

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
TOWN OF EAST HADDAM  
LAND USE OFFICE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
August 26, 2014  
(Not yet approved by the Commission)

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

**2. ATTENDANCE:**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Crary Brownell–Chairman, James Curtin (regular member), Bernard Gillis (regular member), Ed Gubbins (regular member), Martha Hansen (alternate member), Kevin Matthews (regular member), Richard Pettinelli (alternate member), Louis Salicrup (regular member),

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Jessica Stone (alternate member), Harvey Thomas (regular member)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** James Ventres, Emmett Lyman, and 15 members of the public

Mr. Brownell appointed Mr. Pettinelli to vote in place of Mr. Thomas this evening.

**3. MINUTES**

The minutes of the August 12, 2014 regular meeting were accepted as presented.

**4. BILLS**

Suburban Stationers	\$140.38
Suburban Stationers	79.44
Suburban Stationers	55.15
NLJ (review Dutch propane)	1029.19
Branse & Willis, (held from last meeting)	129.00 (P&Z portion)

**Motion by Mr. Curtin, seconded by Mr. Gubbins, and carried by unanimous vote to pay the bills as presented.**

**5. SITE PLAN REVIEW**

**A) Application 14-17, Jonathan Peters, Hilltop Road, Site Plan Review to construct a single-family residence. Assessor's Map 67, Lot 170.**

**First date: August 12, 2014**

**Last date: October 29, 2014**

Mr. Jonathan Peters addressed the commission. The green cards were submitted to Mr. Ventres. Mr. Ventres distributed revised plans to the commission. Mr. Ventres stated that Mr. Peters dropped off this set of plans yesterday. Last month, there was additional mapping that needed to be done. Approximately 95% of this has been done.

Mr. Ventres indicated they are waiting for Chatham review. Ms. Davidson of Chatham Health District needs the information on the septic system, and for the plan to correctly show the septic system with respect to the fill section. There is a discrepancy with the separations shown on two pages of the plan, and whether or not it is below grade or above grade.

Mr. Peters stated that Chatham should have a punch list, because things are being added to the requirements. Mr. Curtin stated he should take that up with Chatham and his engineer. Mr. Ventres reviewed several other outstanding items that were not shown on the plan. Mr. Peters had another plan. Mr. Ventres stated that still needs to be reviewed.

Mr. Peters asked for punch lists from Chatham and this commission. Mr. Ventres stated his list has been emailed to everyone. He stated it is not fair to keep adding things to the requirements. Mr. Curtin explained that this commission cannot sign off on any plan for which Chatham has not given approval. Mr. Ventres asked about the building height. Mr. Peters stated that has been done.

Mr. Brownell asked about wetlands. Mr. Ventres stated wetlands has reviewed this application already. Mr. Ventres stated that he will contact the engineer again. Mr. Pettinelli stated they would need to see the details of the rain garden.

**Motion by Mr. Curtin, seconded by Mr. Matthews to continue Application 14-17, Jonathan Peters, Hilltop Road, Site Plan Review to construct a single-family residence to the September 9, 2014 meeting. Motion carried by unanimous vote. .**

**B) Application 14-18, James Bailey, 6 Hilltop Road, Site Plan Review to reconstruct existing year-round home. Assessor's Map 66, Lot 361.**

**First date: August 26, 2014**

**Last date: October 29, 2014**

Mr. Charles Dutch addressed the commission on behalf of the applicant. The plans were distributed to the commission. Mr. Dutch stated this year-round cottage is in disrepair. It will be torn down and rebuilt. They have located a septic system that appeared to be in unused condition. They also located the well. He was told that Ms. Davidson of Chatham was amenable to this plan.

Mr. Ventres stated there is a drawing of what the house will look like. Chatham has requested a final floor plan. It has a pre-existing system that is within the well radius. For pre-existing applications that do not meet the current Public Health Code, there can be no additional square footage. The building official went to the site to measure the square footage and discovered that the owner has cleared the property all the way down to the lake. The wetlands commission will take no action until a remedial

plan is in place.

