

**TOWN OF HADDAM
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING
TOWN HALL
21 FIELD PARK DRIVE, HADDAM, CT
THURSDAY, 7 JANUARY 2016
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Steven Bull, Vice Chairman
X	Arthur Kohs
X	Michael Lagace
X	Jamin Laurenza, Chairman
X	Wayne LePard (7:02 p.m.)
X	Carmelo Rosa (7:01 p.m.)
X	Robert Braren, Alternate - Seated
A	Raul de Brigard, Alternate
X	Edward Wallor, Alternate - Seated
X	Liz West Glidden, Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mr. Laurenza, chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Attendance/Seating of the Alternates

Attendance was taken and all regular and alternate members were seated.

3. Additions/Corrections to the Agenda

None.

4. Public Comments

None.

5. Discussion of the Potential Acquisition of the Moody Property (Tax Map 62, Lot 02) by the Haddam Land Trust. Said Parcel is Approximately 129 Acres with Frontage along Ruth Hill and Tinker Roads.

Bill Cowan, President, Gail Reynolds, Treasurer, and Cindy Sullivan, Director, Haddam Land Trust, were present.

Mr. Cowan distributed copies of a six page information packet entitled "Beaver Ledges, A Conservation Project, Project Lead: HLT, Inc.", (Exhibit A). Mr. Cowan stated that the Haddam Land Trust (HLT) is requesting a letter of support from the Commission to acquire the Beaver Ledges parcel.

Using a map, Mr. Cowan pointed out the parcel and abutting properties (Cockaponset State Forest, Connecticut River Watershed Council, and Tinker and Ruth Hill Roads. Mr. Cowan reported that the HLT plans to apply for an open space and watershed land acquisition grant through DEEP and that the grant requires community support. Mr. Cowan also reported that the HLT will be raising funds for the acquisition of the property.

Mr. Cowan noted the following features on the parcel: 1) a beaver pond (approximately eight acres), 2) lower marsh, 3) vernal pool, and 4) three brooks (Roaring Brook, a recognized cold water stream wild trout brook which is unusual and important to maintain). Mr. Cowan stated that the handout outlines goals for the parcel; and that one of the goals for the parcel, more so state than local, is passive recreation. Mr. Cowan also stated that part of the HLT's plan is to develop a multi-use trail around the property (planning already in process) with a small gravel parking area (three to four cars) off of Ruth Hill Road.

Mrs. Reynolds reported that the HLT has been participating through the River COG in a group called the Lower River Land Trust Exchange that used geographic information systems (GIS) to develop different layers of information. Mrs. Reynolds also reported that these layers have indicated that this is a prime area for high conservation value from an ecological and regional perspective.

Mr. Bull asked how the Connecticut River Watershed Council plays in this matter. Mr. Cowan stated that the Council, a conservation organization, covers the entire Connecticut River watershed and they were given their land approximately 20-30 years ago by the previous owner (not Moody). Mr. Cowan stated that it's his understanding that the current owner has no interest in owning the property and would like to see it sold probably to the state.

Mr. Bull asked Mrs. Glidden if P&Z had any regulations governing this type of matter. Mrs. Glidden stated that the HLT is applying for a grant that requires community and town support and that presentations will be made to other commissions/boards. Mrs. Reynolds stated that she will be introducing this matter to the Conservation Commission where she is chairman; and noted that letters of support from different groups is important in obtaining this grant.

Mrs. Glidden reported that she walked the parcel, that it's a wonderful piece of property, and applauds the HLT for taking this project on. Mr. Bull stated that there appears to be no downside to this matter and that the parcel would be taxed differently to the town. Mr. Cowan stated that the property is currently under P.A. 490 (forestry) – low tax rate. Mr. Bull stated he assumes the parcel is undevelopable due to the extreme slopes. Mr. Cowan stated it could be developed and that is one of the concerns of the HLT.

Mr. LePard asked about access to the property. Using the map, Mr. Cowan pointed out the access points.

Ms. Sullivan stated that she supports the project and that it's a spectacular property.

Mr. Laurenza read a letter of support from P&Z, dated 8 January 2016, into the record (Exhibit B). As the Commission was in support of the statement, Mr. Laurenza signed the letter. Mrs. Glidden will scan the document and mail the original to Mr. Cowan.

