



# TOWN OF EAST HADDAM

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT: 2019-2029

August 27, 2019

Prepared by the Town of East Haddam Planning and Zoning Commission

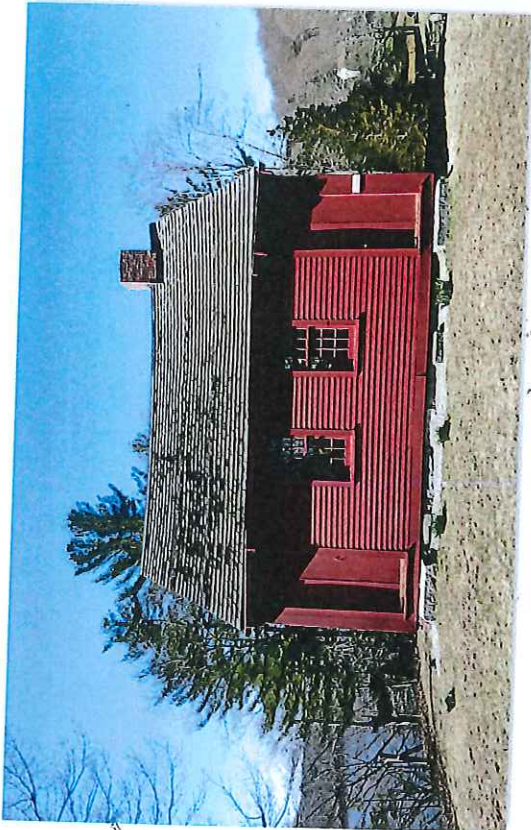
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## Where We Are

East Haddam has adopted village center and commercial center regulations that protect the distinctive character, landscape and historic structures within those districts. To evaluate the balance and strength of any proposed project, the commission uses a Project Evaluation Worksheet as a tool for weighing values and discussion.



Nathan Hale School House

- The Town has a strong desire to keep with the historic development patterns of having population centered in and around the village centers.
- Future development, commercial or residential, is confined by scale, architectural style, and location where appropriate in order to mesh with the town's existing rural character.

- The Town adopted a Village District Zone in East Haddam Village which offers additional requirements to ensure that future development fits in with the historical character of the area.

**East Haddam promotes the growth of its current and future agricultural businesses and farmable lands and doubles down on its agricultural heritage.**

East Haddam has been making great strides in supporting the agricultural businesses that contribute to the preservation of the Town's farmland and agricultural heritage. Farmland preservation provides economic, ecological and social benefits to the Town, its residents and its visitors. Promoting local small family owned businesses and their long-term economic viability contributes to the tax base and draws in valuable agritourism dollars. These farms also



Staehly Farm Winery, March 2016, Photo Source: Staehly Farm Mgmt

**Where We're Going: Goals**

Conserve East Haddam's natural environment and agricultural lands.

**How We'll Get There: Recommended Strategies**

- Continue to work with preservation partners - State of Connecticut, The Nature Conservancy, East Haddam Land Trust, Eightmile Wild & Scenic Watershed, Salmon River Watershed, Connecticut River Gateway Commission, and other conservation organizations.
- Protect East Haddam's environmental and historical assets while managing growth according to best environmental practices available.
- Support existing farms that provide a diverse local economy, provide locally grown and raised products, preserve open space, and retain the rural quality of life.
- Build partnerships with local and regional agriculture based organizations (i.e. UConn Extension center, Ct Farmers' Bureau, FFA, VoAg, etc.) to promote agriculture as viable business initiatives.
- Continue to actively support local and State policies to preserve agricultural properties and improve the business climate for agriculture and facilitate recruitment of agricultural businesses.
- Continue to keep in effect the present Public Act 490 tax relief program for excess property.
- Review inventory of underdeveloped lands and provide information to land owners as to the tax benefits of the P.A. 490 program.
- Work with owners of agricultural lands to increase awareness of programs to help preserve and retain agricultural lands and operation.
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) allows farmers to sell weekly "shares" directly to customers over the course of the growing season, foster a connection between farmers and consumers, the Town should continue to support local CSA operations.
- Pursue marketing efforts to promote locally grown products, food festivals, and event venues to support family farms.
- Continue to support agritourism efforts in town through the use of farms as venues for greater public participations. Promoting and supporting farms as event venues highlight East Haddam's agricultural amenities, bring agritourism to the region and serves as a farmland protection strategy.

Encourage and support agricultural businesses to reinforce the rural character of East Haddam.



Where We're Going: Goals	How We'll Get There: Recommended Strategies
<p>Work on a regional basis to share resources to expand mutual economic development opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the creation of a collaborative regional entity to facilitate marketing of vacant/underutilized properties, job creation, entrepreneurial development and recruitment of industries appropriate to East Haddam and the region.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with neighboring economic development entities in Chester, Essex, Deep River, Lyme, and Haddam to promote tourism, market attractions and create destination promotions.</li> <li>• Support and promote the Farmers Market and other agri-business enterprises as regional attributes to encourage locally grown food sources.</li> <li>• Continue to support RiverCOG's Regional Economic Growth Strategy, "GrowSMART", in its relation as the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.</li> <li>• Continue to support the Connecticut River Gateway Commission's charge of protecting the Lower Connecticut River Valley.</li> <li>• Support implementation of the comprehensive economic development study (CEDS) for Middlesex County.</li> </ul>
<p>Work to improve transportation routes and methods between neighboring towns to bring people to East Haddam.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore opportunity to create a visitor shuttle service, using the Essex Steam Train, ferries and parking at Eagle Landing State Park, and shuttle routes connecting Essex, Deep River, Chester, Haddam and East Haddam's major tourist destinations.</li> </ul>

The Action Agenda and Implementation Plan Guidelines, and Commission, Board and Community Group Assignments can be found after Pg. 80