

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
TOWN OF EAST HADDAM
LAND USE OFFICE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 23, 2011
(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: Cary Brownell – Chairman, James Curtin (regular member), Bernard Gillis (regular member), John Matthew (regular member), Kevin Matthews (regular member), Harvey Thomas (regular member), Louis Salicrup (Alternate)

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Anthony Saraco (regular member)

OTHERS PRESENT: James Ventres, Emmett Lyman, and approximately 30 townspeople were present.

3. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND SET HEARING DATES:

A) Application 11-02, Clark Gates, LLC, Homestead Subdivision – Bogel Road, proposed 2-lot subdivision. Assessor's Map 38, Lot 11.

First date: August 23, 2011

Last date: October 26, 2011

Mr. Robert Casner addressed the Commission and presented the plan for his proposed subdivision. He explained that there was a previous subdivision on Bogel Road. This proposal is for Lot 89, which was a 14-acre parcel that was connected to another 2.5 acre parcel. He would do away with the connector piece onto Lot 89. This would be a triangular piece that would be added onto Lot 2. Lot 89 will become 10 acres, with 3 acres in the conservation easement area. Lot 2 would be increased by approximately an acre and one half. Lot 73, the new lot, will be approximately 2.5 acres.

Mr. Casner stated this proposal meets all requirements for frontage, etc. He stated there is a small area of wetlands, but there is no activity proposed there.

Mr. Matthew questioned the reason for the original lot configuration. Mr. Casner showed the area on the plan, and stated he had hoped to acquire the parcel with the farmhouse, but that did not happen.

Motion by Mr. Thomas to schedule a public hearing for Application 11-02, Clark Gates, LLC, Homestead Subdivision – Bogel Road, proposed 2-lot subdivision to be held on September 27, 2011, 8:00 p.m. at the Town Grange. Seconded by Mr. Gillis, and carried by unanimous vote.

4. LOT LINE REVISION

A) Application 11-10, Allyn and Todd Chase, 19 and 25 Ridgewood Road (Moodus Reservoir), proposed lot line revision. Assessor's Map 75, Lots 85 and 86.

First date: August 23, 2011

Last date: October 26, 2011

No one representing the applicant was present at this meeting. Mr. Ventres presented the plan and explained the proposal to the Commission. Mr. Ventres explained this was a property swap between two neighbors, as one of the houses is only 9-feet off the road.

Mr. Curtin asked if this swap would make the property conforming. Mr. Ventres stated the one parcel with the house would be conforming with this lot line revision.

Motion by Mr. Curtin to approve Application 11-10, Allyn and Todd Chase, 19 and 25 Ridgewood Road (Moodus Reservoir), proposed lot line revision as presented. Seconded by Mr. Matthew, and carried by unanimous vote.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the August 9, 2011 were accepted with the following amendments:

- Page 2, Paragraph 2: Change "strategic plan" to "comprehensive vision" in the first sentence, and change "looked" to "is looking through" in the last sentence.
 - Paragraph 5: Change "Greene" to "Walter"; add "previous" before "recommendations", and "by the municipal space committee" after "recommendations". Change "the lower parking lot" to "Town property in the village."
 - Paragraph 7, sentence 5: Change "linked" to "linking", and add "to the half-acre zone" after "sidewalks". Change "completed" to "started" in the last sentence.
- Page 6, Paragraph 3: Change "they" to "there" in the 4th sentence.
 - Paragraph 6: First sentence: Replace "they are left with" with "the only additions to the site plan were"
- Page 7, Paragraph 4: Last sentence: Strike "it"
- Page 8, 1st paragraph: Change "scrubbed" to "shrubbed"; and Paragraph 7: Change "financial" to "financially"

6. BILLS

Vendor

Amount

None

Motion by Mr. Curtin, seconded by Mr. Gillis to change order of business. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

8. ZEO Report

Mr. Ventres reported that Mr. Milan Cais is attempting to file, without the benefit of an attorney, an appeal in this case. Mr. Ventres will report on this next month.

