East Haddam Planning and Zoning Commission
Land Use Office

Regular Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2026

1) CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Brownell called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

2) COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Crary Brownell (Chairman), James Curtin (Vice Chairman), Richard Pettinelli (Secretary), Bernard Gillis, Susan Kinsman, Maureen Pierson, Eric Chamberland, D. Duncan Orr, and Gary Turenne.

   COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Debbie Langdon

   OTHERS PRESENT: James Ventres LUA

3) MINUTES –

   a) **January 27, 2026**
   Page 1 & 3 – Nicholson instead of Nickleson
   Page 4 – 1st paragraph, deer resistant, not resistance
   Page 4 – last paragraph, regional approaches to "affordable housing"
   Page 4 – last paragraph, historic, not history

   b) **February 10, 2026**
   Page 2 – middle of page, Petinelli with two t's
   Page 4 – middle of the page, #2, assessed, not accessed
   Throughout the minutes CTDOT, not CT DOT

   c) **March 10, 2026**
   Page 1 BILLS – Ms. Kinsman asked if the bills are to be paid by the applicant. Mr. Ventres stated Yes

4) BILLS – NLJ Associates $44.98 – review of CTDOT letter for the gas station. It was noted that the applicant is responsible for review billings.

   A motion was made by Mr. Curtin to pay the bills as presented. Seconded by Mr. Gillis and unanimously approved.

5) APPLICATIONS

   Application #26-1 44 WM F Palmer Rd, Map 65, lot 138, East Haddam Fire Department, construction for new firehouse and demolition of existing. CGS 8-24 Review – Public Improvement

   First Date: February 24, 2026 Last Date: April 29, 2026

Mr. Ventres presented the commission members with copies of the Connecticut General Statutes 8-24 Municipal Improvements and Chapter 2 of the 2019 Plan of Conservation and Development. Attorney Willis said the commission first has to review the project to see if it is in conformance with the Plan of Conservation and Development, then the town votes, and finally the commission reviews the final site plans and building diagrams.

A motion was made by Mr. Pettinelli to set the public hearing for April 28, 2026. Seconded by Mr. Curtin and unanimously approved.

Mr. Brownell asked that previous engineer reports be given to the commission members.

6. HOME OCCUPATIONS

A. Application #26-02 621 Town St, Map 56, Lot 031, Albert & Joycelyn Hawkes, property owners. Garage based woodworking business.

Mr. Ventres reported that the applicant sells the products online and goes to the post office to send deliveries. The mailings have been sent; no concerns were brought forward.

A motion was made by Mr. Curtin to approve Application #26-02 621 Town St, Map 56, Lot 031, Albert & Joycelyn Hawkes, property owners. Garage based woodworking business. Seconded by Mr. Gillis. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

B. Application #26-03 11 & 23 Three Bridges Rd, Map 15, Lot 001, Map 24, Lot 034. Madelyn Curto, property owner. Floriculture production & sales.

Mr. Ventres reported that this is more than a farm stand but since she wished to be a design business that needs a Trade Name Certificate.

A motion was made by Mr. Gillis to approve Application #26-03 11 & 23 Three Bridges Rd, Map 15, Lot 001, Map 24, Lot 034. Madelyn Curto, property owner. Floriculture production & sales. Seconded by Mr. Pettinelli. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

C. Application #26-04 84 Falls Rd, Map 65, Lot 099, John Gagnon, property owner. Online only kitchenware retail shop.

The application was tabled since we did not receive the certificates of mailing.

6. DISCUSSION

a) Housing Bill 8002 Review

Mr. Ventres presented the commission with a housing work sheet that noted the regulations that work with the new bill and a condensed version of the goals and timeline that the towns and the regional planning agencies have to meet. He also presented copies of our 2022 Affordable Housing Plan.

He noted he attended the Lower Connecticut Valley Council of Governments (River GOG) Regional Housing Committee meeting today. It was the kickoff meeting for the Regional Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Growth Plan. The State Office at Policy and Management (OPM) is to establish regional housing needs and housing growth targets by December 1, 2026. The COGS are to establish a recommended affordable housing goal for each municipality by June 1, 2027. The River COG staff feels the committee should start now, since January to June may be too short of time.

Under this bill each COG receives $200,000 to assist the municipalities. The first step is to have a consultant review the existing zoning regulations and to make recommendations for compliance with the new law.

The second step is to review the holding capacity at the land using GIS technology. This would exclude developed land, open space, state parks, wetlands, ledge, and steep slopes.

It was noted that considering staff time limitations, it may be beneficial to opt into the regional plan since they have the resources.

There was a discussion about how soil limitations usually prevent clustering of housing units to bring the cost down.

There was also discussion about the potential for sewers in Moodus. Mr. Pettinelli noted the commission had reviewed that and the use of a centralized septic system would be more effective.

Under the existing Plan of Conservation and Development along with the East Haddam Water Pollution Control Authority Regulations most of the town is in a Sewer Avoidance Program.

Mr. Gillis asked that Mr. Ventres distribute the past review of sewer needs to the commission members.

Mr. Ventres stated he would be attending the monthly regional planning agency meeting and would report back to the commission. He also noted that there have been many amendments submitted already but more have been acted upon.

b) Moodus Master Plan – Regulation Review

The commission reviewed the draft mapping with five subzones. It seems that all were in favor of reducing the number of zones to two or three. The commission members felt it would be confusing

for potential developers if it stayed as five zones. One would clearly be residential in nature, while the others would be mixed use/commercial including industrial uses.

Mr. Ventres said he would return with the options for the commission's review.

6) LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Mr. Ventres stated that there was a violation of the agricultural agreement at the Shugrue Farm, but the lease had no knowledge of the property being used over the weekend. A Notice of Violation has been sent out, and all parties will be contacted.

7) ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Pettinelli to adjourn at 8:10 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Curtin and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Olson
Recording Secretary