

NEW BUSINESS GUIDE TO EAST HADDAM

Welcome! We are glad you are here!

Municipal website: www.easthaddam.org

So, you are opening a new business in Town, or perhaps you are relocating your business to East Haddam. You join a diverse group of 250+ businesses involved in tourism-related, agriculture, service industry, light manufacturing, and home-based activities.

WE CAN HELP! The Economic Development Commission is here to help make your start-up or transition to Town as smooth as possible. First, don't hesitate to call the Town's Economic Development Administrator for assistance.

Contact information:

Email: edcadmin@easthaddam.org /Economic Development Administrators Office: 860-891-8503

Additional Department Numbers:

- Land Use Office: 860-873-5031
- Building Department Office: 860-873-5024
- Chatham Health District: 860-873-5101
- Fire Marshall Office:860-873-5004

As the staff for the Economic Development Commission and business liaison with the Town Office departments, the administrator's role is to help navigate you through the local approval process, including the regulatory boards and any Chatham Health District requirements that may be needed. Other services include assistance with some State approvals, finding project financing, import/export assistance, and finding technical assistance for business development and management.

The Economic Development Commission is a volunteer group that works to promote economic development by encouraging business growth and expansion that is consistent with East Haddam's historic character, quality of life, and natural environment. The Business section of the municipal website easthaddam.org, contains the information about the Commission's business support activities (Business Introduction & Business Links).

WHAT APPROVALS ARE NEEDED? Below are some general guidelines for you to consider in planning your business opening. As a new business in East Haddam, you will likely need several approvals from Town departments/offices and boards/commissions before you begin your operations in Town. The number of approvals and the timeframe will depend on a number of factors such as:

- Type of business
- Proposed location
- Zoning,
- Proposed development project (such as, new construction or renovation).

Town and Regional Commissions potentially required for siting a business include:

- Inland-Wetlands (only if wetlands and watercourses are affected)
- Planning & Zoning/Land Use Office

- Fire Marshal
- Building Department
- Chatham Health District (septic, food service, well sites)
- Historic District Commission (if property located within one of the three historic districts)

WHAT DO I NEED? Helpful things to have with you for any Land Use and Building planning or application discussions:

- 1) Building site plan that includes: building locations, parking, septic field, well site, wetlands (if present), driveway access, site lighting
- 2) Business signage plan
- 3) Business plan or detailed description of proposed land use

WHAT ASPECTS OF MY BUSINESS ARE REVIEWED? Typical issues that these departments review include:

- 1) Zoning compatibility of proposed use
- 2) Permitted Uses
- 3) Adequacy of Parking
- 4) Signage
- 5) Septic Capacity (as appropriate)
- 6) Driveway site distances
- 7) Building Code Compliance
- 8) State Fire and Life Safety Code Compliance.

WHO DOES WHAT? Within the “Town Departments Section” of the municipal website easthaddam.org there is information for:

Land Use Office: Coordinates reviews by Planning & Zoning; Inland Wetlands; and the Historic District Commission (if an historic building or in an historic district))

- It is important to contact the Land Use Administrator and Building Official at the East Haddam Town Office as early as possible to review the proposed business.

Building Department: building permit issuance and building code compliance.

Fire Marshal: fire and life safety code review and approval. Building improvements should also be reviewed with the Fire Marshall early in the process to ensure that you meet fire code requirements

Chatham Health District: Septic field design or expansion; water well site approval; commercial kitchen review and approval.

- New construction or substantial building renovations should be under the direction of a licensed architect for building construction or an engineer for site work.

[Planning and Zoning Commission](#) has jurisdiction over land-use and compatibility with the Town zoning requirements.

- Prior to approval, the application will need to be approved by the Building Department, Fire Marshal and Chatham Health District.
- The Town has several *commercial and industrial zones* – please be sure that the proposed land use for your business is compatible to the specific zone.
- Many of the permitted land uses in commercial zones are allowed by special exception, *which means that you will need to appear before the Planning and Zoning Commission to review and approve your proposed project and your site plan.*
- We encourage you to present your plans and proposals, on an informal non-binding basis, to the appropriate board/commission at a regular or special meeting.
- The intent of these informal presentations is to provide preliminary comments, observations, questions, or areas of concern, and should minimize delay and expense related to gaining town approvals.
- [Special Exceptions and Site Plan Review:](#)
 - Applicant will be responsible to notify adjacent neighbors of the subject project via certified mail, return receipt requested of the hearing prior to the public hearing date.
 - Return post cards must be presented as proof of notification.

[Historic District Commission](#) has jurisdiction over renovation, alterations, construction and reuse of historic buildings and structures, or contributing properties within a historic district.

- The commission will review planned alterations to the subject property(s) to ensure that the project will not adversely affect the integrity of the historic structure or the neighborhood.
- Typical items reviewed by the Commission include: Proposed Signs, Parking, and Building Alterations.

[WHAT IS THE TYPICAL APPROVAL PROCESS?](#)

- **The minimum timing from completed application to Town approval is 6 weeks.**
 - State approvals, incomplete information, and required input adds to timing.
- Continued communication with the Town will assist in the process.
 - Step 1: File application & support material, pay fee (fee includes newspaper public notice).
 - Step 2: 1st Planning & Zoning meeting: referral to Inland-Wetlands, Historic District Commission (if necessary); or the Commission will set public hearing date.
 - Step 3: 2nd Planning & Zoning meeting: public hearing (hearings may be continued to next scheduled meeting date)
 - Once the public hearing is closed, P & Z acts on the application

[IF YOU NEED HELP, PLEASE ASK!](#)

We hope that this information will get you started in the right direction toward business success in East Haddam. Please contact the Economic Development Administrator or Land Use Administrator with any questions.