123 acres into an affordable housing district, with 36 acres for development and 87 acres for open space.

[The commission voted to send the application to the Inland Wetlands Agency for a referral](#), after intervenors made the case that the proposal required such review.

The developer's lawyer had contended the preliminary site plan, which calls for 840 residential units, does not require review by the Inland Wetlands Agency until a final site plan is submitted.

A letter, dated Monday, from IWA Chairwoman Cheryl Lozanov to Matthew Walker, the chairman of the Zoning Commission, explains the agency's review.

The letter states that the Inland Wetlands Agency has reviewed comments from the public hearing and documents submitted by the intervenors, the Friends of the Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve, Save the River-Save the Hills, and the Connecticut Fund for the Environment.

The document states that an analysis by soil scientist John Ianni of Highland Soils Inc. concludes that the proposed construction of one of the buildings and roof drain drywells within 100 feet of inland wetlands would qualify as "regulated activities."

It also points to a report prepared by [Steve Trinkaus, an engineer for the intervenors](#), that evaluates the proposed development's likely impact on wetlands or watercourses during rainfall and says pollutants from the proposed development would "exacerbate the adverse impacts to wetlands and watercourses."

The letter from Lozanov concludes that the agency needs additional information to "evaluate the environmental impact, the short and long term impacts, irreversible or irretrievable impacts of the regulated activities and the impacts on wetlands or watercourses outside the area of the regulated activity as well as evaluate whether any feasible and prudent alternatives exist."

"Therefore to properly evaluate the above, the Inland Wetlands Agency would need an application for an inland wetlands permit to be submitted with all the applicable information as required by Section 7 of the East Lyme Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations to conduct regulated activities," it adds.

The Zoning Commission will hold a meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday at Town Hall on Landmark's proposal.