

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
TOWN OF EAST HADDAM  
LAND USE OFFICE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
June 24, 2008  
(Not yet approved by the Commission)**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Crary Brownell called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. at the Town Grange.

**2. ATTENDANCE:**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Crary Brownell-Chairman (regular member), James Curtin (regular member), Bernard Gillis (alternate member), Kevin Matthews (alternate member), Harvey Thomas (regular member), John Matthew (regular member)

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Phillip Barlow (regular member), David Hughes (regular member), Anthony Saraco (regular member)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** James Ventres and 5 townspeople

Mr. Brownell appointed Mr. Matthews to vote in place of Mr. Saraco, and Mr. Gillis to vote in Mr. Barlow's absence.

**3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND SET HEARING DATES**

None

**4. SITE PLAN REVIEW**

**A) Continued: Application 08-04, Thomas Pagley, 59 East Shore Drive, Site Plan Review, demolition of existing home and construction of single-family residence. Assessor's Map 80, Lot 365.**

**First date: May 13, 2008**

**Last date: July 16, 2008**

No one representing the applicant was present at this meeting. Mr. Ventres explained that Mr. Pagley handed in the design plans, but does not have a site plan or Chatham's review yet.

Mr. Curtin inquired about the timeline for the application. Mr. Ventres stated that the last date was July 16, and the applicant still had one more meeting.

Mr. Ventres presented the plan to the Commission. The Commission discussed the height of the structure. Mr. Ventres stated he would measure the height to ensure compliance with the regulations. He stated he would call the applicant tomorrow, as there was no scale on the drawings. The Commission briefly reviewed the set of plans.

**Motion by Mr. Thomas to continue Application 08-04, Thomas Pagley, 59 East Shore Drive, Site Plan Review, demolition of existing home and construction of single-family residence, until the next regularly scheduled meeting on July 8, 2008. Seconded by Mr. Gillis, and carried by unanimous vote.**

**Motion by Mr. Curtin to change the order of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Matthews, and carried by unanimous vote.**

## **7. OTHER**

## **8. ZEO REPORT**

Mr. Ventres stated he spoke with the fire marshall and the building official last week regarding the former Klar Krest, and they asked him if any information was missing. Mr. Ventres gave them a list of items. Mr. Ventres stated he contacted the Department of Public Health to see if Camp Chomesh had received approval for the water system. Since the DPH did not know who they were, it was obvious that there was no permit to discharge water on a State level. Mr. Ventres spoke with Mr. Charles Dutch, L.S., and he said he had never received a call to begin work. Mr. Ventres stated that last year when they came in, they had conceptual plans, but not final plans. He stated today, he had a meeting with Mr. Dutch, the architect, the contractor, as well as the building and fire officials. At that meeting, Mr. Dutch stated that most of the items for this application were not ready.

Mr. Gillis asked the owner's intent for this property. Mr. Ventres stated it was for a girl's camp, for up to 200 campers.

Mr. Curtin asked if the owner was aware that they were not going to open this year, and if they knew they could not schedule campers. Mr. Ventres stated it was mentioned at today's meeting. Mr. Curtin recommended a letter be sent directly to the owner stating what was not done. Mr. Ventres stated he would do this, and he would also send a copy to all of the involved parties. Mr. Brownell asked that the 22 points that had been brought up last year be included with the letter, and that he be copied on the letter as well. Mr. Ventres stated he would copy the Commission. Mr. Thomas suggested that Attorney Branse review the letter before it is sent.

Mr. Matthew inquired about the permits. Mr. Ventres stated the applicant could demolish the building without a permit, but that they would need a permit for the building, etc.

For other projects, Mr. Ventres stated the new school was close to being done. Mr. Brownell commented that one requirement of the school was that the use of the land was to be decided. He asked if anyone had addressed this yet. Mr. Ventres was unaware if this issue had been resolved. Mr. Curtin asked in whose hands the land would remain. Mr. Brownell did not know. Mr. Ventres stated he could bring the map for the next meeting. He noted that there were a lot of wetlands on the property.

