EAST HADDAM PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MUNICIPAL OFFICE COMPLEX – 1 PLAINS ROAD – MEETING ROOM #1 & 2
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
October 08, 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), Susan Kinsman (Alternate Member), Toni Dumaine (Alternate Member), Stepehen Lohmeyer (Alternate Member).
  .
  ABSENT: Justin Anderson (Regular Member), Ed Gubbins (Regular Member), Bernard Gillis (Regular Member).

  Mr. Brownell asked that Ms. Kinsman sit in for Mr. Gillis, Mr. Lohmeyer for Mr. Gubbins and Ms. Dumaine sit in for Mr. Anderson.

  MINUTES – The September 24, 2024, minutes accepted as amended: Add that Mr. Brownell has no affiliation with the Brownell facility.

  BILLS – None

- **HOME OCCUPATION APPLICATIONS**

  A) HOME OCCUPATION - Application #24-20 – 50 Norwich Road (property location), Julia Bjornberg (applicant & property owner). Map 026, Lot 068. Human Resources Consulting, Property Management and Leadership Development Training.

  First Date: 10/08/2024 Last Date: 11/12/2024

  Mr. Ventres stated that the application is for a consulting office at home and that the tasks include administrative work, banking, and finances. There will be no customers visiting the property and he added that the property is a barn previously known as Foree's Orchard. The office is in an apartment building and the applicant owns the building and intends to switch to LLC. The operating hours are 9 AM to 4 PM, Monday through Friday, with no weekends or holiday operations. The neighbors were notified, no complaints were received.

  Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to approve Application #24-20 – 50 Norwich Road (property location), Julia Bjornberg (applicant & property owner). Map 026, Lot 068. Human Resources

Consulting, Property Management and Leadership Development Training; seconded by Mr. Gubbins and the vote passed unanimously.

B) Application #24-21 – 5 Landing Hill Road (property location), David Lovejoy (applicant & property owner). Map 026, Lot 026. Home office

First Date 10/08/2024 Last Date 11/12/2024

Mr. Ventres stated that this application is for a home office and the business type is for a psychologist. The applicant will be reviewing records and writing up reports from home office. There will be no visitors and no deliveries at the property. The neighbors were notified, no complaints were received.

Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to approve Application #24-21 – 5 Landing Hill Road (property location), David Lovejoy (applicant & property owner). Map 026, Lot 026. Home office; seconded by Mr. Gubbins and the vote passed unanimously.

C) Application #24-22 – 45 Alger Road (property location), Robert Garstka (applicant & property owner. Map 047, Lot 057. Woodworking, Home Occupation.

Mr. Ventres stated that this application is for a woodworking and farm stand business. The applicant plans to use one bay of the garage for woodworking items for online sales and fairs. Machinery includes a small drill press and planer. The farm stand will sell vegetables and woodworking items. The commission members considered limiting the operating hours from 8 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday, and weekends. The commission members discussed the noise regulations for woodworking machinery in residential areas. The neighbors were notified, no complaints were received. The commission members discussed the noise regulations for woodworking machinery in residential areas and the hours of operation. Mr. Ventres will be speaking with the applicant before the next meeting and the application is continued until November 12, 2024.

- **DISCUSSION**

A) Moodus Center Master Plan – Review of Survey Results

Handouts

- **Moodus Center Site Analysis**
- **Moodus Center Study Area Profile**
- **Moodus Center Master Plan Community Survey Report**

Discussion on Center Master Plan Review of Survey Results:

Survey Distribution and Response:

- The survey was distributed to 333 people.

- Methods of distribution included the town website, East Haddam School's parent database, flyers in the front office, and the town newspaper.
- The response rate exceeded the expected 3%.

Concerns and Questions:

- There was a discussion on whether the sample size was sufficient.
- Questions were raised about the demographic representation and potential biases in the survey results.
- The survey aimed to gather community input on traffic flow, site restrictions due to wetlands, and infrastructure issues.

Key Points:

- The survey results largely confirmed existing knowledge about traffic and site restrictions.
- Additional information will be gathered at an upcoming event in two weeks.

Conclusion:

- The survey is a critical tool for validating community needs and preference, even if the results align with prior expectations.

Next Steps:

- Further Information Gathering: An event is planned for two weeks to gather additional input from the community.
- Review and Analysis: The commission will likely review the survey results in more detail to ensure they accurately reflect the community needs and preferences.

Addressing Concerns:

- Any concerns about demographic representation and potential biases in the survey results may be addressed to ensure a comprehensive understanding.
- Planning Adjustments:
- Based on the survey findings and additional input, adjustments to the Moodus Center Master Plan may be considered to better align with the community feedback.

General Sentiment:

- The community desires a return to a charming, quaint town aesthetic.
- Current architecture is seen as too industrial.
- The area is perceived as having an identity crisis with mismatched architectural styles.

Historical Context:

- Comparisons were made with the town of Chester, which maintained its charm.

Business Owner Engagement:

- Meetings with business owners revealed a variety of ongoing activities and challenges.
- Business owners were generally receptive and provided valuable insights to the consultants.

Next Steps:

- Further community input will be gathered at an upcoming event in two weeks.
- The commission will continue to refine the master plan based on survey results and additional feedback.

ADOURNMENT – Mr. Gubbins made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m. seconded by Mr. Curtin and the vote passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Magri