6. Discussion and Referral of Proposed Regulation Updates for Sections 6, 7A, 21.12, 17.5, 23, 30.6, The Housing Opportunity District, Section 4 Table 1, and the Definitions Section of the *Town of Haddam Zoning Regulations*

Mrs. Glidden reported that she hopes the public hearing will be on Thursday, 4 February 2016; and that she has sent the referral to the Gateway Commission and the document is available in the Haddam Town Clerk's Office. Mrs. Glidden will have a Power Point presentation ready for the 21 January 2016 meeting. Mrs. Glidden requested a 35 day effective date once the revisions are approved to allow for formatting.

Bruce Mazzotta, resident and local contractor, questioned Subsection 13B.2 – Definitions - 2.5 “Monthly Payment” of the proposed Housing Opportunity District (HOD) regulations. After review of the section, Mrs. Glidden stated she would speak to Attorney Mark Branse about Mr. Mazzotta’s concern. Mrs. Glidden asked the Commission if they would like Mr. Branse to be present for the public hearing. Mr. Laurenza stated yes.

Mrs. Glidden advised the Commission that there are people waiting until after the approval of the revisions to submit their applications.

In regard to galleries (proposed Section 6, Residential Zones, 6.5 U), Mr. Bull stated the wording pertaining to a gallery being on a lot that has frontage on a state road or highway was to be eliminated. Mrs. Glidden thought the consensus of the Commission was to leave the wording in. Mr. Bull stated he thought it was the consensus to eliminate it with Mr. Wallor and Mr. Laurenza agreeing. Discussion followed in regard to galleries being within residential areas; that a special permit would be required; and that there is an individual who has approached the town in regard to opening a gallery. Mrs. Glidden asked if the consensus of the Commission was to remove the wording “frontage on a state road or highway”. The Commission responded yes.

Mr. Laurenza asked if Mr. Mazzotta had any further concerns. Mr. Mazzotta asked if there’s a minimum acreage requirement for an HOD development. Mrs. Glidden responded no.

7. Request Extension of the Filing of a Mylar for the Approved Subdivision of the Wytas Subdivision located at 428 Plains Road. The Subdivision was Approved on October 1, 2015.

Neither Steven and Michele Wytas, owners/applicants, or Richard Mihok, their engineer, were present.

Mrs. Glidden reported that Mr. and Mrs. Wytas have not filed their Mylar, which needed to be done this week; and that Mr. Mihok has requested a 90 day extension.

MOTION: Jamin Laurenza moved to approve a 90 day extension to file the record Mylar with the Haddam Town Clerk for a one lot resubdivision that was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on October 1, 2015. **Conditions:** The record Mylar shall be filed by March 30, 2016. Ed Wallor second. Motion carried unanimously.

8. New Business: Stasia DeMichele Resignation

Mr. Laurenza reported that Mrs. DeMichele has resigned and that it’s a sad day for P&Z. A card of appreciation was signed by all and a token of appreciate will be presented to her.

9. Old Business

Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Kick Off January 20

Mrs. Glidden reported that the initial meeting will be Wednesday, 20 January 2016, Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive, at 7:00 p.m. and that all Commissioners will be cc’d on emails pertaining to the POCD. Mrs. Glidden also reported that Mr. Rosa sent some revisions in regard to the Request for Proposal (RFP).

Mr. Bull asked if a committee has been established. Mrs. Glidden reported that all Haddam commissions have been asked as well as the Higganum Vision Group (HVG), a resident who works for the Department of Transportation (DOT) who expressed interest, and other planners and architects who expressed interest. Mr. Bull asked if Paul Geraghty, former P&Z chairman, who had worked on the current POCD, had been contacted. Mrs. Glidden stated that she hadn’t due to the lack of an email address. Mrs. Batzner stated that she will provide Mr. Geraghty’s email address to Mrs. Glidden.

Mrs. Glidden stated that she feels the first step is to draft the RFP and begin interviewing people in order to hire a consultant, who will then take the lead on this matter.

Election of Officers

A brief discussion followed in regard to electing a secretary for the Commission. The Commission agreed to table the vote.

10. Approval/Correction of the Minutes

MOTION: Carmelo Rosa moved to approve the 3 December 2015 minutes as submitted. Art Kohs second. Motion carried unanimously.

11. Chairman's Report

None.

12. Scheduling of Hearings

None.