Mr. Ventres stated the owner's plans have changed some. He recommended that this application be continued to the September 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**Motion by Mr. Curtin, seconded by Mr. Pettinelli to continue Application 14-18, James Bailey, 6 Hilltop Road, Site Plan Review to reconstruct existing year-round home until the September 23, 2014 meeting. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

**Motion by Mr. Pettinelli, seconded by Mr. Matthews to alter the order of business. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

## 7. DISCUSSION

### A) Gateway Standards

Mr. Pettinelli stated he was not present at the last meeting. He had, however, reviewed the materials from the meeting. He questioned the land coverage requirement. He stated at certain levels, one additional square foot means that a property owner would lose coverage.

Mr. Pettinelli referred to Item C in the Standards of the CT River Gateway Commission, and noted per these regulations, unless there was a structure over 4,000 square feet, it reads that he basically could not repair his roof, add solar panels, or anything else. See Item C.

Mr. Pettinelli believed that Item E. seemed stringent.

Mr. Pettinelli referred to Section F, 1.C: If the town is doing a road project, this reads that they could not put in an outlet, according to this regulation. In addition, he spoke to the 50-foot repair section. Mr. Ventres agreed that he did not like this language either.

Mr. Pettinelli questioned the height of the building. Mr. Curtin stated they already discussed this at the last meeting. Mr. Ventres stated the commission has tried for three years to get them to change this, and it was suggested that the few applications to which this would apply could go for a variance. Mr. Pettinelli stated it would only take one person who did not like it to hang it up on something like this. He stated these are guidelines, just like stormwater and erosion control are guidelines, but they become almost gospel.

Mr. Pettinelli stated that only a foot path, 5-feet wide, is allowed. Mr. Curtin agreed that these regulations are somewhat suppressive.

Mr. Brownell suggested that this item be kept on the agenda, as others may have more input.

## 8. ZEO REPORT

Mr. Ventres stated that he will have his hands full with wetlands permits this fall with the draw down on Bashan Lake. Mr. Curtin stated he has been getting calls for work that people want to do this fall.

Mr. Ventres reported that work is being done on the WPCA treatment plant building. The roof is done, and they are moving onto other areas.

Mr. Pettinelli inquired about the person who is renting kayaks on the reservoir. It was noted that Chatham Health District issued a permit for him to have a hotdog stand. Discussion ensued. Mr. Salicrup asked if there was a valid reason why someone could not have a hotdog stand. Mr. Ventres stated that EDC asked this commission not to allow food carts in town as it is detrimental to businesses who pay taxes in town on structures they own. Mr. Brownell stated the commission could shut them down. Mr. Gubbins stated that it would be late to do that. Mr. Salicrup proposed this commission address the EDC.

Noting that the time was now 8:00 p.m., the public hearing began.

## 6. PUBLIC HEARING

**A) Grandview Camp Resort, 89 North Moodus Road, amendment of existing approval. Assessor's Map 73, Lot 10.**

**First date: August 26, 2014**

**Last date: October 29, 2014**

Mr. Pettinelli recused himself from this application and left the building.

Mr. Donald Bergeron, manager for Grandview Camp Resort addressed the commission. He stated they eliminated the swimming pool and the cabanas. They had a zip line, previously approved, which they eliminated. They have removed the teepee and rock climbing wall. There were port-o-lets, and those have been removed. Also eliminated were the propane station, and the previously proposed baseball field. They have changed this high activity campground to a quiet campground.

Mr. Bergeron stated there used to be high-intensity lights on the existing basketball courts, but those have been removed. The courts are still there. Another significant improvement was that they had a lot of water coming onto North Moodus Road. They have established good grasses on the property. They looked at the sheetflow areas, and put in a level spreader, 530-ft long x 40-ft wide. This goes into a small detention pond. There was one area that was depositing runoff onto Ms. Williams' property. This detention area has stopped that runoff.

