

**COVENTRY INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY
MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER:

By: Penney

Time: 7:04 p.m.

Place: Virtual

ROLL CALL:

		PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:	Martin Briggs	X	
	Patricia Laramee	X	
	Lori Mathieu, Chairperson		X
	Open		
	Thomas Woolf, Vice Chairman	X	
ALTERNATE MEMBERS:	Suzanne Choate	X	
	Mike Powers	X arrived 7:08 p.m.	
STAFF:	Todd Penney, Town Engineer/Wetlands Agent	X	
STAFF:	Mindy Gosselin, Wetlands Agent Assistant	X	

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. 20-40W – 89 South River Road – Applicant: Owen Swift – Sweet River Farm, LLC; Owner: Same; Agent: None – North and South Drainage project for Agricultural purposes**

Owen Swift was present.

Penney said the goal of today’s meeting is to see if the IWA agrees this is an as-of-right activity under Section 4.a.b of the wetland regulations – farming as being an allowable use. Penney feels this activity is operational in the maintenance of the farm to better utilize the property.

Mr. Swift said he has owned this property since 2011 with farming activity starting in 2012. This property has been occupied as agricultural for a very long time before his ownership. Swift has kept cows, sheep, berries, fruit trees, ducks, chickens, turkeys, and a large vegetable garden. He is stabling two horses and his poultry in the barn. There is a fenced barnyard also. The livestock will spend time in the outdoors during the non-grazing season. The barnyard is a decent size and he has never had more than ten animals at a time in it. It is difficult to

maintain grass here. It would be more manageable if the flow was not coming into the barnyard from the road. There is also an issue with gutters on the barn draining to the south with no outlet to a downspout. The barn roof creates a lot of storm water runoff as it catches a lot of rain. He has observed more than five gallons per minute. On this side of the property Swift wants to create subsurface drains for the flow from the road and tie the gutters to a downspout to the subsurface drains. The drains will outflow into the river.

Penney asked Mr. Swift to touch on the involvement with NCRS and how these plans were developed. Swift got in touch with NCRS and contracted with them. These projects are designed to improve conservation and help out farmers. NCRS soil scientists and engineers developed this plan. Without the help of NCRS this project would not be feasible for Mr. Swift. He is hopeful that funds received from NCRS will cover most of the cost. Choate said this proposed project does seem to help with a potential erosion problem. Woolf and Laramee agreed the plan is well thought out. Swift added the drain between the road and the barnyard are subsurface and should not be getting sediment.

Mr. Swift said the project on the north side of the property is to correct an issue created by the Town's catch basin. The basin currently outlets onto the grass without a plunge pool. Therefore, channels have developed as the water runs down to the river. He wants to maintain this section as a small field with blueberry bushes. Mowing and mulching is needed for this crop. It is very difficult to get equipment to that side. His walk behind mower gets stuck and his tractor has seasonal limitations. The project is to put in a manhole at the catch basin outlet and run the underground pipe to a plunge pool and then into the river. Fill material will be needed to cover up the pipe. Sediment will not get into the river from his property. Any sediment will be coming from the road and erosion is already taking place that carries sediment into the river. Answering Choate's question about the Town needing an easement on Swift's property since this is to correct a catch basin issue, Penney said that is not needed. Everything Swift is doing will be his responsibility to maintain. The catch basin outlet was probably a prescriptive right to discharge; this is an old culvert. Swift has not seen the river flood to the level of the plunge pool. Woolf said this is very well planned and logical.

Penney feels these regulated activities are in support of the farming on the property. There is a good outline in the plans for erosion and sediment control. Woolf agrees and with the NCRS involved people with expertise developed the plans. The activity being proposed will help with erosion issues to the north. This plan would be to the betterment to the condition of the property and of farming activities. Briggs commented that the IWA seems to have gotten into this project fairly late to which Penney agreed. Mr. Swift indicated NCRS will be providing an engineer and wildlife biologist to be on-site during the construction.

Choate and Powers were seated.

Motion: I move the Coventry Inland Wetlands Agency determines application 20-40W is an as-of-right projects that are integral for the main and operation of the agricultural use on the property and therefore, as-of-right, under Section 4.1.a of the wetland regulations.

With the following condition:

The Wetland Agent is invited to a pre-construction meeting.

By: Choate

Seconded: Powers

Voting:
For: Choate, Briggs, Powers, Laramie
Against: None
Abstain: None

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

By: Choate

Seconded: Powers

Voting:
For: Choate, Briggs, Powers, Laramie
Against: None
Abstain: None

Respectfully Submitted,

Yvonne B. Filip

Yvonne B. Filip, IWA Clerk

PLEASE NOTE: The minutes are not official until approved by the Inland Wetland Agency at the next Agency meeting. Please see the next Agency meeting minutes for approval or changes to these minutes.