EAST HADDAM PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

MUNICIPAL OFFICE COMPLEX – 1 PLAINS ROAD – MEETING ROOM #1 & 2

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 12, 2023

1. **CALL TO ORDER - Mr. Brownell called the meeting to order for the East Haddam Planning and Zoning Commission at 7:15 P.M.**

2. **ATTENDANCE**

   PRESENT: Mr. Brownell (Chairman), Mr. Pettinelli (Secretary), Mr. Curtin (Vice Chairman), Mr. Gubbins (Regular Member), Ms. Langdon (Alternate Member), Ms. Dumaine (Alternate Member), Ms. Kinsman (Alternate Member).

   ABSENT: Mr. Anderson (Regular Member), Mr. Salicrup (Regular Member), Mr. Gillis (Regular Member).

   Mr. Brownell requested that Ms. Kinsman sit in for Mr. Anderson, Ms. Langdon sit in for Mr. Gillis and Ms. Dumaine sit in for Mr. Salicrup.

3. **MINUTES –** August 22, 2023

   Ms. Kinsman stated that she did not attend the August 22, 2023 meeting.

   Page three (3) needs to state was not clear and Ms. Langdon verified that she had asked if the parking was going to be dependent on the Eagle Landing parking area for overflow parking. The minutes should state that parking would be decided by all the owners on how parking would work.

   Page 3 section 8 Ms. Langdon said that the minutes did not include her asking if they could request if a deeded environmental buffer on East Shore Drive could be included.

   Mr. Brownell accepted the August 22, 2023, minutes as amended.

4. **BILLS – None**

5. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - Application #23-11 – 25 Falls Road (property location), Goodspeed Realty LLC (property owner), Andrew Payne & Joanne Gamble, Moodus Mud Coffee Roasters, LLC (applicants). Special Exception Application for a coffee roastery, coffee café and mobile food truck. Map 065, Lot 047.**

Mr. Ventres stated that the applicant is seeking to turn their home occupation business into a full-scale. Included with their submitted application is a floor plan for building # six. The applicant would also like to use a mobile food truck and have an outdoor patio area as well. They are prepared to have a public hearing on September 26, 2023.

Ms. Kinsman made a motion to schedule a public hearing on September 26, 2023, for Application #23-11 – 25 Falls Road (property location), Goodspeed Realty LLC (property owner), Andrew Payne & Joanne Gamble, Moodus Mud Coffee Roasters, LLC (applicants). Special Exception Application for a coffee roastery, coffee café and mobile food truck. Map 065, Lot 047, seconded by Mr. Pettinelli, the motion passed unanimously.

6. HOME OCCUPATIONS – Minor Applications - None

7. DISCUSSION

A) Update of adopted Gateway Standards

Mr. Ventres made mention to the staff position at the Gateway Commission that still needs to be filled and that he is waiting to hear from them, at this time things are currently on hold, he should be hearing from them shortly.

B) Farm Stands verses Farm Stores

Mr. Gubbins said that there was a meeting held on August 31, 2023. He explained that they are currently working on a set of definitions for a farm stand versus a farm store and a farm market. Mr. Ventres stated that he sent out a draft set of definitions to the Regional Planning Agency and to the Chatham Health District for review.

C) Electronic Message Display Signs

Mr. Ventres made mention of commercial property owners that may want to have an electronic message display sign. He explained that according to Attorney Willis, the Town of East Haddam represents health, safety, and welfare, therefore the need for the town to have a display sign would be separate need for a commercial entity, where they would be using the sign for advertisements. Attorney Willis advised that the sign be used for municipal purposes only.

Mr. Brownell stated that he is unsure whether the commission would need to approve this or the First Selectman. Mr. Ventres replied stating the Planning and Zoning Commission would need to decide if this would be allowed or not, afterwards the First Selectman and the Board of Education would need to set up a policy for the electronic message display sign.

It was decided by the commission members to table electronic message boards at this time.

Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to change the order of business to the Land Use Administrator Report Section, seconded by Mr. Gubbins, the vote passed unanimously.

8. LANDUSE ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

Mr. Ventres informed the members of what he recently researched regarding the application process of home occupations in several towns, and none seemed to have a defined limit for commercial vehicles.

Mr. Ventres gave each member a copy of the traffic analysis that was conducted by CT DOT.
Mr. Brownell asked Mr. Ventres to contact Mr. Casner to schedule a meeting date for the Moodus Subcommittee Committee.

Mr. Pettinelli inquired about junk vehicles located on properties and if more can be done to try to get people to remove them. There was also mention of signs that are being placed throughout the town. Mr. Ventres said that he would address this. He explained the process in enforcing this regulation to the members of the commission.