Mr. Thomas suggested that after completion, and before the school is turned over to the Board of Education, they must know what the plans are. Mr. Brownell asked Mr. Ventres to bring the maps to the second July meeting. He noted that the Town had talked about the possibility of putting some land aside

for a possible firehouse. Mr. Ventres did not know what the plans were, but he stated they could use a lot of the property for educational classes.

Mr. Curtin asked the status of the fieldstone at the new middle school site. Mr. Ventres stated the pile was still there; however, Mr. Steve Shaw from the Sons of the American Revolution, asked if they could use some of them for the Nathan Hale Schoolhouse site. Mr. Ventres stated if the Commission was really concerned about the children playing on the rocks, they could put a construction fence around it. Mr. Curtin believed the contractor should pull out the boulders.

Mr. Brownell asked the status of Shagbark. Mr. Ventres stated there had been no further progress since the letter that everyone received in their last packets.

Mr. Ventres informed the Commission that he had to go to court on Monday, July 7 for the issue on Powerhouse Road. He would update the Commission at the next meeting. In addition, the issue on Haywardville Road was approximately one week away from being ordered to court.

## 9. MINUTES

### A) May 27, 2008

Mr. Brownell gave instructions to file the minutes of the May 27, 2008 regular meeting minutes as presented.

### B) June 10, 2008

Mr. Brownell gave instructions to file the minutes of the June 10, 2008 regular meeting minutes as presented.

## 10. BILLS

<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Invoice</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Hartford Courant (legal notices)	5124	\$61.48
Shoreline News (legal notices)	2293186	43.28

**Motion by Mr. Curtin to pay the bills as presented, seconded by Mr. Thomas, and passed unanimously.**

**Motion by Mr. Curtin to recess at 7:54 p.m., seconded by Mr. Matthews, and carried by unanimous vote. Mr. Brownell reconvened the meeting at 8:00 p.m.**

## 6. PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Curtin read the call for the following public hearing:

**A) Application 08-07, Claudia Mazzotta, 17 Cedar Meadow Road, Special Exception Review to hold private art lessons as a home occupation under section 14B and Section 27 of the East Haddam Zoning regulations. Assessor's Map 55, Lot 83.**

**First date: June 24, 2008**

**Last date: July 28, 2008**

Ms. Claudia Mazzotta addressed the Commission. She explained her intent to offer gouache painting, acrylic floor cloth painting, mosaic table tray, and graphite drawing classes. These classes would be offered two or three days per week, likely from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. during the summer. The space in which the classes will be held is 14ft. x 14ft., and is bright and sunny.

Mr. Ventres informed the Commission most home occupations are reviewed in his office. This particular application was before the Commission because classes would be offered and it required Commission review.

Mr. Ventres read into the record a letter dated June 2, 2008 from Mr. Don Mitchell of Chatham Health District. Chatham had no objection to the application with the decreased hours and size. Ms. Mazzotta clarified that if she taught more than two children at a time, she would have to have a daycare license.

Mr. Ventres stated the fire marshall looked at this application on June 9, and stated that the gas heater must be inspected before classes began, and a fire extinguisher was required. Ms. Mazzotta stated she has a fire extinguisher, first aid kit, hand sanitizer, etc. In addition, there is a ramp if needed.

Mr. Thomas asked if the application was for a maximum of two students at a time, plus the applicant. Ms. Mazzotta responded affirmatively. She added that the gas stove was inspected yesterday, and she has the written approval.

Mr. Thomas asked how the students would get to her studio, and about parking. Ms. Mazzotta believed most of the students would be dropped off by parents, and a couple were neighbors. However, she had a 40ft. x 40ft. turnaround and an upper and lower area. Mr. Thomas commented that this should be plenty of space. He asked if the applicant would have two or three cars there at a time, to which Ms. Mazzotta responded affirmatively.

Mr. Gillis inquired about the hours of operation. Ms. Mazzotta planned to hold classes from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. Mr. Brownell asked if the room was existing, and Ms. Mazzotta confirmed that it was.

