East Haddam
Zoning Board of Appeals
September 1, 2026

1. Call to Order

   The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Zoning Board of Appeals was held on Tuesday, September 1, 2026, at 7:00 PM. The Chairperson and Secretary being present.

2. Attendance

   Laurie Alt, William Smith, Richard Fiala, James Fennema, Samuel Wytas, James Ventres – Land Use Officer

   Others Present: George Fellner, Scott Spencer, Andrew Bordick, Nancy Bordick, Bruce Lawrence of Bluewater Millwork & Construction Inc.

   Mr. Fennema appointed Mr. Wytas to sit in as a regular voting member in place of Mr. Kane.

3. Public Hearing

A. Application #26-05 - East Shore Dr, Map 80, Lot 357, James Foley. Accessory structure without a primary structure. Requested variance of Section 10.2 of the Zoning Regulations.

Mr. Ventres outlined the applicant is not here, and asked for the application to be tabled until the end of the meeting. He is requesting a variance for an existing shed on a property that does not have a primary use. The shed was placed on the shed without discussion with the Land Use Officer.

Motion by Ms. Alt to move the application to the end of the meeting to give the applicant time to join. Seconded by Mr. Fiala and unanimously approved.

Motion by Mr. Smith to continue to the next meeting Application #26-05 - East Shore Dr, Map 80, Lot 357, James Foley. Accessory structure without a primary structure. Requested variance of Section 10.2 of the Zoning Regulations. Seconded by Ms. Alt and unanimously approved.

B. Application #26-06 - 259 Lake Shore Dr, Map 87, Lot 103, George Fellner (applicant), Scott Spencer, (owner). Seeking variance of Section 10.1 of the Zoning Regulations for maximum lot/building coverage of 11.4% where 10% is allowed, maximum impervious lot coverage of 17.7% where 15% is allowed, and minimum side yard of 9'4" where 20' is allowed, to add 259 sq ft to the 1st floor and 626 sq ft to the 2nd floor.

Mr. Fellner provided background on the project. He reviewed the site plan, which the commission had a copy of. The lot is 0.342 acres in the lake zone. He showed the existing footprint of the building and then showed the expansion plans along with adding a partial 2nd floor. The deck in the back will be replaced with the same footprint. It is currently a 1 story

house with 3 bedrooms and a basement. He outlined the set back on the map which showed the house is out of compliance already. He also walked through the elevations. The residence is year-round already. The owner wants to move in permanently. He outlined the current living area and layout, as compared to the future living area and layout after the expansion is completed. He also outlined the living area and layout of the proposed 2nd floor.
He walked through the 3 variances. The first is related to maximum lot building coverage. 10% is what the regs outlined; the existing coverage is 9.76%, so it's already close. The proposal would bring the total to 11.4%, so a 1.4% variance is what is being requested. The second variance is related to maximum impervious lot coverage. The allowable is 15%, the existing as it is today is 16%, so the existing structure is already 1% over the allowable coverage. The proposed will be at 17.7%, which is a variance request of 2.7%. To help resolve this added coverage, a new storm drainage system has been added into the design to address the additional rain water from the roof. The third variance is related to the side yard. The allowable side yard is 20 feet; the existing side yard at the first floor is at 3.6 feet making it very close to the property line. For the proposed 2nd floor, the distance to the side yard boundary would be 10.6 feet, which makes the variance requested 9.4 feet.
He outlined the reason for the hardship is that the owner is looking to move in permanently and the interior layout and space is very tight. The variance would not change the character of the neighborhood. There are other homes in the neighborhood which have 2nd stories. The design of the expansion would fit right into the existing neighborhood.
Ms. Alt asked for clarity if there is a neighbor who is behind this property who would have their view impeded by the 2nd floor. All neighbors have been notified via letter of this proposed change. The neighbor to the back's view is through the yard and would not be impeded by the proposed 2nd floor addition.
Mr. Smith asked for clarification on the maximum impervious coverage. Mr. Ventres outlined that this house was built prior to zoning being implemented; it is non-conforming already.

Motion by Mr. Smith to open the Public Hearing. Seconded by Ms. Alt and unanimously approved.

No public comments.

Motion by Mr. Smith to close the public hearing. Seconded by Ms. Alt and unanimously approved.

Motion by Mr. Smith to approve Application #26-06 - 259 Lake Shore Dr, Map 87, Lot 103, George Fellner (applicant), Scott Spencer, (owner). Seeking variance of Section 10.1 of the Zoning Regulations for maximum lot/building coverage of 11.4% where 10% is allowed, maximum impervious lot coverage of 17.7% where 15% is allowed, and minimum side yard of 9'4" where 20' is allowed, to add 259 sq ft to the 1st floor and 626 sq ft to the 2nd floor, due to the hardship which is it is a pre-existing lot that was made non-compliant with the introduction of zoning regulations, and not the applicant. Seconded by Ms. Alt and unanimously approved.

C. Application #26-07 - 20 Bailey Rd, Map 57, Lot 038, Bluewater Millwork & Construction Inc. (applicant), Andrew and Nancy Bordick (owners). Seeking variance of Section 10.1 of the Zoning Regulations for minimum side yard of 11' where 25' is

allowed, maximum coverage of 14% where 10% is allowed, to replace an existing 17'x20' outbuilding with a new 28'x36' barn.

