TOWN OF EAST HADDAM
Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2026
7:30 pm
Municipal Office Building, Meeting Room 1

1. Will Brady, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

2. **ATTENDANCE, Historic District Commission Members**: Will Brady (Chair), Jack Lovejoy, Christian Miller, Steven Rossi, Karl Stofko,
Absent: David Nelson, Joe Zirlis
Jack Lovejoy was authorized to vote in place of Joe Zirlis.
Karl Stofko was authorized to vote in place of David Nelson.

Guests: Tim Mulcahy, Robin Mulcahy, Agatha Madigan, Donna Lynn Hilton, Gail Steigler, Greg Stiegler
Audience members: Brenden Dahill, Susan Dowling, Diane Dugas, Tracy Gionta, Carol O'Hare, Sean Roe, Laurie Soltis, Attorney Stephanie Antone representing Jackie M. Clegg, and GCMD Trust

Will Brady stated that the order of the discussions and hearings on the agenda will be changed in order to simplify the meeting.

3. Informal Discussion:
A. HDC #26-04 80 Orchard Rd (property Location), Gail Stiegler (applicant and property owner). Map 47, Lot 004.
Gail Stiegler wants to replace the windows, which are in poor condition, re-shingle the roof, and paint the house. Her brother Greg Stiegler, a builder, described the windows as being in poor condition and not reparable. Photos of the old windows were shown to the Commission. The proposed new windows would be vinyl, with 12 over 12 panes to match the old windows, with plain casings and window sills. Jack Lovejoy said that the HDC prefers wood windows to vinyl ones. In addition, the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines for rehabilitating historic buildings recommend preserving as many original features as possible, including windows. The house was built circa 1830 and Mr. Lovejoy recommended contacting a professional to see if it is possible to restore the old windows and what it would cost. This was done on another house in a Historic District in East Haddam and some of the original windows were able to be preserved at a lower cost than replacing them. Storm windows and weatherstripping could be added to increase energy efficiency. The windows on the front and sides of the house are visible from a public way, so the HDC has jurisdiction over them. The windows on the back of the house are not

visible. There was more discussion about the windows and Ms. Steigler agreed to consult a window restorer.
Mr. Stiegler said that the roof shingles also need to be replaced. He proposed using black architectural shingles to replace the older black 3-tab shingles.
The HDC does not have jurisdiction over paint color, so the house can be painted as the owner wishes.
Will Brady said that the Commission cannot make a decision tonight. There will be a public hearing at the April 21 meeting. A legal notice needs to be published in the newspaper 5 to 14 days before the meeting, and notices to the abutting neighbors should be mailed by the end of this month. The Zoning Dept. can provide list of abutting neighbors and provide a sample letter to send them. The letters should be sent by certified mail and the receipts provided to the Commission at the April 21 meeting.
Jack Lovejoy mentioned the Old House Doctor, John King, as someone who may be able to help with the windows.

4. Public Hearing 8:15

A. HDC #26-03 6 Main Street & Lumberyard Road (property location) Goodspeed Opera Foundation Inc. Map 17, Lot 090, 093, 096.
   1. A statue of Sandy, the dog from the musical "Annie," was installed adjacent to the Goodspeed Opera House entrance on a concrete pedestal.
   2. Elevator entrance canopy addition to the Goodspeed Opera House.
      The elevator entrance on the north side of the building is being modernized, and a canopy will be installed above it. The foundation next to the entrance will be repaired and painted.

Agatha Madigan, of Centerbrook Architects, provided drawings of the new wooden canopy for the elevator entrance. The canopy is compatible with an existing canopy on the building and will be painted to match.
The Sandy statue was discussed. Ms. Madigan said that it would not be possible to add texture or stone to the base as the HDC had requested at an informal hearing in February. Donna Lynn Hilton, Goodspeed's Artistic Director, said that the base of the statue cannot be changed because the statue is attached to the base with steel posts which cannot be removed. The concrete base can be painted to blend in better with the location.

Karl Stofko made a motion, seconded by Steven Rossi, to approve the application for the canopy as presented, and to approve the Sandy statue with the stipulation that painting the concrete base a compatible color be explored.
Steven Rossi, Christian Miller, Karl Stofko, and Jack Lovejoy, voted in favor. Motion passed.

B. HDC #26-02 55 Main St (property location), Tim Mulcahy and Robin Mulcahy (applicant and property owner), Map 026, Lot 006. Proposed addition; master suite, mud room, and detached garage.
The Commission made some suggestions about the plans at an informal hearing in February. Mr. Mulcahy brought a plot plan and receipts from neighbor notices as requested. The roof on the mudroom has been changed to a flat roof with a balustrade. The roofline on the garage has been lowered and the dormers changed to be less prominent. The changes to the ell were discussed. The plans call for the roof to be raised in order to accommodate a master suite on the second level. There are two windows now, one will be removed. Jack Lovejoy said that if some original windows are removed they could be used in another part of the house. Karl Stofko asked about the elevations. The roofline of the garage has been reduced, and it is lower. The garage is 30 feet back from the front of the house and the ground slopes down to the river.

Several letters were sent by neighbors opposing the proposed changes. Will Brady read three letters which commented on the project. The objections expressed in the letters were that the new garage overwhelms the house, is not consistent with the style of the house, the changes to the ell make it out of proportion to the house, the view of the river will be blocked, and the approval process is being rushed.
Will Brady said, for the record, we do not consider the view when making a decision, and there is precedence to add another building in the Historic District. The Commission has 65 days from the receipt of an application to make a decision. The letters were read in full and may be heard on the meeting video posted on the Town of East Haddam's website: https://www.youtube.com/live/vub3KjmLK8s?feature=share

Susan Dowling asked if the river is considered to be a public way? Will Brady replied that the question has been asked of the State Historic Preservation Office, and no ruling has been made on that. We have not ruled on anything on the river side.

Steven Rossi commented that he still thinks the garage and the dormers are too big and the additions overwhelm the original building. He likes the flat roof on the mudroom and the balustrade.

Susan Dowling and Diane Dugas agreed that the garage is too big and talked about it blocking the view of the river. Karl Stofko suggested putting the garage in the back, so it is not so overwhelming.

Tracy Gionta commented that, looking at the drawing, it looks like the garage is bigger than the front of the house. It is a Federal house and should be symmetrical as far as windows go. She thinks the garage should look more like a carriage house, not a barn. The taller ell is fine and is compatible with the main house.

Tim Mulcahy stressed that they want to be able to move into a functional house and said that if they add the mudroom and addition, perhaps they could add a garage later.

Jack Lovejoy thinks the ell should be subservient to the main house; the HDC's main goal is to preserve the historic integrity of the buildings and the area. Will Brady mentioned that the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines for rehabilitating historic buildings are against slavish reproductions. New additions and construction should be compatible in massing and size, although different styles can be used.

Stephanie Antone, representing Jackie Clegg and the GMCD Trust, said that the garage is too big and overwhelms the house.

Steven Rossi said that we have an application before us, and a window of time in which to make a decision. Will Brady said we can decide on part of the application with the stipulation that he comes back and discusses the garage again.

No decision was made and the application was continued to the April 21 meeting. Jack Lovejoy suggested bringing the architect to the meeting so he can answer some questions.

4. Approval of Minutes of the February 17, 2026, meeting – tabled to the next meeting.

5. Other Discussions – none

6. **Adjournment:** Karl Stofko moved, seconded by Steven Rossi, to adjourn the meeting at 9:42 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Martha Hansen,
Recording Secretary