13. Town Planner's Report

Department of Transportation (DOT) Meeting – Proposed Roundabouts, Tylerville - Mrs. Glidden reported that the town has been approached in regard to two (2) roundabouts (traffic rotaries/circles) – 1) Route 154 and Bridge Road and 2) Route 154 and the 82 Connector (bottom of Exit 7). The rationale for Route 154 and Bridge Road is to keep traffic moving – prevent traffic backup and help regulate bridge traffic - and provide some bicycle safety as bicycles would go through the circle with vehicular traffic rather than to the side of the road. Mrs. Glidden reported that this potential project would not take place until 2020-2021 as there's a major swing bridge project scheduled for 2018. Mrs. Glidden stated that she supports the proposal as they do reduce accidents; and that she would encourage East Haddam to do the same on Routes 82 and 151 (over by Two Wrasslin' Cats and Shagbark). Mr. Laurenza asked how a tractor trailer could negotiate the circle noting the issues with the Killingworth Circle (Routes 81 and 80). Mrs. Glidden stated that DOT is aware of the issues with the Killingworth Circle and have learned from that. The Salem Four Corners traffic circle was mentioned as well. Mr. Wallor stated that he doesn't have a problem with traffic circles noting that he works in Massachusetts. Mr. Laurenza stated that Massachusetts knows how to build them.

Mrs. Glidden stated that it's an idea that DOT is floating (no monies committed or designs made) and it would be at state costs and that there will be public meetings (starting in February). Mrs. Glidden noted that the roundabouts can fit within the state's existing right-of-way. Mr. Wallor asked if one is accepted, does the town have to accept the other. Mrs. Glidden responded no.

Mrs. Glidden reported that there is accident data at the intersection of Route 154 and the 82 Connector. Mrs. Glidden stated that the idea is to keep traffic moving; however, she is not sold on this one. Discussion followed in regard to drivers coming off the connector not being clear as to whether traffic on Route 154 is turning onto the Connector or continuing south on Route 154.

Mr. Bull asked if the town has a say in regard to installing roundabouts. Mrs. Glidden stated in this case, yes, as DOT has approached the town. Mrs. Glidden stated that DOT has a new program and are interested in working with the town and that they feel these two locations are good locations for circles. Mrs. Glidden reported that there are a couple of ways DOT works: 1) take project to a design phase and then do a public presentation or 2) have a community meeting to discuss the matter and come back a year later. Mrs. Glidden stated that she and Lizz Milardo, First Selectman, suggested starting with the community meetings.

Mr. Laurenza stated that if DOT suggested two lanes in either direction over Bridge Road up to the River House and then drop down to one in order to allow people to turn or to continue straight. Mr. Wallor

agreed, stating that the state should finish the 82 Connector by going straight through – over the beaver pond toward the state garage - noting that the state already owns the property. Mrs. Glidden stated that it would cut off the businesses in Tylerville.

Discussion returned to the roundabouts in Killingworth, Salem, and Madison (Routes 80 and 79) and whether or not plantings or signage could be included. Mrs. Glidden stated this potential project could be a means in which other positive changes occur.

Mr. Kohs spoke in regard to traffic congestion when the bridge is open for boat traffic. Mr. Laurenza again suggested two lanes – one for over the bridge and one to continue north and south bound.

Preservation of Place (POP) Grant – Mrs. Glidden reported that the town has received a \$10,000 grant for a market study of Tylerville and that she has asked for matching funds from the Capital Planning Committee to allow for the study and to draft regulations based on the study. Mrs. Glidden also reported that she will draft an RFP (potential release in March) for the organization Connecticut Main Street Center outlining what the Commission is seeking. Mr. Bull asked about the specifics of the organization. Mrs. Glidden explained that Connecticut Main Street Center focuses on main street revitalization.

Chatham Health District (CHD) - Mrs. Glidden reported that the town voted to explore alternative options for a health district (find another health district or hire a director of health/sanitarian). Mr. Bull asked who the town is currently using. Mrs. Glidden stated that the town will continue to use the CHD until 30 June 2016 and explained that state statute requires a town to give notice by 31 December of the year prior to leaving. Discussion followed in regard to the number of towns involved with CHD, the rationale behind leaving CHD, and availability of services (those used and not used).

14. Adjournment

MOTION: Steve Bull moved to adjourn. Ed Wallor second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 21 January 2016.