Mr. Ventres reported that Mr. Puska has been to the Lipka property several times this summer regarding removing the debris, to no avail. He asked if the Commission would like to walk this property. Mr. Brownell inquired what the next step would be, to which Mr. Ventres responded the Commission could refer this to Attorney Knapp. Mr. Ventres stated the original letter went out last year. Mr. Salicrup asked if the attorney would request a court order for the cleanup. Mr. Brownell asked if the Commission would like to walk this site, and have the attorney write the letters. The consensus of the Commission was to just have the attorney take the next step. Most of the Commissioners were familiar with this site, and did not need to walk this site. Mr. Brownell instructed Mr. Ventres to contact Attorney Knapp on this matter.

Mr. Ventres stated he and the Conservation Commission is working on a grant for walking trails on the Harris property. Mr. Ventres informed the Commission that they are looking at the Lyons property as well. They are also looking at trails to include recreational activities such as horseback riding, hiking trails, etc.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Brownell asked Mr. Matthew if he had an opportunity to look at the historic documents, as discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Matthew stated he looked at some of them. Prior to zoning, people were looking at rural character. In 1967, there was a two volume plan put together, which delineated neighborhoods, the renewal of Moodus center, etc. In 1982, there was a comprehensive plan of conservation and development. After 1982, Mr. Matthew did not find any other plan. In 1994, there was a document prepared by the East Haddam Economic Development Commission for an economic strategy. There are significant vision components in this document. There was discussion of a grocery store, etc. Responsive to inquiry by Mr. Gillis, Mr. Ventres stated this was put together by the EDC in 1994. Mr. Matthew stated in the 1990's, there was a community planning group. Mr. Matthew stated there is no existing community planning group. As part of that, the East Haddam Village project was proposed in 1998. The mobility improvement study was done in 2000. Although very comprehensive, it only applied to the village. Mr. Matthew suggested this might be beneficial for the other neighborhoods.

Responsive to inquiry by Mr. Brownell, Mr. Matthew stated he would pull out some highlights from this information. Mr. Ventres stated if Mr. Matthew tagged.

Motion by Mr. Curtin, seconded by Mr. Gillis to take a brief recess. Motion carried by unanimous vote. The meeting reconvened at 8:05 p.m.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Matthews read the call for the public hearing:

A) Continued: Application 11-08, 89 North Moodus Road, LLC, Special Exception Review for a proposed campground. Assessor's Map 73, Lot 10.

First date: July 12, 2011

Last date: August 15, 2011

Mr. Thomas stated he has been unable to attend the last two public hearings on this application, and he exited the building at this time.

Mr. Ventres distributed a letter dated 8/23/2011 from the Chatham Health District. He read this letter into the record.

Mr. Ventres distributed and read into the record a letter dated August 23, 2011 from Ms. Elizabeth Lunt, Department of Public Works Administrator.

TAPE CHANGE (1B)

Mr. Ventres read into the record a review letter dated 8/22/2011 from Mr. Brian Curtis of NL Jacobson and Associates. In this letter, he reviewed the changes made to the plans, as well as his recommendations. The letter stated the proposed improvements should reduce the runoff by diverting and infiltrating into the soil.

Mr. Ventres read into the record a letter dated July 27, 2011 from the Building Official. The pool barrier is damaged/compromised. The pool filter building is not secure. There are 6 wood framed buildings in disrepair. The arcade/assembly use area must have battery powered lights. The buildings previously deemed unsafe must be secured. The arcade building must be secured. There must be changes to the doors so that they swing out. The letter itemizes seventeen conditions, but states that it is not a complete list.

Mr. Chris Bell, P.E. addressed the Commission. He presented the plan for this proposal. He stated they went out to look at the concerns that were raised at the last hearing. There is storm runoff coming down the driveway. They added a dry swale location, with crushed stone. They added additional measures to catch smaller storm runoff. It will overflow and catch some drainage.

Mr. Bell believed they have addressed the concerns as well as they could in this area.

Regarding the southerly access sight line improvements, they submitted a detail for that cut. It will not be a deep cut, but it will be along the steep bank that already exists. They have a silt fence and crown vetch to support this slope. It is stronger than what exists there now. They have hay bales around this area now. If any kind of silt fencing is needed, they will install it.

Mr. Bell did not believe it was appropriate to use the trailer areas as impervious. He explained that typically, they would not use parked as impervious surfaces.

Mr. Bell stated he spoke with Thad King of the Chatham Health district, and they have a letter from the DPH, which is on file.

Mr. Bell stated they took out many of the tent sites, due to the gravel driveway. He believed they would The total amount of camp areas would be 25, so they could meet the regulations.

