East Haddam Planning and Zoning Commission
Town of East Haddam
Land Use Office

Regular Meeting Minutes
(Not yet approved by the Commission)
August 23, 2022

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Crary 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 (regular member).

3. **COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT**: Justin Anderson (regular member), Ed Gubbins (regular member), Louis Salicrup (regular member), Susan Kinsman (alternate member), Deborah Langdon (alternate member).

4. **MINUTES**
   July 12, 2022, Minutes – *Second paragraph, last sentence, Issues that continually came up was density and setbacks. Should read "Issues that continually came up were density and setbacks."*

5. **BILLS**

   Halloran & Sage - $74.00

   A motion to pay the bills was made by James Curtin, seconded by Richard Pettinelli and passed by unanimous vote.

6. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

   None.

7. **REGULATION DISCUSSION**

   A. Campgrounds

   Mr. Ventres informed the commission that he has separated the campground section of the regulations from the recreational campground section. There was a discussion on the definition of recreational campgrounds and some of the campgrounds that we currently have now in town.

   Richard Pettinelli asked if there was a separate definition for a resort, Jim confirmed that there was a separate definition for a resort and that resorts are separate from recreational camps.

B. Parking

Richard Pettinelli read aloud the language in 15-2-3 Campgrounds and Recreational Camps 15.2.23. A discussion ensued about having traffic studies completed and for holding public hearings to discuss the matter.

Jim Ventres showed the Commission the material that he had from The Getaway Campground and the State of Connecticut regarding traffic flow, entrances, and footage.

C. Moodus Commercial District Guidelines

Chairman Crary Brownell mentioned that there was to be a meeting regarding funding. Richard Pettinelli explained that it was to discuss asking River COG to initiate a couple planning studies.

Crary Brownell said that one of the studies was to be done fairly quickly and that the second one, which would be the corridor study would be placed on a waiting list. Crary would like to meet with someone from the planning side of River Cog to look at things and review the regulations.

Richard Pettinelli stated that a corridor study would be extremely helpful and feels that a planner should look at things.

D. Potential Open Space Grant Application – Town of East Haddam – Kronberg Property – 95 acres – North Moodus Road.

Jim Ventres handed out material for the potential open space grant application and explained some details about the property. The property is located on North Moodus Road and is across the street from Grandview. It has 20 acres plus of fields and a hillside that runs all the way up to the middle school. He recommends that seventy-four (74) acres be purchased for open space preservation, which is farmland and forest land. He informed the commission that the Board of Education has approved this. The commission reviewed the map and had a brief discussion on the grant application. Jim Ventres asked that a letter be written so that this grant application can move forward.

Richard Pettinelli asked if this property has public access and Jim Ventres confirmed that it does and that there was also going to be another access off North Moodus Rd. There is also an area to park below.

***A motion was made by Richard Pettinelli that a letter be written to recommend that the grant application for the 74 acres move forward, seconded by Jim Curtin* and passed by unanimous vote**.

E. **Potential Open Space Grant Application – East Haddam Land Trust – Honey Hill Farm – 126 acres – Honey Hill Road.**

Jim Ventres gave details about the property and described the location of the property. He also stated that there were a couple of property owners that have conservation easements that are willing to participate for some of the crossover.

A motion was made by Jim Curtin that the Commission finds that the 126-acre lot for the Honey Hill Farm property meets the criteria for open space purchase, seconded by Mr. Gillis and passed by unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Crary Brownell to take a 5-minute recess, seconded by Mr. Pettinelli, and passed by unanimous vote.

8. PUBLIC HEARING 8:00 pm

Mr. Pettinelli read into the record the legal notice.

A. **A. #22-03 – 427 Tater Hill Road, Christopher & Gina Weske (applicants), Christopher Weske (property owner). Special exception review for accessory uses to a farm. Map 051, Lot 050.**

Jim Ventres stated that the applicants are looking to do additional activities that are accessory to the farm which under the Planning & Zoning Regulations require a Special Exception Review.

The applicants, Christopher & Gina Weske introduced themselves for the record and continued to their presentation to the Commission. They explained that they are looking to do what is above what is allowed to do as a farm under the planning & zoning regulations.

They would like to do certain community type events such as yoga, events for flower cutting, fall events, which would include music and food, these events would have everything for people to enjoy during fall weekends.