Mr. Bergeron explained that they added maples along the basketball area. They have done some grading on North Moodus Road and added pines. Ms. Williams requested more trees, which they installed adjacent to her property.

Mr. Bergeron stated the original approval was for 29 sites. This plan shows 48. The existing building has been renovated and opened, bringing it to 36 sites. They have relocated some of the tent sites and designated areas for them. At the top of the hill, some people want to stargaze, and they have added a couple sites to this area. He stated that people who camp in tents want to have more separation and privacy. He stated that Ms. Williams stated she might be able to see some of the tents in the proposed sites. With the berms, etc., he did not believe she would be able to see them.

Mr. Salicrup asked about the floating zones for tents at the last meeting. Mr. Bergeron stated since they had to have a public hearing, they decided to add some of the upgrades to the application.

Mr. Ventres stated that Christopher Bell, P.E. did a septic review, which are very low. The septic capacity is more than adequate for what is proposed on this application. Mr. Bergeron stated they are using the septic systems evenly. They had the tanks pumped after the first holiday, and they were at good levels.

Mr. Gillis asked if they were proposing any other activities, such as zip lines, etc. Mr. Bergeron stated they were not. It was asked about the recreation building. Mr. Bergeron stated they were continuing to use this.

Mr. Gubbins asked how many total rooms. Mr. Bergeron replied 15. The recently opened units in cabins brought to 36 total sites. The tent sites were previously 9, and with this proposal would increase to 11. The rest of the new units comprised of 7 sites converting to tent campers, and 4 RV sites.

Mr. Steven Crosby, Cherry Swamp Road stated this is a beautiful property, and it continues to look better and better. He supported this project.

Ms. Shaylene Thody supported the efforts to continue to improve this property, and to preserve history in town. The cabins have incorporated some recycled materials.

Mr. Bob Casner, Chairman of the EDC stated this is a big change going around the corner now, compared to what it used to be. The campers are there, the area is mowed, and this is a wonderful benefit to the town. Adding space for people to stay here is something EDC has been working toward for some time. This would actually double the number of rooms for people to stay. He believed this is a wonderful benefit to the community.

Ms. Debbie Williams, 30 Banner Road stated that Mr. Casner is a contractor working on the property. She added that everyone thinks Grandview is doing a good job, but gives less credence to someone who is associated with the property.

Mr. Ron Distefano, who stated he has nothing to do with the campground, lives on Clark Gates Road. He commented that there used to be derelict shacks on the property. Now when people drive by, they see renovated, maintained buildings, mowed lawns, etc. It provides an opportunity to bring business to

our town.

Mr. Peter Simmons, EDC coordinator submitted a statement for the record. He read this statement into the record, which praised this project.

Mr. David Carpenter stated he has been neighbors with Mr. Bergeron for 30 years. He stated the general behavior of the campers is greatly improved from the past. He does smell campfires at times. He voiced some concern about camp fires. He praised Mr. Bergeron for admitting that the runoff was inadequate before. He stated the catch basins are still not in the right location, and Mr. Bergeron agrees. He stated he sent an email to Mr. Ventres and others previously. He asked that the curbing be added. He suggested that the curbing be added past his barn and let the water flow into the Jansky's pond.

Mr. Brownell asked when the next Selectman's meeting was scheduled. Mr. Ventres stated he forwarded the email regarding the drainage to the appropriate people, but he does not control the Public Works budget, etc.

Mr. Dale Duby stated he has been in town 37 years, and is not associated with this project. He believed this would be a grand addition to this town, and would complement the community. He wholeheartedly supported this application.

Ms. Deborah Williams stated she was not trying to waste anyone's time. She stated she is so close to this project, that when kids are playing or smoke is coming up, she does have asthma, and it comes to her. She stated if the tent sites come up the hill, then the tree line should come up the hill also.