Mr. Bell stated they added 8 RV sites in the southeast corner of the property between the log house and the 7-unit cottage building. They added a one-way access around the 8 RV units, as part of the requirements for traffic flow. As part of that, there is a backup area to access a dumping station using the septic system.

Mr. Bell stated they will drop five of the tent sites behind the log house, adjacent to the 8 RV sites. Mr. Brownell asked how many sites there would be, to which Mr. Bell responded there would be 9 tent sites, 15 RV sites, one teepee site, and 4 cottages.

Mr. Ventres stated under the Public Health Code and the existing bathroom facilities, they are allowed 25 sites. Mr. Matthews asked the total units. Mr. Bell stated there would be 29 total units, including the 4 cottages. In the past couple of weeks, the grass has grown in. He believed this area would be filled in more within the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Bell stated they looked at the runoff issues Mr. Carpenter has. It appeared across the street, there is a large buildup of sand, which is probably acting as a curb, resulting in runoff from Banner Road and down this road. He stated getting rid of the sand might help. Mr. Ventres spoke with Ms. Lunt, and stated they removed some sand on the east side of the road. They looked at North Moodus Road and did a bit of work to take out some of the pockets, but they will look into this further, to see what they could do.

Mr. Bell believed they had addressed many of the issues. He realized the owner has several issues to deal with regarding the securing of the buildings. He stated they have approvals from Chatham Health. They have located the septic systems for many of the buildings so far. Other than those comments, he believed they had addressed the major concerns.

Mr. Curtin questioned the berm. Mr. Bell stated they took the Commission's advice from the last meeting, they installed the berm already. They included a section for the berm with the trees on top of it. This is a small fill area, and they did not install a silt fence. The Public Works director suggested adding erosion control.

Mr. Bell stated they added a fence along the Williams property line.

Mr. Curtin asked if there was anything to prevent runoff around the RV sites. Mr. Bell stated most of this area was paved already, so it was really adding very little.

Mr. Bell stated this site has always had a one-way travel. If this is not changed, they would not need to change the sight line. Now with the parking lot, it will most likely be used as a two-way.

Responsive to inquiry by Mr. Curtin, the five tent sites behind the office building would be removed from the plan.

Mr. Curtin asked about the ball field. Mr. Bell stated they would have four bases out there, and that would be the ball field. There is also a zip line that is proposed. It is new on the revised plans submitted.

Mr. Bell spoke about the level spreader. Mr. Bell reviewed the location of this.

Mr. Bell read into the record a letter dated August 16, 2011 to Mr. Ventres from Mr. Nedovich, which spoke to the applicant's desire to use this property as a resort facility during the remainder of the year. Mr. Ventres stated he spoke with the building official, and they are subject to seasonal use. There are no plans to convert this to a year-round use at this point.

Mr. Matthew questioned the potable water. He asked if all of the issues concerning water were resolved. Mr. Bell stated they received a letter from the DPH. Mr. Ventres stated there is a slight disconnect, which should be clarified. Mr. Matthew asked about the submittal date of May 18, 2011, as outlined in the Chatham letter. Mr. Bell stated this is resolved.

Mr. Matthew asked if the cottage units have bathrooms, and are self-contained units. Mr. Bell stated they are self-contained.

Mr. Gillis asked about the safety of the buildings, and how they will be secured. Mr. Nedovich stated they have secured approximately 90% of the buildings now. All of the doors are secured, and they have boarded up some of the buildings. They have sent a letter to the fire marshal regarding the hotel.

TAPE CHANGE (2A)

Mr. Nedovich stated they would send a letter to the building official regarding the hotel. They have met most of the requirements. They have installed interior and exterior lighting. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors have been installed.

Responsive to inquiry by Mr. Gillis, Mr. Bell stated they will be shaving the area on the slope. It will be close to a 1:1 slope, but because of the crown vetch, etc., they did not believe it will be a problem. He stated there is no snow shelf there now. If the Town wanted to, they could add a small swale there now. He believed it would be important to do this work in September, so it will take.

Mr. Gillis asked which building was the Seneca building. Mr. Bell stated it is the one-story. Mr. Terry Thomas explained the buildings, locations, and names.