Mr. Lawrence provided an overview of the project. The goal is to replace an existing barn and tuck it into the side as much as possible to prevent it from being in the middle of the lot. The lot is a pre-existing non-conforming lot to current zoning regulations. There is another project that is being done on the site where a new septic and well have been installed, which further restricts the new barn's placement/buildable area. The new building would allow the owners to park inside as well, upon moving to the area. It is part of a larger renovation of the property.
Ms. Bordick has discussed with the neighbors; they have expressed their support (albeit one neighbor which is the State of CT). There is an overarching feel that this change will not negatively impact the character of the neighborhood. The lot is 0.44 acres and is relatively narrow. While there is a variance being requested, the goal is to keep the new building on the site of the old building. The new barn would increase the square footage of the building by about 660 square feet. This new building is part of a larger full-scale renovation of the property which includes adding in a new well given there is currently no potable water at the site right now. There will be a new septic system added, moving and replacing the current system which is a holding tank and is located 8 feet from the lake. The new septic location will be 150 feet from the lake. Given these changes, there is not much room on the property to put the barn in such a way as to meet the current zoning regulations. While it does exceed the standard, the goal was to minimize what the variance was needed for outside that standard. She outlined the rationale for the variance requests – the narrow lot, the existing home and the approved new septic system relocation results in limitations where this garage can be located. The unusual configuration of this lot combined with the existing location of the residence, driveway, septic system and topographical constraints created an exceptional difficulty in complying with setback and coverage requirements, and the requested variance represents the minimal reasonable relief and the barn will not adversely impact the neighborhood, public safety or the intent of the existing zoning regulations.
Mr. Ventres noted that a stone trench needs to be added for absorption given the additional increase of the roof size. Ms. Bordick noted that is a better idea than what is planned and will be added to the plan.

Motion by Mr. Smith to open the Public Hearing. Seconded by Ms. Alt and unanimously approved.

No public comments.

Motion by Mr. Smith to close the public hearing. Seconded by Mr. Fiala and unanimously approved.

Motion by Mr. Smith to approve Application #26-07 - 20 Bailey Rd, Map 57, Lot 038, Bluewater Millwork & Construction Inc. (applicant), Andrew and Nancy Bordick (owners). Seeking variance of Section 10.1 of the Zoning Regulations for minimum side yard of 11' where 25' is allowed, maximum coverage of 14% where 10% is allowed, to replace an existing 17'x20' outbuilding with a new 28'x36' barn, due to the hardship which is the

already non-existing conformity to the side yard zoning regulation, the proximity of the septic and well. Seconded by Ms. Alt and unanimously approved.

D. Application #26-08 – Hilltop Rd, Map 67, Lot 167, Mark Lapomardo and Wendy Farrell (owners). Requesting a variance to construct a garage 20.5 feet from the property line where 25 feet is required, section 10.1 of the Zoning regulations.

Mr. Lapomardo outlined the project. When the property was purchased several years ago, it required a wholesale renovation. The house only has a crawl space, so there is no storage. There is a little shed across the street which would be removed in the process as well. He would like to construct a garage to store his pontoon boat in the winter and park a car in as well. The only real infringement is one corner of the garage which is past the 25-foot line. The aprons and approaches would be stone to handle the water from the roof. He has also checked with the neighbors who have expressed no issues. They own both lots, that are across the road from each other.

Mr. Ventres outlined this is an older septic system from the 1960s. It is a flat lot and not a lot of elevation from the wetlands that are nearby. He noted that if a new septic system had to be installed, it is going to be an elevated system above the water table which takes up space. Mr. Ventres asked the owner to stay as far away from the wetlands as possible to reserve that space if it is needed in the future. There are no As-Builts to outline where the current system is now for reference.

Mr. Ventres noted that there is a voluntary merger section in the regulations that allows an owner to purchase a lot across the street for use, but with the variance that stipulates the lots must be sold together. Due to this merger section, the property owner can put the garage across the street from the house.

Mr. Wytas asked if it is possible to shift the location of the garage to be closer to Shore Road and be non-compliant on that section versus being non-compliant on the Hilltop Road section. This also moves the building to be further from the location of the future septic site.

Mr. Ventres noted this shift would move the building to the northeast by 8 feet. The variance would be 12 feet from the property line where 20 feet is required. There is still plenty of room to turn the boat around and put it into the garage.

Discussion ensued as to which variance would be better, as a variance is required either way. Overall the board and applicant agreed the existing variance request remains in-force.

Motion by Mr. Smith to open the Public Hearing. Seconded by Ms. Alt and unanimously approved.

The neighbor at 86 Hilltop Road, joined the meeting and outlined that with the 20.5 foot variance, that screening be added as it will be closer to their property line. They do not oppose the application, but would like to have screening so they are not looking at the closer building.

Mr. Ventres noted there are no submitted public comments.

Motion by Mr. Smith to close the public hearing. Seconded by Mr. Fiala and unanimously approved.

Motion by Mr. Wytas to approve Application #26-08 – Hilltop Rd, Map 67, Lot 167, Mark Lapomardo and Wendy Farrell (owners). Requesting a variance to construct a garage 20.5

feet from the property line where 25 feet is required, section 10.1 of the Zoning regulations, due to the hardship which is the septic system location, the wetlands location, the existing non-conformity of the shed, with the provision that a screening like arborvitae around the side of the shed that encroaches. Seconded by Mr. Smith and unanimously approved.

4. Minutes

   Motion by Mr. Smith to approve the May 5, 2026, minutes as presented. Seconded by Ms. Alt and unanimously approved.

5. Bills

   No bills.

6. Adjournment

   Motion by Mr. Smith to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Wytas and unanimously approved.

   Meeting adjourned at 7:59pm.

   Respectfully submitted,
   Shannon A. Goyette
   Recording Secretary