Mr. Gillis asked if Ms. Mazzotta planned to put up a sign. Ms. Mazzotta did not believe she would need a sign, as she had put one out at the beginning of the road. Mr. Brownell asked about exterior lighting. Ms. Mazzotta stated she only planned to hold classes in the mornings.

Mr. Brownell opened the hearing to the public.

Mr. Robert Casner spoke in support of the application, stating it was very nice to see something like this offered in town.

**Motion by Mr. Thomas to close the public hearing for Application 08-07, Claudia Mazzotta, 17 Cedar Meadow Road, Special Exception Review to hold private art lessons as a home occupation under section 14B and Section 27 of the East Haddam Zoning regulations. Seconded by Mr. Matthews, and carried by unanimous vote.**

Mr. Brownell stated that if the hours were changed to evenings, the applicant would have to come back before the Commission with a lighting plan. Mr. Matthew asked if Chatham would have to review this again if the hours changed. Mr. Ventres stated they would not. Mr. Thomas asked if the hours were noted in the application. Mr. Brownell confirmed that the application stated hours of operation from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

**Motion by Mr. Thomas to approve Application 08-07, Claudia Mazzotta, 17 Cedar Meadow Road, Special Exception Review to hold private art lessons as a home occupation under section 14B and Section 27 of the East Haddam Zoning regulations, with the following conditions:**

- **The fire marshal's and Chatham Health District's stipulations must be followed.**
- **If any future signage, or changes in hours that would require lighting are planned, the applicant must come back to this Commission for review.**

**Seconded by Mr. Gillis, and carried by unanimous vote.**

Mr. Curtin read the call for the following public hearing:

**B) Application 08-11, The Nature Conservancy, 1 Dolbia Hill Road, Special Exception Review to use residential structure as office space for Nature Conservancy related non-point conservation work under Section 14B and Section 9.2.5 of the East Haddam Zoning Regulations. Assessor's Map 33, Lot 10.**

**First date: June 24, 2008**

**Last date: July 28, 2008**

Mr. Nathan Frohling of The Nature Conservancy addressed the Commission. He explained that the property in question belongs to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Goodwin, who founded the Nature Conservancy. Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin have life estate, and the Nature Conservancy may want to eventually use this property as an office. Mr. Goodwin passed away, and Mrs. Goodwin requires care and is no longer able to live at the house.

Mr. Frohling stated The Nature Conservancy is looking to hire a land steward, and it is possible that this person might live in the house. With the hiring of a land steward, there would be three people in the office. If the program grows, there could eventually be four or five employees.

Responsive to inquiry by Mr. Thomas, Mr. Frohling stated they would like to have the option to house a land steward. However, he asked if someone would need to live in the house. It was noted that this application came under Section 9.2.5 of the zoning regulations, for educational purposes. Therefore, this would not be considered a home occupation.

Mr. Curtin asked if waivers would be needed. Mr. Ventres stated they were asking for a waiver of the topography mapping. Mr. Frohling stated this parcel of land was approximately 1,200 acres. Mr. Ventres stated there were existing buildings. He spoke with Chatham Health District about this, and they informed him that a conversion from a single family home to an office would be less use. Mr. Ventres asked if all of the Commissioners received the narrative in their packets. Everyone received it.

Mr. Thomas summarized that the request was for up to five people there from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and the possibility of one person living there. He noted that there were two dwellings. He asked for the plans for the building that is not used as an office. Mr. Frohling stated there were not a lot of plans, but they might possibly rent the other house, use it for storage, etc.

Mr. Brownell asked about fundraisers, and if these would occur at this location. Mr. Frohling stated the last function held here was a memorial for Mr. Goodwin. The function was catered. Mr. Brownell asked about seminars, conference rooms, etc. Mr. Frohling stated the building was really not large enough to hold large meetings. He noted that they could hold some meetings in the living room in the house. He stated they would not be taking down walls, but they may have to add some walls in order to make offices. Mr. Ventres stated if they did decide to build a conference room, they would have to come back to the Commission.