A town resident from the audience stated that lot sizes will come up with the farm stand and farm markets and she is hoping that the subcommittee will look at this. She also inquired on how grandfathering works.Mr. Ventres said part of the subcommittee to work on, goal put together to hold a public hearing on this.

Mr. Curtin made a motion to take a recess at 7:45 p.m.

The Public Hearing was called to order at 8:00 p.m. Mr. Pettinelli read the Public Hearing Notice into record.

9. PUBLIC HEARING – 8:00 p.m.

Application #23-09 – 60 Smith Road (property location), Smith Farm Gardens, Winkley (applicant & property owner). Special Exception Application for additional events and garden cottage. Map 049, Lot 011.

Mr. Ventres said that the applicant, Mr. Travis Winkley, has submitted the special exception application along with overhead drawings, a request for additional events and a request to put a small accessory structure on the property. Mr. Ventres also created a spreadsheet of what was approved in 2020 and what the applicant is requesting at this time.

The applicant, Mr. Winkley, introduced himself to the members. He stated that he was looking to add an overall of five more events and reconstruct the maximum guest allowances.

Mr. Winkley added that he would like to add amplified music for the events with a decibel level of 48 for certain events. He said that these are very small events, and that the music would just be

background music. He added that he did some testing with the music levels and did not feel it would affect the neighbors in any way. Mr. Winkley also said that all the D.J.'s would be required to use the system that is installed at the property, which is state of the art technology, where it will direct the music away from the neighbors.

Mr. Winkley would also like to replace two of the maximum number events with 225 maximum number of people, just in case on a rare occasion they may want to have a larger event on the property.

Ms. Dumaine inquired about the food that is served and if it was prepared on site. Mr. Winkley said that all food is catered for the events, or the food comes in already prepared.

Mr. Winkley said that he would like to add an accessory structure to the property located in the vegetable garden, 45 feet from the property line in the middle of the garden. It would be about 800 square feet, a two-story structure to include two bedrooms and one bathroom and a small kitchenette and designed with a cottage style. The purpose of the structure would be primarily for wedding events and the second purpose would be to provide overnight accommodation.

Mr. Ventres said that this is an accessory structure placed on a very large lot and is within the setback guidelines. He said that it will have its own septic system, he does not see any problem with locating a septic area for an accessory structure such as this on the property.

Mr. Winkley said that he has overflow parking on the property that can fit about forty cars. He explained that anytime he has a wedding event that is over one hundred people that he recommends shuttle parking. The overflow parking is located on their accessory road in the woods where there is a large parking area for parking and the shuttle bussing. He added that lighting is currently in place.

Mr. Gubbins said that as a neighbor of the property there has never been any issues in the past with events being held on the property and that he has never heard a negative comment about it.

Public Questions & Comments

Carolyn Ohare - 7 Juda Lane – Ms. Ohare said that the Winkley's have been wonderful neighbors who keep their property beautifully maintained. Her concern is the decibel levels going from 55 to 48.
She explained that she lives downward, and she can hear the music both in her home and in her yard when events are held, she objects to have the amplified events.

She also feels that having 200 people using the septic is a lot of people but, her main concern is with the amplified music along with people making noise at the events.

Mr. Winkley said that the music would be strictly for background music only. He said that there will be no bands. He believes that a decibel of 55 to 48 is a significant difference. He stated that he does not want to be a nuisance or bother his neighbors in any way, he takes this matter very seriously. He has done extensive testing on decibel level minimal impact strictly background music.

Mr. Pettinelli suggested that a compromise with the amplified music be in place, such as it being used for the first dance and introduction of the groom & bride and possibly run until around 8:30 p.m. or 9:00 p.m.

The commission agreed that a field inspection be scheduled to look at things and investigate the sound system and the decibel levels.
Mr. Ventres read out loud a letter received August 31, 2023, from a town resident's, Charles & Peggy Kaufman stating that they are in total agreement with Mr. Winkley's proposed requests.

Mr. Ventres stated that as far as the septic system and public portlets are concerned it falls under the Public Health Code Standards.

Mr. Brownell scheduled a field walk inspection for September 20, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. for Application #23-09 – 60 Smith Road (property location), Smith Farm Gardens, Winkley (applicant & property owner). Special Exception Application for additional events and garden cottage. Map 049, Lot011.

Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to continue the public hearing to the next regularly scheduled meeting on September 26, 2023, for application #23-09 – 60 Smith Road (property location), Smith Farm Gardens, Winkley (applicant & property owner). Special Exception Application for additional events and garden cottage. Map 049, Lot011, seconded by Ms. Kinsman, the motion passed unanimously.

10. ADJOURNMENT – Mr. Gubbins made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m., seconded by Ms. Dumaine, the vote passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Magri