EAST HADDAM PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 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. Curtin (Vice Chairman), Mr. Pettinelli (Secretary), Mr. Salicrup (Regular Member), Mr. Gubbins (Regular Member), Mr. Gillis (Regular Member), Ms. Langdon (Alternate Member), Ms. Dumaine (Alternate Member).

   ABSENT: Mr. Anderson (Regular Member), Ms. Kinsman (Alternate Member).

   Mr. Brownell requested that Ms. Langdon fill in for Mr. Anderson and Ms. Dumaine for Ms. Kinsman.

3. **MINUTES –** PZC September 12, 2023.

   Correct page 3 under Lan Use Administrator Reports, from "junk vehicles to commercial signs".

   The September 12, 2023, minutes accepted as amended per Mr. Brownell.

4. **BILLS – Halloran & Sage - $40.00**

   Mr. Gubbins made a motion to pay Halloran & Sage, seconded by Mr. Curtin, and the vote passed unanimously.

5. **HOME OCCUPATIONS – Minor Applications – None**

6. **DISCUSSION**

   A. **Update of adopted Gateway Standards – No new information.**

   B. **Farm Stands verses Farm Stores -Subcommittee Report**

      The Subcommittee will meet next week on September 28, 2023.

Mr. Brownell asked Mr. Casner if he had anything to report from the Economic Development Commission. Mr. Casner informed the commission that the town received a $40, 000.00 grant for a trail, with 20% town and 80% DEEP. He added that it has been approved by the Board of Selectman and the Board of Finance and it will be going out for a town meeting. Mr. Casner has been in touch with the town of Chester, they would like the trail to go across the ferry and into Chester Village. The town of Chester had the state come and do a study on the road that they want to utilize for the trail. Mr. Casner said that this project is moving along nicely. He informed the commission that the latest prints are located at the town hall.

Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to change the order of business to the Land Use Administrator Reports, seconded by Mr. Gubbins and the vote unanimously approved.

7. LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

Mr. Ventres said that he received a letter from the State of Connecticut Forestry Division, he explained that the East Haddam forestry regulations do not match, and the State of Connecticut said that the town is not in compliance. Mr. Ventres said that the town of East Haddam is one of eleven towns that regulate forestry.

Mr. Ventres explained to the members that the forestry regulations were written for the Gateway area and that the East Haddam forestry regulations can be amended but the Gateway Standards cannot.

Mr. Ventres added that under the wetlands act that forestry is permitted to use, he explained the main concern would be if there is any sight line where you are pulling out and if there are any anti traction pads, so people do not slide all over the place with mud in the roadway.

Mr. Ventres added forestry is commercial cutting of timber, the regulation was designed for the Gateway area and only applies to the Gateway area. Mr. Ventres will start to work on the language and the definitions regarding the forestry regulations.

Mr. Ventres also explained that the town has been allowing home daycares as required under the statues and that they do not need to come in for a site plan review or special exception review. He explained that there are some things he noticed when looking at the regulations and these did not get erased so these will need to be amended. He stated that this should be put in as permitted use under the residential zone.

Mr. Pettinelli requested to change the time of the public hearings to 7:45 p.m. All members agreed to have future public hearings start at 7:45 p.m.

Mr. Pettinelli made a motion that public hearings are to start at 7:45 p.m., seconded by Mr. Gillis and the vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Brownell asked Mr. Ventres if he had heard from Gateway about how the red dye went. Mr. Ventres said that he has not received any reports yet and that the dye was released to see the water movement with the tides. Mr. Ventres also said that the plan is to apply herbicides to control the hydrilla on the Connecticut river.

The members discussed the hydrilla's and who is starting to get involved with it. Mr. Ventres stated that the Army Corps made a push for public hearings in Middletown. They contacted every hunting and fishing club as well as marinas and land trusts in the conservation group questioning every town to see who would be interested. Mr. Brownell asked if they were getting the Marina's on board with the hydrillas.

Mr. Curtin made a motion for a five-minute recess, seconded by Mr. Pettinelli, and the vote passed unanimously.

The Public Hearing was called to order at 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Pettinelli read the Public Hearing Notice into record.

8. PUBLIC HEARING – 8:00 p.m.

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

First Date: September 12, 2023 Last Date: October 17, 2023

Mr. Ventres handed out information regarding decibel levels. A field walk was conducted at the property site which all members of the commission attended except for Mr. Anderson and Mr. Salicrup, to hear the sound difference from 55 to 48 decibels. All members agreed that no noise could be heard in the surrounding area of the property at 48 decibels.

Mr. Ventres reviewed the events that the applicant is proposing. He explained the difference in what the applicant has requested in 2020 to what this application is proposing.