Mr. Frohling asked if he would need to come back to the Commission if they decided to rent the house, or use it for the land steward. Mr. Brownell stated he would not. Mr. Gillis asked if the Nature Conservancy would house a family, or just the land steward. Mr. Frohling did not believe the structure would be large enough to house a family, but that it would likely only be used for the steward.

Mr. Thomas inquired about signage. Mr. Frohling stated they might put a sign on the building to let people know it is an office. He stated they would want a light so people could see to get from the parking area to the door.

Mr. Gillis asked if the building would be open to the public when the staff was not there. Mr. Frohling stated there would be no exclusion if people wanted to stop by during office hours, but they were not looking to have people come into the building when the employees were not there.

Ms. Catherine Miller, 53 Dolbia Hill Road, voiced concern about traffic. She stated this was on a narrow road, and she walks her dogs on this road. Mr. Frohling stated that there were no plans to have a lot more people other than himself and the other employee, unless they added additional people. He stated they usually have a small meeting approximately once per week. He stated it would be likely that they would leave to go to meetings, but he did not expect there to be a noticeable increase in traffic. He stated the Preserve meetings that Mr. Goodwin held were approximately 12 people.

Ms. Miller asked if the meetings would be held during the day, or at night. Mr. Frohling stated most meetings would be held during the day, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. He stated the monthly Preserve meetings usually began around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m. Ms. Miller commented that this would be a wonderful gift to the area.

**Motion by Mr. Gillis to close the public hearing for Application 08-11, The Nature Conservancy, 1 Dolbia Hill Road, Special Exception Review to use residential**

**structure as office space for Nature Conservancy related non-point conservation work under Section 14B and Section 9.2.5 of the East Haddam Zoning Regulations. Seconded by Mr. Curtin, and carried by unanimous vote.**

Mr. Curtin asked about residents. Mr. Thomas stated for the building currently being rented, they could still use it for this. Being the Nature Conservancy, Mr. Brownell commented that they might want to hold outside events. He asked if they would have to come back to the Commission for this. Mr. Ventres stated they have been holding outside events there from time to time for the past 20 years. He stated they have held classes on ferns, mushrooms, etc. However, if they planned to hold a real conference, there would not be enough space for it. Mr. Thomas noted that even if they held a cocktail party with a tent and 100 people, it would not be very often. Mr. Gillis asked if the applicant would have to apply to Mr. Ventres for the tent, to which Mr. Ventres stated they would not. He noted that he never sees permits for functions such as this.

Mr. Curtin voiced some concern about outside events. Mr. Gillis believed the language was vague. Mr. Ventres stated it has been happening there for the past 20 years. Mr. Curtin and Mr. Gillis suggested if they planned to have 20 or 50 guests, then they could come back for review. Mr. Ventres asked why, on 1200 acres. Mr. Matthew agreed with Mr. Ventres. He stated he could not envision an event there that would affect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of East Haddam.

**Motion by Mr. Thomas to approve Application 08-11, The Nature Conservancy, 1 Dolbia Hill Road, Special Exception Review to use residential structure as office space for Nature Conservancy related non-point conservation work under Section 14B and Section 9.2.5 of the East Haddam Zoning Regulations, with the following conditions:**

- **The office space shall be for a maximum of five people.**
- **If the Nature Conservancy intends to have more than five people, or other than an office/small meetings, this would constitute a change of use and would require further review.**
- **If signage is planned, the applicant must come back to the Commission for review.**
- **If lighting is intended, the applicant must come back to the Commission for review.**
- **If the applicant intends to use the building for something other than for an office, this would constitute a change and the applicant must come back before the Commission.**

**Seconded by Mr. Gillis, and carried by unanimous vote.**

## **5. DISCUSSION**

### **A) Zoning Regulation/Planning Projects**

Mr. Brownell stated they would begin discussing the regulation projects in August.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Mr. Curtin to adjourn at 8:49 p.m., seconded by Mr. Matthew, and carried by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Pattavina