Mr. Brownell asked if this hearing would have to be continued. Mr. Ventres asked if there was anything else that would be changing. Mr. Bell stated Public Works wanted a bit of silt fence behind the berm, removal of 5 sites.

Mr. Brownell stated they needed to end this hearing tonight by 9:30 p.m., as they have two other public hearings to get to. He opened the hearing to the public at this time.

Ms. Debra Williams appreciated the work that has gone into this project. Ms. Williams referred to the 5-foot high berm and 6-foot arborvitae. She stated there is a shuffle board pavilion, pool, etc. She questioned RVs in general. She stated sometimes people have RVs plugged into electric units, generators, etc. Mr. Bell stated these would be plug ins for the RVs.

Ms. Williams asked when they would begin construction on the berm, trees. Mr. Bell stated they would start it immediately upon approval. Ms. Williams voiced surprise that the fire marshal said nothing about the fires. She stated if the wind shifts, she will get a lot of smoke. She spoke to the issue of fairness. She appreciated all of the work that was put into this. She stated everyone on the Commission is a volunteer. She stated since the application process began, the process has changed about five times. She stated at the last meeting, there were no RV sites. Now at this meeting, there are 15 RV sites. Ms. Williams supported the chairman's request for continuance, so that people can have the chance to review the plans. She stated this was submitted as a seasonal, summer project. She stated this property is adjacent to single-family homes. She questioned the capacity.

Mr. David Carpenter prepared a 4-page letter for the Commission's review. He submitted copies to the Commission. He highlighted a few points from his letter. He stated this work has been fragmented. He stated there has been clearing, with a number of trees cut. This resulted in severe erosion. He stated there has to be something done so this does not happen again. He understood that Public Works is doing work to alleviate some of these issues; however, it is not enough. He stated his letter has a "wish list" of things he and his wife would like to have done, some by the developer and some by the Town. He stated there is a bill of \$660.00 that to his knowledge, has not been paid.

Mr. Carpenter stated supposedly, the runoff problem has been reduced. He quoted from a previous letter from Ms. Lunt, regarding designing for the worst case scenario. He did not believe this has been designed for the worst case scenario. He believed the water has to be stopped at the site, and then the Town has to take some measures. He stated he would like to see a bond for this issue.

Mr. Carpenter stated the road had issues before the development, but he believed the problems have quadrupled since this development. The water is still going around the catch basins. He asked the Town to consider, after the developer has done his work, that the Town install two catch basins on Mr. Carpenter's side of the road.

Mr. Donald Bergeron, 78 North Moodus Road, stated his property is across from the site. He stated he was concerned about the property values. His biggest concern was the water problems. He stated he asked the engineer what could be done. They added some swales, and they added hay bales. It did not stop the water, but it significantly slowed it down.

Mr. Bergeron stated that cluster housing, or low-income housing would not benefit his property values. He stated this area had previously had resorts in the area. He stated they have made efforts to correct the issues with the tree cutting. He stated he has done a lot of traveling and camping, and he did not believe the fires would be an issue. He did not believe there would be 200 fires in this campground.

Mr. Bergeron stated if the Commission believed the applicant had done what they needed, they should vote on this project, to let the applicant salvage what is left of the season.

Mr. John Felciano stated every time he comes to these meetings, the plans change. He stated his other concern was the unsecured buildings. He stated the two buildings on Banner Road are not secured.

Mr. Bell stated as soon as the plans were done, they handed out copies to the neighbors.

Ms. Debra Williams stated she did not receive a plan. She saw the applicant come on to her driveway, and she did not believe it would be difficult to drop off a plan to her. She stated anything below 200-feet for buffering. She stated some of the buildings are 25-feet away. She believed some consideration must be given to the buffering. She believed there could be different buffers on different sides of the property.

Mr. Carpenter asked that the entire buffer on the north side of the property be untouched until the runoff is controlled. It could be reevaluated at a later date.

Mr. Brownell stated he would like to have time to review these plans. Mr. Curtin asked if there was sufficient time to wait. Mr. Ventres stated with the extension, they could meet again on 9/13.

Motion by Mr. Gillis, seconded by Mr. Matthew to continue this application until the next regularly scheduled meeting on September 13, 2011, 8:00 p.m. at the Town Grange. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Thomas returned to the meeting at this time.

