EAST HADDAM PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MUNICIPAL OFFICE COMPLEX – 1 PLAINS ROAD – MEETING ROOM #1 & 2
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 24, 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), Jim Curtin (Vice Chairman), Richard Pettinelli (Regular Member), Deborah Langdon (Regular Member), Ed Gubbins (Regular Member), Susan Kinsman (Alternate Member), Toni Dumaine (Alternate Member).

  ABSENT: Justin Anderson (Regular Member), Bernard Gillis (Regular Member), Stepehen Lohmeyer (Alternate Member).

- **Mr. Brownell asked that Ms. Kinsman sit in for Mr. Anderson and that Ms. Dumaine sit in for Mr. Gillis.**

  MINUTES – The September 10, 2024, minutes accepted with the following corrections: Include Ms. Langdon as attending meeting, correct spelling of "La Vita" Wrasslin Cats, and clarifications regarding the zoning permit for the restaurant at Wrasslin Cats. Correct grammatical errors and had handicap ramp.

- **BILLS – None**

- **DISCUSSION - Letters of Support – East Haddam Land Trust CT DEEP Open Space Grant application. Property on Tater Hill Road, 14.12 acres, Miller Farm Preserve to the North (EHLT), Walls Way to the west (EHLT), Lena Town Open Space Property to the south, and a conservation easement to the east. In the Eightmile Wild & Scenic Watershed.**

  Mr. Ventres explained that the East Haddam Land Trust is going to be applying for an Open Space Grant and would like letters of support. Mr. Ventres highlighted key points on the map and described the proposed walking path that would connect Miller Farm Preserve to the Lena property.

  Ms. Kinsman made a motion to send a letter of support to the East Haddam Land Trust, Connecticut, for the Open Space Grant Application, seconded by Ms. Dumaine and the vote passed unanimously. Mr. Curtin abstained.

  Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to change the order of business, seconded by Mr. Gubbins and the vote passed unanimously.

- **LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

- **Brownell Facility**

  Mr. Ventres gave the commission members a diagram of the Brownell's Facility explaining that a new client, Stop Plus, LLC, plans to move into the 3,600 square foot facility. The business involves warehousing and shipping with no customer interaction. There was discussion regarding the need for a loading dock and potential office space and bathroom facilities. The commission noted that there is a doorway on the relevant wall, which could potentially be used or modified to improve the access for loading and unloading activities. Also discussed was the possibility of carving out a small office space and ensuring access to the bathroom facilities and that they maintain compliance with the Zoning Regulations as well as complying with the Building Codes.

- **Competition Automotive of Connecticut, LLC**

  Mr. Ventres explained that this company is requesting to park a single vehicle on the property as well as a for-sale sign. The vehicle would be parked during daytime hours only and will be approximately forty (40) feet from the center of Route 149 and the entrance of 423 East Haddam Moodus Road.

  Mr. Curtin made a motion to approve the request of Competition Automotive of Connecticut LLC, property location 423 East Haddam Moodus Road, with the condition that the vehicle be parked during daytime hours only and be located approximately 40 feet from the center line of Route 149 and 423 East Haddam Moodus Road with a for sale sign that conforms to the towns sign regulations; seconded by Mr. Pettinelli; the vote passed with a 5/2 vote, Mr. Brownell, Mr. Gubbins, Mr. Pettinelli and Ms. Dumaine in favor and Ms. Kinsman and Ms. Langdon opposing.

- **Bids for the trail project from Four Corners River Road**

  The commission members discussed the bids received for the trail project from the Four Corners to River Road. The three bidders will be interviewed to determine the best fit for the project. The project is funded by a grant of $32,000.00 with an additional $8,000.00 matched by the town. Further steps will include finalizing the design and securing any additional funding or permits needed for construction.

- **Moodus Master Plan**

  The commission members discussed the events at the Palmer Warner House, some concerns regarding safety at an event were discussed such as the safety of people crossing the road at an event and the issue of not having a parking lot in place for the event as well as businesses not being allowed to hold events without proper parking arrangements.

  The Palmer Warner House will be holding a presentation on October 22, 2024. It was proposed that there be a dedicated table at the open house to discuss the Moodus Master Plan in detail. It was noted that this would be a great opportunity to address any concerns and gather valuable information from the community.

  - **LED Lighting – Open Signs**

  The commission members discussed the LED lighting, and whether it should be allowed as a dynamic sign. It was decided to add this question to the list of questions at the open house in October.

- **PUBLIC HEARING – PZC#24-19 - 6 Main Street (property location), The Goodspeed Opera House Foundation Inc. (applicant & property owner). Map 017, Lot 093. Proposed construction of an accessible ramp addition and parking lot rehabilitation on Lumberyard Road.**

  Mr. Pettinelli read out loud the legal hearing notice for Application PZC#24-19 - 6 Main Street (property location), The Goodspeed Opera House Foundation Inc. (applicant & property owner). Map 017, Lot 093. Proposed construction of an accessible ramp addition and parking lot rehabilitation on Lumberyard Road.

  Mr. Daly, P.E., from SLR Consulting, explained that the proposal involves construction of an accessible handicap ramp addition to the Goodspeed Opera House and the rehabilitation of the parking lot on Lumberyard Road.

  Mr. Daly stated that a geotechnical study has been conducted and explained that the existing pavement, which is in poor condition, will be completely replaced. Mr. Daly said that the overall rehabilitation efforts are to improve the functionality and appearance of the parking lot. He added currently lighting is nonexistent and there is no landscaping. They intend on introducing landscape islands throughout the parking lot to include together trees shrubs and perennials as well as ornamental lighting which includes a full down light and a full cut off light. There are big spotlights on telephone poles that will remain, and a temporary electrical meter will be removed.

  Mr. Daly added that storm water features would be included in the plans as well, there is currently nothing in place for storm water. He explained the drainage plans to the commission

members which includes proposing permeable pavers allowing the water to flow down and infiltrate into the ground, this concept slows down the water and promotes infiltration. Daly stated that the town engineer did a wonderful job in terms of summarizing the drainage approach and believed that he offered his support in terms of his approach to storm water management and quality.

Ms. Madigan, AIA, from Centerbrook Architects Planners, stated that the Goodspeed Opera House is planning to enhance accessibility by adding a new entrance at the main entry. This involves removing the current front porch and steps and modifying the elevation so that the top landing of the porch is level with the first floor. This will allow direct access to the main lobby via an accessible ramp.

Ms. Madigan added that the accessible handicap ramp will be added to ensure better access for individuals with disabilities. The overall rehabilitation efforts to improve the functionality and appearance and will provide direct access from the front area along Main Street. The handicap ramp features will match the existing architectural style. Ms. Madigan added that the design has been approved by the State Historic Preservation Office, as the building is on the National Historic Registry.

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

Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to approve PZC#24-19 - 6 Main Street (property location), The Goodspeed Opera House Foundation Inc. (applicant & property owner). Map 017, Lot 093. Proposed construction of an accessible ramp addition and parking lot rehabilitation on Lumberyard Road; seconded by Ms. Dumaine and the vote passed unanimously.

- **ADOURNMENT – Mr. Gubbins made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. seconded by Mr. Curtin and the vote passed unanimously.**

Susan Magri