EAST HADDAM PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MUNICIPAL OFFICE COMPLEX – 1 PLAINS ROAD – MEETING ROOM #1 & 2
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 28, 2024

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

- **ATTENDANCE**

  PRESENT: Crary Brownell (Chairman), Richard Pettinelli (Secretary), Jim Curtin (Vice Chairman), Ed Gubbins (Regular Member), Bernard Gillis (Regular Member), Toni Dumaine (Alternate Member), Stephen Lohmeyer (Alternate Member), Susan Kinsman (Alternate Member).

  ABSENT: Justin Anderson (Regular Member), Deborah Langdon (Regular Member).

  OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Ventres, Land Use Administrator, Mr. Tucker Salls, Desegregate CT Legislative Director, Mr. Christopher Antilla, Mr. David Erlandson, Mr. Jason Morin.

  Mr. Brownell asked that Ms. Dumaine fill in for Mr. Anderson, Ms. Kinsman for Ms. Langdon.

- **MINUTES –May 14, 2024**

  Clarify to add that regarding Mr. Brown's affiliation with Brown Company. He stated that his family sold the company in 1976, and neither he nor his family has any current affiliation with it. Add first names to attendance for Ms. Kinsman and Ms. Dumaine, change Subcommittee to Moodus Master Plan Subcommittee, pg. three, applicant stated that he would like to include a used auto dealership from the inside of the existing building.

  The minutes for May 14, 2024, accepted as amended.

- **BILLS - None**

- **PRESENTATION – THE WORK LIVE RIDE PRESENTATION**

Mr**.** Tucker Salls, Desegregate CT Legislative Director, introduced himself to the commission members. He conducted a presentation on Desegregate Connecticut. The Work Live Ride is a policy framework to align local & state planning to create more transit-oriented communities and focus growth on communities with public transit and existing infrastructure.

Mr. Salls explained the purpose of Transit Oriental Development (TOD) and that it encourages the construction of affordable housing near bus and train stations and that the new housing

units generated by TOD incentives provide convenient options for low-income residents, add to the city's housing stock, and promote alternatives to car travel.

He added that the benefits provide TOD are provide jobs, TOD encourages economic development around transit hubs, also, provides homes as it adds to the housing supply, especially affordable options. He added that by concentrating development near transit, it discourages unnecessary driving and promotes walkability.

This presentation touched on the following topics:

- Job Creation.
- General Foot Traffic for Local Businesses.
- Rejuvenate downtowns and commercial districts.
- Creates a variety of housing options.
- Offers a better way to concentrate Affordable Housing.
- Makes construction more economical.
- Public transit ridership, reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled.
- Concentrates growth in environmentally responsible places.

- **PUBLIC HEARINGS – 7:45 p.m.**

Mr. Pettinelli read into the record the public hearing legal notice for Application #24-08 - 423 East Haddam Moodus Road (property location), Christopher Antilla (applicant), Brownell Properties, LLC (property owner). Map 064, Lot 049. New and Used Auto Dealership, Text Amendment.

A. Application #24-08 - 423 East Haddam Moodus Road (property location), Christopher Antilla (applicant), Brownell Properties, LLC (property owner). Map 064, Lot 049. New and Used Auto Dealership, Text Amendment.

Mr. Brownell stated for the record that his family has sold out of this business in 1976 and that neither he nor any other family members has had any financial or other business involvement with the property since then.

Mr. Ventres stated that the applicant seeks a text amendment of the Moodus Center Regulations to include new and used auto dealerships.

Discussion ensued regarding defining regulations for village automobile sales, rentals, and repairs and focused on the discretion of the zoning commission regarding vehicle parking placement.

The applicant, Mr. Antilla, described to the commission members what his business plan would be for a new and used auto dealership. He stated that the business model is entirely based inside of the warehouse, and he anticipates that 80 % of his business would be conducted online. He added that everything would take place inside the warehouse.

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

Ms. Rebecca Skinner of 405 EH Moodus Road stated that she lives across the street from the property and her concern would be that broadening the terminology of the definition would open doors for bigger things to happen within the town and is concerned with the protection of residential areas in town.

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

Mr. Gubbins made a motion to approve Application #24-08 - 423 East Haddam Moodus Road (property location), Christopher Antilla (applicant), Brownell Properties, LLC (property owner). Map 064, Lot 049. New and Used Auto Dealership, Text Amendment, to amend the current regulations to include automobile sales, rentals, and repairs, as outlined in the Moodus Village Section of the East Haddam Zoning Regulations dated May 20, 2024, and to be revisited after the Moodus Master Plan has been completed; seconded by Ms. Dumaine and the vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Pettinelli read into record the public hearing notice for Application #24-11 - 423 East Haddam Moodus Road (property location), Brownell Properties, LLC (applicant & property owner). Map 064, Lot 049. Special exemption review for multiple uses in the former factory - office building.