Ms. Deb Mathiasen, volunteer on EDC thanked Mr. Bergeron for presenting a compatible use for this community. She thanked the volunteers and staff on the P&Z commission. She was pleased to add Grandview in the economic development plan. She looked forward to helping Mr. Bergeron with his business.

Ms. Rhea Lynn DiStefano, who owns a riding stable on Clark Gates Road stated this campground has actually brought business to her. She hoped everyone would stop trying to stifle business in town.

Mr. Emmett Lyman stated he has attended many meetings over the years, as well as sitting on the Planning & Zoning Commission for years, and he has never seen such a positive reaction to a public hearing.

Ms. Williams stated she is the only one really next to this project. She stated that enough smoke, etc. would deteriorate property values. Sometimes kids scream and yell, and sometimes their parents are louder. She stated she would like it controlled.

Mr. Bergeron read into the record a letter from Mr. Steven Besek, who wrote in support of this project.

Mr. Bergeron stated this property had been a campground for 100 years. As an attorney, Ms. Williams Should have done her due diligence. He stated they removed the swimming pool, and have added passive activities. He did not know what more to do to appease her. He stated she requested thousands of dollars of trees, which the commission granted.

Ms. Kathy Bengston, 70 North Moodus Road, stated if she did not know the campground was there, she would not know there was a campground because she has heard no noise, nor has she smelled any campfires.

Mr. Dave Carpenter asked the long-term plan for the old hotel. Mr. Bergeron did not have the answer to that. Mr. Carpenter asked if there were animals in there. Mr. Bergeron stated there are a couple of raccoons, but he was not aware of anything else.

Mr. Gillis asked if there were designated fire pits. There is nothing noted on the map. Mr. Bergeron stated that some are on stone, and or small fire rings.

Mr. Brownell asked if there would be fire rings on the bottom tent sites near Banner Road.

Mr. Salicrup asked if the fire marshal was okay with these sites and fire pits/rings. Mr. Bergeron stated the fire marshal inspects the site annually.

**Motion by Mr. Salicrup, seconded by Mr. Matthews to close the public hearing of Grandview Camp Resort, 89 North Moodus Road, amendment of existing approval. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Mr. Ventres stated there is one section of this application with just a berm. He noted they could add plantings of trees 10-ft on center on the berm up hill.

Mr. Brownell suggested they might request trees planted when they do the additional tent sites. That way, it would not be all at once.

Mr. Brownell asked if the commission was comfortable with the additional tent sites.

Mr. Curtin suggested they move one tent site at the northeast location at the Banner/North Moodus Road intersection. That seemed to be the only place people really had objections. Mr. Curtin stated in the alternate sites, he did not believe they needed a buffer if it remained an alternate tent site; however, if it was used continuously, they should have a buffer.

Mr. Gubbins was in favor of the plan as presented. Mr. Salicrup agreed. Mr. Gubbins did not believe additional buffering was needed. Mr. Ventres reviewed the regulation and advised the commission to require the buffer. Mr. Curtin suggested requiring the buffer only if they use that area. It was noted that the buffer was a double row of arborvitaes, which they substituted with pines, 10-foot on center.

**Motion by Mr. Curtin to approve the application of Grandview Camp Resort, 89 North Moodus Road, amendment of existing approval with the following conditions:**

**If the alternate tent sites at the top of the hill are used at all, the buffer along the Williams property must be added in accordance with the regulations.**

**Motion seconded by Mr. Matthews and carried by unanimous vote.**

#### **8. ZEO REPORT (continued)**

Mr. Ventres reported that the bridge projects along Route 82 are moving along well.

Mr. Ventres advised that Ms. Lombardo has resigned, and has taken a job closer to her home. Everyone wished her well.

#### **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Mr. Matthews to adjourn at 9:09 p.m. Motion seconded by Mr. Salicrup, and carried by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Holly Pattavina