

To: Inland Wetlands Agency

From: Tim Austin, Chair – Woodbridge Conservation Commission

RE: 10 & 14 Merritt Ave Subdivision

Date: January 4, 2022

The Woodbridge Conservation Commission (WCC) held a Special Meeting on December 22nd regarding the proposed Merritt Avenue subdivision that is before you. The Commission wanted to inform the IWA that when the matter comes before the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, the Conservation Commission will be requesting Open Space in the subdivision.

We have informed the Civil Engineer/Surveyor and the Developer for the Subdivision of this request. Whether this will lead to any changes to the plan while this matter is before you, is not known to us.

As you know, the West River flows through the property. As the property borders the river, it is part of the state designated *West River Watershed Greenway*, having received that designation from the state of Connecticut in 2015, with the endorsement of the Town of Woodbridge. From DEEP's Official Connecticut Greenways site:

West River Watershed – Nominated by the West River Watershed Coalition (WRWC) and endorsed by the Towns of Bethany, Hamden, New Haven, West Haven and Woodbridge in addition to the South Central Regional Water Authority and Greater New Haven Water Pollution Control Authority. With this designation, the entire watershed of the West River is now an official CT Greenway. This greenway encourages the protection of natural resources and promotes sustainable recreational uses in the corridor.

The *West River Watershed Coalition* has recently completed walking path sections along the West River in New Haven, terminating close to Pond Lily Ave. It is envisioned that this walking path can be continued under the Wilbur Cross Parkway, through the to be designated Open Space in this subdivision, eventually connecting to existing town walking paths near the Darling House, and continuing on Water Company trails into Bethany. Walking paths of this type would be a valuable resource to the people who will live in this subdivision and to the greater Woodbridge community.

To further our understanding, the WCC also plans to make a site visit as a group to the property in January. Any member of the IWA would be welcome to join us.

If need be, you can reach me at: tim.austin@outlook.com.

Respectfully,

Tim Austin
Chair – Conservation Commission