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

B) Application 11-09, Daniel O'Mara, 26 Berry Road, Special Exception Review for a proposed bait and tackle shop and skiff rentals. Assessor's Map 67, Lot 66.

First date: August 23, 2011

Last date: September 26, 2011

Mr. Daniel O'Mara addressed the Commission, and presented the plan. He submitted the green, certified receipt cards to Mr. Ventres.

Mr. O'Mara stated the address was listed incorrectly. Mr. Ventres explained the Map and Lot number were accurate.

Mr. O'Mara stated he was proposing a 24-ft. x 24-ft. structure for a bait shop.

Mr. Ventres stated the IWWC reviewed this application last week. There is a 24-ft. x 24-ft. structure, but it was discovered that part of the structure was within the Association's right of way. The IWWC approved Mr. O'Mara's application for a replacement last week.

Mr. Ventres stated the Building Official was amenable to a new structure.

Mr. Ventres reviewed the conditions of the Chatham Health District a few years ago, which spoke to a chemical privy. Mr. O'Mara located the Port-O-Let on the plan. Mr. Ventres stated the Chatham Health District would not approve snacks or drinks without any type of hand washing system. The Chatham Health District could not approve this as it was not before them at this time.

Mr. Salicrup inquired about parking. Mr. O'Mara stated there would be adequate parking. Responsive to inquiry by Mr. Salicrup, Mr. O'Mara stated he would have row boats and kayaks. Mr. Gillis asked about bait deliveries. Mr. O'Mara stated he would get deliveries by van.

Mr. Matthew inquired about water needed for bait tanks. Mr. O'Mara stated he would use lake water for the bait wells. Mr. Matthew asked about discharging the water back into the lake. Mr. O'Mara stated the water is filtered within the tank itself. Mr. Matthew asked who regulated this, to which Mr. Ventres stated this application was actually sent to the DEP, and they received no response.

Mr. Thomas asked about the season. Mr. O'Mara stated it would be seasonal, although he would like to be open for the ice fishing season as well as the regular fishing season.

Mr. Thomas noted that the applicant is relying on using the State's parking lot for parking. Mr. O'Mara indicated he sent notice to the State, but received no response. Mr. Curtin asked if the parking lot is full at times. Mr. O'Mara stated it is full sometimes. Mr. Curtin noted that people renting a skiff would not bring trailers with them.

Mr. Gillis asked about signage. Mr. O'Mara stated he would have a sign, but he had not considered the sign yet.

Mr. Brownell opened the hearing to the public.

Ms. Kathy Olson, 16 Shore Road, questioned what a skiff is, and if it has a motor or not. She asked the hours of operation

TAPE CHANGE (2B)

Ms. Kathy Olson asked what time they would rent the boats, how many boats, where the excess people would park.

Mr. O'Mara stated the skiffs would be 14-foot aluminum boats. Some would have 5hp motors, and some would not have motors. He also might have some electric motors. The hours of operation would be 7:00 – 7:00 Monday – Friday, and 6 to 8 on Saturday and Sunday.

Ms. Olson asked how many boats, with the kayaks. Mr. O'Mara stated to begin, he planned to have 6 skiffs, a couple kayaks, and possibly a canoe.

Ms. Olson asked about jet skis, etc. Mr. O'Mara stated he had no interest in that. Ms. Olson asked if there would be interest in a year or so. Mr. Brownell stated the Commission could only review what was before them and not future applications.

Mr. Dave King, 10 Shore Road, questioned the zoning, if this would be residential going to commercial. Mr. Brownell explained it would be a home occupation. Mr. Ventres reviewed the regulations, and stated that in the lake district, that Section 9.4.16 of the Zoning regulations allow seasonal commercial uses.

Mr. King questioned trash pickup. Mr. O'Mara plans to have trash cans around the property, and will have trash pickup. Mr. King asked what the trash pickup schedule would be. Mr. O'Mara stated he would service them himself.

Mr. King stated parking was an issue. Mr. O'Mara stated he could provide 5 parking spaces on the site. Mr. King questioned what facilities there would be. Mr. O'Mara responded he would have a Port-O-Let.

Mr. King stated that traffic would be an issue, and he voiced concern about people turning around in his property. Mr. O'Mara explained how the traffic would flow.