The applicants would also like to have small scale birthday parties for children and other events such as for wedding showers, educational trips for children and tours for special needs groups where they can come and interact with the animals.

They explained several events that they have held in the past and their experience with the events and projects that they have done. They explained that they would

like to be a creative outlet for people and do crafts which involve items from the farm such as making soaps. They stated that it is about being a community area for people to get back into agriculture and enjoy themselves.

Crary Brownell asked what type of music they would have, they stated that it would be acoustical and some country type music.

Jim Curtin asked about the amount of people there would be for the minor events or classes. They explained that it would be about four (4) families and maybe up to twenty (20) people. If it were a shower, it may be a bit more people.

A discussion ensued regarding the amount of people who would be at different events as well as how many people for the various classes such as the yoga and soap making.

The Commission asked about what type of parking they have. The applicants stated that they have 12 parking spaces and there is an overflow parking on the grass in the back. They explained people come and go too so they have never experienced any issues with parking. The food truck is placed in the gravel parking area and works out well.

The Commission reviewed their application and site plan. Jim Ventres said that the site plan demonstrates 17 formal parking spaces, they have overflow parking all the way to the back.

Chairman Crary Brownell opened the application up to the public for questions or comments.

Richard & Roxanne Albert (property owners) 70 Millington Road – Mr. Albert asked how many of the four (4) acres of their property, including the fencing and clusters woodened, is available to use for this purpose.

The applicants stated that they will not be using all the acreage and that they left a buffer, roughly three (3) plus acres is farmland.

Mrs. Albert explained that their property is close to their property line. Mr. Albert presented a map to the Commission and explained where the two properties are located.

Crary Brownell stated that there was quite a bit of trees and wooded area between the two properties. The Commission reviewed the map, they discussed the wooded areas and stone wall.

A neighbor explained to the Commission that she is overjoyed to have an agricultural place like this in town. She also stated that she has never experienced any problems with noise, parking, or traffic.

Maureen Pierson (property owner) 82 Millington Road – Ms. Pierson addressed the Commission. She stated that the Weske's are a lovely family, their animals are beautifully cared for, and all their events are for the community. It is quiet and respectful, and they are a joy to have in the neighborhood and our community. She also stated that the back of her property joins theirs and she sees absolutely no issues with this, it is a positive thing for the community.

Mrs. Albert of 70 Millington Road explained that they have not been difficult people however, as a property abutter, she now has excessive noise, they hear all the traffic and with all the woods down things are opened up and the now hear all of the noise.

Crary Brownell stated that it sounds like this is going to be a family farm, petting zoo. A brief discussion ensued between the commission, public and applicants.

Crary Brownell made a motion to schedule a field walk on September 30, 2022, at 6:30 P.M. and to continue the public hearing to September 13, 2022, seconded by Bernie Gillis and passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Pettinelli read into the record the legal notice.

B. C-3 Plains Road Commercial Area – Text Amendment to include restaurant in Section 9.6.1.2

Jim Ventes explained that he marked the area on the map so that the commission could see where it stretched all the way down to the old Cumberland Farms and is all of Plains Road and then a section all of the way down to the old Cumberland Farms.

Jim explained that C3 has a little less variety of uses under the table of uses but the Moodus Commercial regulations already allow bed and breakfast and Country Inn.

The Commission discussed seating for restaurants and coffee shops.

Jim Curtin opened to public questions and comments.

There were no public questions or comments.

Mr. Anderson made a motion to approve the modification to C3 planned through a commercial area text amendment to 9.6.1.2 as presented, seconded by Jim Curtin and passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Pettinelli read into the record the legal notice.

C. Annual review of the 2019 Plan of Conservation Plan of Development.

Jim stated that he and the conservation commission sent in some changes for the commission to review. Also, Jim added some modifications, and they emailed back and agreed to accept the modifications. Jim added that Susan Kinsman agreed with the modifications as presented.

Jim Curtin made a motion to accept the changes made in the 2019 Plan of Conservation & Development related to Hazard Mitigation and Resilience under the Conservation Commission, seconded by Richard Pettinelli and passed by unanimous vote.

9. LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Jim Curtin made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Gillis and passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Magri, Recording Secretary