B. Application #24-11 - 423 East Haddam Moodus Road (property location), Brownell Properties, LLC (applicant & property owner). Map 064, Lot 049. Special exemption review for multiple uses in former factory - office building.

Mr. Brownell stated for the record that his family has sold out of the business in 1976 and that neither he nor any other family member has had any financial or other business involvement with the property since then.

Mr. David Erlandson, co-owner of Brownell Properties, LLC, presented his proposal to the commission members stating that he is seeking a special exemption review for multiple uses within a former factory office building. He read into record the business narrative. He presented his proposal, map of the property and the building plan layout of the building.

Mr. Erlandson said that the layout would enable smaller mixed-use spaces. He also described to the commission members his proposal for a directory sign.

The applicant submitted the following documents:

- Special Exemption Application.
- Revised survey of the property.
- Narrative requesting a special exemption under Section 14 of the Zoning Regulations.
- Waiver request for any items that are not included in the survey.
- Map showing building layout and square footage.
- Narrative relating to the approval of the directory sign under Section 12 of the Zoning Regulations.
- List of property abutters within 100 feet of the property location.

Mr. Erlandson noted that only uses approved in the Moodus Village table of uses would be permitted. The commission agreed that some form of notice be developed so they would be aware of the changes.

Mr. Ventres noted that each use would be reviewed by the Building Inspector, Fire Marshall, and the Chatham Health District.

Mr. Pettinelli 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 #24-11 - 423 East Haddam Moodus Road (property location), Brownell Properties, LLC (applicant & property owner). Map 064, Lot 049. Special exemption review for multiple uses in former factory office building, along with the waivers of the mapping that were applied for by the applicant and that commission be notified of any occupation changes, seconded by Ms. Dumaine and the vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Pettinelli read into record the legal notice for PZC#24-12 – CT River Dock Road (property location), Goodspeed Opera House (applicant & property owner). Map 017, Lot 093. Entertainment tent on the lawn south of the building.

C. PZC#24-12 – CT River Dock Road (property location), Goodspeed Opera House (applicant & property owner). Map 017, Lot 093. Entertainment tent on the lawn south of the building.

Mr. David Byrd, the managing director of the Goodspeed Opera House, presented his proposal requesting permission to erect a temporary seasonal 20 X 20 tent on a portion of the Goodspeed Opera House property. The tent will be in place from June 10, 2024, through October 21, 2024. The primary purpose of this tent is not for performances. The foundation observed that patrons enjoyed socializing together under a larger tent during the 2021 season, and they aim to continue this experience for the one hour before each performance during the specified window.

The commission inquired about the need for a liquor permit extension due to the tent's use. The applicant confirmed that they would seek an extension to their current liquor permit to serve patrons in the tent.

The commission acknowledged the purpose of the tent and the applicant's intent to enhance patron socialization. The liquor permit extension will be sought to serve patrons in the tent.

Mr. Brownell asked if there were any public comments or questions and there were none.

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

Mr. Curtin made a motion to approve Application PZC#24-12 – CT River Dock Road (property location), Goodspeed Opera House (applicant & property owner). Map 017, Lot 093. Entertainment tent on the lawn south of the building; seconded by Ms. Kinsman and the vote passed unanimously.

- **LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Mr. Ventres informed the commission members that he is currently working on the removal of junk vehicles on residential properties.

He also stated that he had a recent violation that he has been working on for a property located on Woodland Road. The property owners were using a shed as habitable space and they have four goats, twelve chickens as well as turkeys and ducks. He and the Building Official will be revisiting the property to ensure that the plumbing and electricity are dismantled from the shed and the animals removed from the property.

Ms. Kinsman stated that she would like her request to have the tree cutting projects discussed at the next meeting. She stated that the notice is inadequate and lacks information regarding tree removal and the current tagging system is insufficient.

Suggestions include using larger tags with more information, such as contact details for questions or objections.

Mr. Ventres stated that he will be reviewing this matter. He explained to Ms. Kinsman that it best to be consistent about not doing any steps past what the statues require, and it is better practice not to exceed any ordinance.

It was also suggested that town residents visit the tree warden's website for updates on tree cutting plans and that the Board of Selectmen modify the tree warden ordinance to improve notification procedures and ensure better communication with town residents.

Mr. Gubbins informed Mr. Ventres that he will be giving him a list of properties located by Lakeside that may be using their cottages for year-round living.

- **ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Gubbins made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 seconded by Mr. Curtin and the vote passed unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted
Susan Magri