Mr. King voiced concern about the boats, the times, etc. Mr. O'Mara envisioned something akin to Pach's Bait Shop. Mr. King stated another concern would be bait. Mr. O'Mara stated he would freeze dead bait for shiners, and the wells would be filtered. The water would be discharged either to the ground, or back to the lake.

Mr. Rob Antonello asked who would check licenses for boat rentals, to which Mr. O'Mara stated it would be his liability to check the licenses. Mr. Antonello was concerned that there would be no parking for people with trailers.

Mr. Antonello asked about fish getting Ick, a spotting disease, and he was concerned that this water would be discharged back into the lake. He voiced concern that the disease would get into the lake. Mr. O'Mara stated the bait would be health checked through the DEP.

Ms. Patty Stricker was very much in favor of this. She stated she was in favor of buying bait, rather than having her kids bring in buckets of worms into her house.

Mr. Brownell asked if there were regulations on the water discharge. Mr. Ventres stated he could check with the DEP, but many people have coolers or bait tanks hanging off their docks. Mr. Curtin asked if Mr. Ventres ever had problems with diseases. Mr. Ventres stated as long as there is water flowing through it, it would not create a problem.

Mr. Brownell noted that people have questioned the boat storage, etc. Mr. Gillis asked if there was a designated parking spot for vehicles with trailers.

Mr. Brownell asked if the commission would want to walk this site. Mr. Gillis would like to walk it. It was decided the commissioners would walk this individually.

Mr. Matthews suggested Mr. O'Mara add to the site plan signage, lighting, etc. Mr. Brownell asked Mr. Ventres to look into the water discharge and about the State property.

Mr. Brownell asked Mr. O'Mara to make copies of the plan available to the neighbors, if they would like them.

Ms. Olson asked how many Port-O-Lets there would be, and where they would be located. Mr. O'Mara stated there would be one, and it would be located about 4-5 feet from Ms. Olson's property line. She asked if that could be relocated.

Mr. Brownell asked Mr. O'Mara to add the location of the Port-O-Let, as well as the garbage cans on the plan, shielding on lighting, etc.

Motion by Mr. Thomas to continue Application 11-09 until the September 13, 2011 meeting, 8:00 p.m. at the Town Grange. Motion seconded by Mr. Matthew, and carried by unanimous vote.

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

C) Proposed Amendments to the East Haddam Signage Regulations

Mr. Ventres distributed the proposed signage regulation. He stated this regulation was last reviewed by the Commission in June, 2011.

Mr. Ventres stated they reorganized the definitions alphabetically. They changed frontage to "façade". They added ingress and egress definitions. They added definitions to page 2 for internally illuminated signage. They added "shall light rays be directed"

On page 3, Mr. Ventres explained the Commission organized the restrictions and conditions alphabetically. Mr. Ventres stated the largest chunk of this regulation was for neon and internally illuminated signs. Mr. Ventres read this section into the record. They also added a requirement for maintenance, which he read into the record. Mr. Ventres stated they added language to the non-conforming signs section, in order to make it clearer.

Mr. Ventres stated they added a section for obsolete signs, on page 4. He read this section into the record. There was a slight change to "Other Permits Required" section.

On Page 5, Mr. Ventres reviewed the proposed change to the Change in Text/Content section, as well as to the Non-Advertising Traffic Control Signs, Temporary Commercial Signs, Temporary Political Signs.

Page 6, slight changes were made to the sections for Temporary Sale Signs; 12.5A Residential Districts; 12.5.A1; 12.5.A.2; 12.5.A.3.

Page 7, changes were made to Section 2, Commercial Signs; 5. Temporary Commercial Signs; and 12.5C.2

Mr. George Greider questioned page 3, the internally illuminated signs. Mr. Ventres explained the "open signs".

At this time, Mr. Brownell open the hearing to the public.

Mr. Edward O'Dell, chairman of the EDC stated they supported the proposed changes.

One person from the audience asked why neon signs were even being considered in this town. Ms. Patty Stricker stated that businesses came to them to ask for them. There are inconsistencies throughout town with signs. She stated many of these regulations were here before. She stated the businesses actually came to the EDC and asked them to propose it.

Mr. Thomas asked if it would be helpful to the conversation for Mr. Ventres to outline where the zones are. Mr. Ventres reviewed the zones and where there were located in town. Mr. Ventres stated there were ten possible sites, a couple of which already have these signs. Mr. Greider stated he took photographs last night, and they are not enforced.

