

ATTACHMENT H

CLA Engineers, Inc.
Letter Dated May 1, 2020

05-04-2020

CLA Engineers, Inc.

Civil • Structural • Survey

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May 1, 2020

Ms. Heidi Wallace
Wetlands Officer
Town of Westbrook, CT
866 Boston Post Road
Westbrook, CT 06498

Re: Dattilo Village
Westbrook, CT
CLA – 6220

CLA Engineers was retained by Dattilo Village to conduct a wetlands investigation and functional assessment on the parcels of land, located on Kirtland Street and Boston Post Road, that are proposed to be developed into Dattilo Village. The application for this project has been submitted to the Westbrook Inland Wetlands Commission and an initial review, provided in a memorandum dated March 10, 2020, was performed by the Nathan Jacobson and Associates. The following comment is excerpted from page 5 of that memorandum.

1. Based on a visit to the site it was observed that there are two areas with 3" to 4" of ponding water within the wetland located to the south on the adjacent property and the wetland to the northeast located on the property. These areas should be checked to determine if vernal pool amphibian species are breeding.

CLA has responded to that comment by conducting a vernal pool study of the two wetlands mentioned in the comment. CLA conducted thorough walk through of each of the wetlands on the following dates: March 3, 9, 13, 16, 31 and April 10 and 27. By donning waders and using a dip net, CLA was able to thoroughly examine both wetlands for the presence of vernal pool obligate species such as fairy shrimp, wood frogs, spotted salamanders and marbled salamanders. CLA found no presence of any of these species, nor were there any egg masses laid by these species. Also, no chorusing of wood frogs was noted. On the same dates, CLA confirmed the presence of each of these species (except for fairy shrimp) in known off-site vernal pools in both Westbrook and Old Saybrook, CT. Based on this information CLA concludes that none of the on-site wetlands function as vernal pools.

CLA is also addressing comment #2 from page 5 of the review letter.

2. It is unclear from the information provided as to the ongoing hydrology of the stormwater practices with respect to supporting the proposed plantings. Some of the rain garden/basin plantings are suitable for wet or inundated conditions while others are suitable for dry conditions. The ponds are indicated to be designed to infiltrate stormwater runoff over an extended period of time, but it is unclear if the basin surface will maintain a saturated condition to support the plantings.

Based on a review of the proposed hydrology of the rain gardens and basins, CLA believes that they will not support plants that require long term ponding or saturation (i.e. wetland conditions) and therefore has recommended that certain species listed in the planting schedule be replaced. The wetland obligates (tussock sedge, swamp sedge, winterberry holly, and swamp azalea) should be swapped out for plants that are not obligate wetland species but fall into the categories of facultative wetland or facultative per the National Wetlands Inventory. Based on my conversations with Talcott Associates, the landscape plans will be revised to address comment #2.

Sincerely,

Robert C Russo

Robert C. Russo CSS