Mr. Winkley stated that he feels that there is a significant difference between 48 and 55 decibels. He added that these events are meant to be very laid back and that the music is basically just background music. Mr. Winkley said that the reason that he would like to change the decibel level is because 48 decibels is a good level, it is loud enough to enjoy but not too loud.

The commission members discussed each of the events and the number of people that would be attending each event, along with a timeline in which the music would be played with the applicant.

The commission agreed that the parking was adequate and that adding the accessory structure would not be an issue.

Mr. Brownell asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

Mr. Casner, Economic & Development Commission - Mr. Casner stated that the farm has become an absolute asset to the Town of East Haddam. He fully supports the application.

Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Gubbins, and the vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to approve Application #23-09 – 60 Smith Road (property location), Smith Farm Gardens, Margaret Winkley (applicant & property owner). Special Exception Application for additional events and garden cottage. Map 049, Lot 011; subject to modifications to the sound amplification with ten (10) of the forty-eight (48) events to be allowed a 48-decibel level ending at 9:00 p.m. and ten (10) events can continue until 10:00 p.m.; also subject to the approval of the cottage, approval of the Chatham Health District, and subject to the previous approval with modifications to the noise per this discussion, seconded by Mr. Gillis and the vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Pettinelli read the Public Hearing Notice into record.

B) 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.

First Date: September 12, 2023 Last Date: October 17, 2023

The applicants, Mr. Payne, and Mrs. Gamble introduced themselves to the commission members. Mrs. Payne said that they currently own and run Moodus Mud Coffee Roasters in town. He explained that he would like to move into the building which is located at 25 Falls Road. Mr. Payne explained that they have a two-phase process, the first to have roast for wholesale online and some retail business.

Mr. Payne added that he proposes also to have a Mobile Café on the green strip in front of the store, to accommodate mobile pick up of cupped coffee and baked goods, with an outdoor patio area. Mr. Payne added that he would like to propose an indoor café in the future.

The applicant stated that the mobile food truck will have a conduit from the building out to the mobile food truck via 50-amp service, the water will be filled daily, and they will be utilizing a frostless machine mounted on the side of the wall and this will drain back to the building.

Mr. Ventres stated that the applicant has the site plan and the septic design for the property and that the septic systems capacity is 688 gallons per day. A walk through was conducted with the Fire Marshal, Building Official and the Chatham Health District. Mr. Ventres noted that the application does need to be reviewed by the State of Connecticut for an exemption for the septic hookup.

Mr. Payne mentioned that the mobile food trailer is already approved as a class one from the Chatham Health Department.

Mr. Payne said that they would like to do a privacy fencing, with a rustic look and feel material. He has not figured out the details of this yet but stated that he is thinking of a fence about five or six feet in height.

Mr. Payne said that they would like to be open from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. seven days a week. He added that they will have lighting in all corners of the building, and it will be well lit. Mr. Brownell asked if he can provide an exterior lighting plan. Mr. Payne said that he can provide a plan and he does want to light up the entire area in front of the mobile food truck.

The commission discussed fencing, lighting, and parking with the applicants.

Mr. Ventres informed the applicant that when he works on his lighting plan that he be sure that it is dark sky compliant as this is part of the building code and that he may need to add some lighting poles.

Mr. Brownell opened it to the public for questions and comments.

Mr. Michael Taylor, 36 Falls Road – Mr. Taylor stated that he came to the meeting to lend his support, he believes this would be a great idea. He fully supports this application.

Mr. Casner, Economic Development – Been to their facility and they run the cleanest and most wonderful facility and they do a wonderful job. He fully supports the application.

Mr. Ventres Land Use Administrator – Mr. Ventres informed the applicant and members that the Chatham Health District is asking that they install a water meter at this time rather than later.

Mr. Ventres said that if the commission decides to approve the application, then the below mentioned conditions would need to apply:

- **Patio and mobile food truck permitted for year-round use.**

- **The hours of the operation are to be 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. – Monday through Sunday.**

- **A water meter to be installed prior to opening.**

- **Final approval from the State of Connecticut Department of Health and the Chatham Health District is to be received before the mobile food truck is hooked up to the septic system.**

- **Decorative wood fencing diagram's, photos are to be submitted to the Land Use Office for final approval before installation.**

- **A lighting diagram is to be submitted to the Land Use Office for final approval before installation.**

Mr. Curtin made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Gubbins, and the vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Curtin made a motion to approve 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; with conditions that were just stated by Mr. Ventres, seconded by Mr. Gillis and the vote was unanimously approved.

9. ADJOURNMENT – Mr. Gubbins made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m., seconded by Mr. Pettinelli and the vote passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Magri