Mr. Todd Gelston stated a lot of work was put into these regulations. As just pointed out by several people, there is a problem enforcing them. He was not in favor of neon signs. He believed there are already plenty of nice signs in town that meet the needs of businesses. He would like to hear from people who need these signs, so he could balance the need. He believed this would be a headache that would just get worse.

Mr. Will Brady, 4 Landing Hill Road, suggested a change to page 3, Illumination, and page 5 historic district. He stated historic districts do not allow internally illuminated signs. He asked that the designated historic districts be added to page 3, and on page 5, that a typographical error exists.

Mr. Brady questioned page 2, regarding lighting. Mr. Brady asked if pre-approved lit signs were grandfathered, to which Mr. Brownell responded affirmatively.

TAPE CHANGE (3A)

Mrs. Nancy MacKinnon, 24 Boardman Road stated many people met for several years to discuss rural character and lighting. If we are trying to create an economic brand in East Haddam, she was not sure illuminated or neon signs in any place make the businesses that much more viable.

Ms. MacKinnon stated she has seen some very tasteful signs lit from below. She suggested they tweak the language a bit.

Ms. Jane Zirlis, Boardman Road, stated she has lived in Boston, New York, Asia, Europe, and would be embarrassed if there is neon lighting allowed. She also does not care to have the tourists who are looking for neon signs.

Mr. George Greider, 382 Town Street, submitted a packet to the Commission, with photographs he took last evening at 9:00 p.m. He suggested the Commission take a leadership role in not allowing light pollution.

Mr. Dick Everett spoke against the proposed regulations. He stated if you want a nice town with people who want to live here, don't want this. He did not believe it made sense.

Ms. Deb Mathiasen, EDC, read into the record a letter from the owner of Hillside Sweet Shop, which spoke in favor of the proposed regulation changes.

Ms. Gail Kranz, 382 Town Street, stated she understood people wanted to make the regulations more readable. She stated no one wanted to talk about the photos Mr. Greider submitted, but these were on at 10:30 p.m. last night. She stated she has lived in town for 35 years. There are already neon signs that are against the regulations. Unless someone enforces the regulations, there will be eventual creep of these signs. She believed this was already out of control, and it will continue to balloon. She asked why they wanted this in town.

Mrs. Charlotte Gelston agreed with everyone who has spoken against the neon signs. She didn't know what was wrong with an open sign. She believed a sign could be lit from above, and that neon signs should be categorically disallowed throughout town. She did not see any need for neon signs in the business district, as they are garish. She stated there was no need for neon or internally illuminated signs, as far as she was concerned.

Ms. Patty Stricker stated that the EDC did not have a problem removing language on page 3, in the section for Neon and internally illuminated signs, after "IG9". This would put it back to what it was before. It was noted that none of the business owners were present at this meeting.

Mr. Ventres stated that internally illuminated signs have been in the regulations since the 1970's. He stated now they are tightening that language to allow only 2 signs. For the IG zone, there was a request to have some type of sign to say "Open". Ms. Stricker stated the EDC was okay with pulling that out.

Mr. Thomas stated then that the only place in town where neon or internally illuminated zones would be in the C/B/IG zones in Moodus. Mr. Ventres stated the Commission would have to deal with the grandfathered ones. Ms. Stricker stated they would pull off the table the businesses up from Moodus. She stated they have notified all of the businesses, and no one representing the businesses are here this evening.

Mr. Everett asked if someone in Moodus has neon or internally lit signs that are allowed, if they move or change ownership, if the next person has the right to have the neon signs. Mr. Ventres stated they would have the same right. Mr. Everett suggested they not be allowed to do this. Mr. Ventres stated this would not be legal.

Ms. Nancy Borge, 482 Town Street, stated that Ridgefield did this. Mr. Ventres stated he could get a ruling from the attorney, but this is against the law.

Mr. Ron Borge, 482 Town Street, asked if someone could come in right now and get grandfathered. Mr. Brownell explained that any application now would be subject to the existing regulations.

Motion by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Curtin to continue this hearing until the September 13, 2011 meeting, 8:00 p.m. at the Town Grange. Motion carried by unanimous vote. .

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Matthews to adjourn at 11:10 p.m., seconded by Mr. Matthews to adjourn at 10:18 p.m. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Pattavina