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**PUBLIC WORKS – ENGINEERING DIVISION**

**M E M O R A N D U M**

TO: Bloomfield Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

FROM: David Peter Castaldi, Civil Engineer and Wetlands Agent 

DATE: December 8, 2025

RE: **Bloomfield Tennis Club request for a Jurisdictional Ruling for tree removal  
51 Douglas Street, Unique ID #851**

**Property Owner:** 45 Douglas St, LLC

**Wetlands File #75-2025-31**

This request for a Jurisdictional Ruling was submitted on November 7, 2025, in accordance with Sections 4.4 and 4.5 of the Wetlands Regulations, along with several supporting documents. The November 7, 2025 letter and supporting documentation is made part of this memorandum. The Commission may approve the request for Jurisdictional Ruling or require that the applicant submit an application for a Wetlands Permit.

This 1.92 acre property is located on the west side of Douglas Street, north of Britton Drive, and includes an existing single-family residence. There are no wetlands or watercourses on the property. However, there are off-site wetlands and watercourses and the westerly part of the property includes the respective 100-foot and 200-foot Upland Review Areas.

The request is for the clearing of all trees and brush on the property. The Tennis Club is planning to expand their operations onto this property and the proposed clearing is the first step in this expansion. The existing residence would also have to be demolished. The Tennis Club opted to submit this request for a Jurisdictional Ruling rather than including the clearing in a Permit application for the development of the property.

Section 4.5 of the 2023 Wetlands Regulations states that:

*“A jurisdictional ruling is required for timber harvesting and forestry. Any person proposing to carry out timber harvesting, forest management practices or any other use or operation that includes the creation of skidder roads or trails, landing areas, temporary crossings or other disturbance of a wetland, watercourse or upland review shall submit a written request for a Jurisdictional Ruling to the Commission pursuant to Section 4.4 of*

*these Regulations. Trees, woods, brush, forest or other vegetation may not be removed, cleared, mowed or otherwise disturbed within the wetlands, watercourses or upland review areas without a Jurisdictional Ruling in accordance with Section 4.4 of these Regulations or a valid Wetlands Permit.”*

Section 6.6 of the Wetlands Regulations also applies and states that:

*6.6 All proposed development or soil disturbance (including removal of trees and vegetative ground cover) of 10,000 square feet of land or more, outside of the Upland Review Areas or Vernal Pool Habitat Areas with overland flow to, or a storm drainage system connection with wetlands or watercourses, shall be submitted for review with a written request for a Jurisdictional Ruling in accordance with Sections 4.4 and 4.6 of these Regulations. The Wetlands Commission or Agent may determine that a Wetlands Permit application is required.*

The majority of the subject property is wooded and the estimated area of the proposed clearing is 1.5 acres (64,000 square feet).

The submitted supporting documentation included a requested tree inventory survey. This inventory indicates many specimen trees within and bordering the property. It is not clear whether the trees on other land owned by 45 Douglas St, LLC, bordering the subject property to the north, are also proposed to be removed. A preliminary plan titled “Site Plan Option 2A” was also submitted.

There are several reasons why the removal of the vegetation should be the subject of a Wetlands Permit. Impacts to the wetlands and watercourse resources will occur with the proposed loss of wetlands and riparian vegetated buffers. The retention of these vegetated buffers is the best way to protect these natural resources.

In addition, without a site plan to review as part of Permit application, it is not possible to determine whether the entire property actually needs to be cleared. The submitted Site Plan Option 2A indicates no proposed development in the westerly part of the property and the removal of the trees from this area does not appear to be necessary. Option 2A shows a retaining wall that is too close to the southerly property line. Another retaining wall may be necessary for the westerly parking lot that has 10-15 feet of elevation change in the existing grades. Also, the Zoning Regulations allow up to 60% impervious coverage and the Option 2A appears to show more than this maximum.

Stormwater detention and quality measures will be necessary for this project and are not indicated on Option 2A. If underground stormwater management is constructed then there will be more opportunity to retain existing vegetation. If a surface stormwater management basin is proposed then more of the existing trees will be lost.

There is also a concern about whether the tree stumps will be removed as part of the proposed clearing. Regardless of whether the stumps are removed this proposal will require disturbance of the ground and soil erosion and sedimentation controls are required.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Commission deny the request for a Jurisdictional Ruling and require the applicant to submit a Permit application for the development of the property.

If the Commission votes to approve the Jurisdictional Ruling then it is recommended that this approval include the retention of the existing vegetation within the Upland Review Areas 100 feet from wetlands and 200 feet from watercourses and the installation of soil erosion and sediment control measures before the trees are cut.