**PLANNING AND ZONING**
**TOWN OF EAST HADDAM**
**LAND USE OFFICE**
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**
**(Not yet approved by the Commission)**
**March 9, 2021**

**There is access to this meeting via a YouTube Live link from the Town's website:**
**www.easthaddam.org**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Brownell called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

**2. COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Crary Brownell (Chairman), James Curtin (Vice Chairman), Richard Pettinelli (Secretary), Justin Anderson (regular member), Bernard Gillis (regular member), Ed Gubbins (regular member) and Susan Kinsman (alternate member).

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:** Lou Salicrup (regular member).

Chairman Brownell appointed Ms. Kinsman to vote for Mr. Salicrup.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** James Ventres, Land Use Administrator, Bob Casner, EDC and Toni Marie Dumaine, Recording Secretary.

**3. MINUTES:** The February 23, 2021 minutes are accepted with the following amendments:
Page 3, Customary Home Occupations, 3rd paragraph, add *is* in violation, and correct two-acre *lot*.
Page 5, Item 4. add: The proposed walkway/bike path will be located on the east side of Rte. 82 from the Rose Hill Farm Land Trust north to Petticoat Lane then across to the west side of Rte. 82 south to the Lion's Club pond.

**4. BILLS:** None

**5. REGULATION REVIEW**

**1. Agricultural Regulations**

Mr. Ventres stated that the Agricultural Commission indicated that the Hobby Farm regulations are too strict. Mr. Ventres will send a draft to the commission recommending appropriate amendments to this regulation.

**6. ZEO REPORT**

In response to Mr. Brownell's question: Mr. Ventres stated that the Land Use office has not received an application for 25 Falls Road, Grist Mill Market area. There is an application for Inland Wetlands Watercourse subdivision review from the commission.

In response to Mr. Brownell's question: Mr. Ventres will maintain a list of seasonal houses where people live year-round. He stated that because it is close to the season opening of April 15th, he will send cease and desist notifications to the owners in November. Mr. Brownell cited liability concerns for the town.

In response to Mr. Brownell's question: Mr. Ventres indicated that Getaway Outpost is proceeding with preliminary site work and permit applications to finalize the sale of the Middlesex County Camp Foundation property.

## 7. DISCUSSION

### 1. Moodus Center Regulation & Mapping Review

Mr. Brownell announced that there will be a Moodus Center subcommittee meeting on March 10, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. at the Municipal Office Complex.

### 2. Customary Home Occupation

Mr. Ventres referenced the copy of the East Haddam Home Occupation Regulation, Section 27, noting his comments in bold type. Mr. Ventres read Section 27.4 of the Approval Procedure regarding the role of the Zoning Enforcement Officer. He indicated that people who use a building as a home office, including a business phone and mailing address, can apply to the Zoning Enforcement Officer. For anything more "the home occupation shall require the approval of the Planning & Zoning Commission as a Special Exception in accordance with Section 14B of these Regulations." Mr. Ventres suggests that the commission review other town's home occupation regulations to help clarify questionable language. Mr. Brownell stated that the Planning & Zoning Commission should resume the approval process for home occupation applications. He requests that the commission review and recommend amendments for this regulation.

In response to Mr. Brownell's question pertaining to Mr. Casner's March 8, 2021 letter: Mr. Ventres requests more time to address the issues pertaining to the 6 Southwinds Road home business. Mr. Casner remarked that the home occupation regulations must be clarified. He feels that most applications should go to special exception review, so neighbors are notified of a home business. Mr. Casner recommends that small businesses requiring more than 500 square feet to operate acquire commercial space in a commercial zone.

Mr. Gillis questioned the 25 % square footage allowance for a home business. Discussion ensued regarding the variety of home businesses that exist in East Haddam; the questionable square footage allowance; the storage of commercial vehicles and equipment and the two-year application renewal requirement. This discussion will continue at the next P&Z meeting.

**3. Beebe Road/Scenic Road**

Mr. Brownell elected Ms. Kinsman to the scenic road subcommittee and appointed Mr. Pettinelli as the maintenance enforcement officer for the subcommittee. At the February 26th field meeting, Mr. Brownell, Mr. Pettinelli, Mr. Salicrup, Mr. Randy Dill and Selectman Rob Smith acknowledged the current road condition and proposed the following improvements: To install a culvert, scarify and compact the road material, and crown Beebe Road to 14 feet wide to improve road conditions. Discussion ensued regarding the annual maintenance of the town's scenic dirt roads and the impact of truck traffic on dirt roads. Repairs to Beebe Road will take place in dry weather conditions.

**4. Regulation review for Colchester large scale indoor Agricultural Zone**

Mr. Ventres distributed a copy of the March 2, 2021 letter to Mr. Joseph Mathieu, Chairman of the Colchester Planning & Zoning Commission from Mr. J.H. Torrance Downs, Deputy Director, RiverCOG regarding the Large-Scale Indoor Agriculture Zone by Petitioner: CMMD, LLC. Discussion ensued regarding the impact this large-scale facility would have on the character of adjacent rural neighborhoods. Mr. Brownell requested that Mr. Ventres draft a letter by March 17, 2021 to Mr. Mathieu, Chairman of the Colchester Planning & Zoning Commission concurring with Mr. Downs and suggests limiting development of a commercial facility to the commercial zone corridor on Rte. 85 in Colchester.

**ZEO REPORT continued**

Mr. Ventres distributed a letter dated February 1, 2021 from Mr. Justin LaFountain, CZEO, Salem Town Planner/Planner II, SCCOG to East Haddam Town Clerk Debra Dennette, regarding the Town of Salem March 16, 2021 Public Hearing. The public hearing application is to "amend Section 25A of the Salem Zoning Regulations. The section, currently known as the Riparian Corridor Overlay Zone, is proposed to be renamed the Eightmile River Watershed Overlay District." There were no comments from the commission.

At this time Chairman Brownell asked Mr. Curtin, also a member of the Village Revitalization Committee, to speak about the Centerbridge Group presentation.

Mr. Curtin informed the commission of the recent East Haddam Village proposal presentation by the Centerbridge Group to the Board of Selectmen and the Village Revitalization Committee. He stated that the Centerbridge Group is a team of experienced professionals who presented a complete and impressive construction site plan. Mr. Curtin explained that there will be road and parking improvements to the village implemented by the State of Connecticut and the Town of East Haddam in addition to the Centerbridge Group's plan. Mr. Casner, a member of the Village Revitalization Committee, added that the Centerbridge team has thirty years' experience in finance, marketing, and retail connections who plan to invest fifty million dollars into a two-acre lot. He indicated that the proposal features quality, detailed architecture for mixed use venues. Mr. Curtin referenced the Ocean House Hotel in Rhode Island as one of Centerbridge's completed projects. He remarked that the owners of the Centerbridge Group live in East

Haddam and plan to strictly monitor this project. The Village Revitalization Committee will send a letter of approval to the Board of Selectmen. Publication of the final site plan will be available once the purchase agreement is complete.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mr. Pettinelli to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Anderson and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Marie Dumaine
Recording Secretary