EAST HADDAM PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

MUNICIPAL OFFICE COMPLEX – 1 PLAINS ROAD

MEETING ROOM #1 & 2

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

June 24, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

2. ATTENDANCE

PRESENT: Crary Brownell (Chairman), Jim Curtin (Vice Chairman), Bernard Gillis (Regular Member), Richard Pettinelli (Regular Member), Deborah Langdon (Regular Member), and Susan Kinsman (Regular Member).

ABSENT: Toni Dumaine (Regular Member).

3. MINUTES

Minutes of June 10, 2025, were unanimously approved with the following correction(s).

-Item 6, 2nd paragraph change "additional buildings" to "additional storage buildings". 3rd paragraph change "stone wall" to "stone walls".

4. BILLS

Halloran and Sage Law Firm - $40.00.

Mr. Curtin made a motion to pay the bill, seconded by Mr. Pettinelli.

Passed unanimously.

Motion by Mr. Pettinelli, second by Mr. Curtin to change the order of the Agenda and proceed to item 6. Home Occupations. Passed unanimously.

6. HOME OCCUPATIONS

A. Application #25-10-134 Mt. Parnassus Road (property location), Erin Smith (applicant & property owner). Map 028, Lot 017. Horticulture, gardening, florals and soap making.

The commission reviewed a request related to a small farm stand where the owner is trying to open a separate business account to sell soap. The stand is located near a stream with a turnaround at the top of the driveway, and hours have been posted on-site.

Motion by Mr. Curtin to approve Application #25-10-134 Mt. Parnassus Road (property location), Erin Smith (applicant & property owner). Map 028, Lot 017. Horticulture,

gardening, florals and soap making. With the condition that parking not be on Mt. Parnassus road and a sign be posted for parking in the driveway. Second by Ms. Kinsman and unanimously passed.

7. LANDUSE ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

Mr. Ventres reported that the former Cumberland Farms has submitted part of their application and is about 80% complete. They still need to submit updated signage and lighting plans and provide sound cut sheets for the drive-in equipment while maintaining the existing building structure.

Mr. Ventres reported that sand had recently been spread at East Haddam Bailey Beach on Bashan Lake. He noted he plans to visit the site, has reached out to the Easttown Land Trust for clarification of the easement they hold, and confirmed that permits will need to be pulled for the work that was done.

5. DISCUSSION

A. Moodus Master Plan

The Commission reviewed the revised Moodus Master Plan and recommended clarifying inconsistent references to the center district. They suggested enhancing the center focus by adding tree-lined approaches at the main intersection, similar to designs seen across the river. They also discussed the need to address tight curb radii that currently restrict truck movement, particularly near the park and at key exit points. Additional recommendations included expanding the section on historical context to reflect the original promises of the 1967 development plan, incorporating missed population projections, and including photographs of both past streetscapes and the proposed changes to illustrate the plan's goals.

The Commission discussed whether the Moodus Master Plan timeline was being pushed too quickly, especially with the July 22nd referendum vote approaching during the summer vacation season. While the plan is modifiable, members emphasized the importance of public input. Suggestions included displaying the plan at the upcoming event, posting it on the town website with a summary and timeline, and providing a Google Form for residents to submit comments, ensuring the public can review and respond at their convenience.

Mr. Casner stressed the value of including historical photos in the Moodus Master Plan, noting that 34 buildings taken down during redevelopment were documented with photos and appraisals, some citing questionable deficiencies. He highlighted the stone mill as a significant loss and suggested using side-by-side images to show what was removed versus what replaced it. These materials may be available through the town clerk’s office or the historical society and would help illustrate the contrast between past promises and present outcomes.

B. Beebe Road/Scenic Road

Mr. Ventres reported that the Beebe Road project plans are nearly 80% complete, with railing placement dependent on the outcome of the budget vote. The project will require review under the scenic road designation and wetlands.

C. Banner Estates

Mr. Casner reported that the EDC is exploring a potential town purchase of Banner Lodge. The Board of Selectmen has authorized the EDC to bring the proposal to the Board of Finance to determine funding and next steps. He emphasized that Planning and Zoning's input is important due to their knowledge of the property and its history. Casner noted that acquiring and revitalizing the golf course could serve as a key economic driver for Moodus by attracting visitors and supporting local business activity.

The Banner Lodge property includes an 18-hole golf course. Public approval and a referendum would be required for any town acquisition. About 100 acres are under a conservation easement, requiring review by the Open Space Committee.
If not preserved, the site could be developed with up to 333 housing units, though sewer access is currently unavailable and any changes would require zoning approval.
The golf course has the potential to become a self-sustaining asset, with estimates of 12,000 to 24,000 rounds annually and profitability within five years based on historical data. Full restoration is favored to quickly reestablish its customer base and retain a rare recreational and economic resource for the community.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to adjourn at 8:21 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Curtin and the vote passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
E. Ruth Ziobron