

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

DECEMBER 11, 2013

Town Council Chambers

Board members present:

Gladys Lavine, Chair

Betty Jane Owen Ron Wolanski, Planning Director

Audrey Rearick Frank Holbrook, Assistant Town Solicitor

Charlene Rose-Cirillo

Matthew Sullivan

Pete Marnane

John Ciummo

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Lavine at 6:00pm.

1. Approval of the minutes of the November 13, 2013 regular Planning Board meeting.

Motion by Ms. Rearick, seconded by Ms. Owen, to approve the November 13, 2013 regular meeting minutes. Vote: 6-0-1, with Mr. Marnane abstaining.

2. Correspondence

a. Letter from Kevin Flynn, Associate Director, RI Division of Planning, dated November 7, 2013 regarding interim guidance for comprehensive plan review.

Motion by Ms. Owen, seconded by Ms. Cirillo, to receive the letter.

Vote: 7-0-0.

b. Letter from Kevin Flynn, Associate Director, RI Division of Planning, dated November 25, 2013 regarding Statewide Planning's review of the draft Middletown comprehensive plan.

Motion by Ms. Owen, seconded by Ms. Cirillo, to receive the letter.

Vote: 7-0-0.

3. Update on activities of the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission.

Mr. Ciummo provided an update on the activities of the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission including the proposal to expand the membership. AIPC is expected to present its proposal to the municipal councils early in the coming year.

4. Update on BRAC Navy Surplus Land reuse planning process.

Mr. Wolanski stated that discussion continues in each of the communities about how to approach the transfer of Navy properties.

5. Consideration of proposed agreement regarding Statewide Planning review of the revised comprehensive plan under interim guidance as offered in letter from Kevin Flynn, Associate Director, RI Division of Planning, dated November 7, 2013.

Mr. Wolanski review the proposal from Statewide Planning to allow Towns that are currently in the process of updating their comprehensive plans to have the plans, once adopted by the town, reviewed under interim guidelines that are less intensive than those that are expected to be implemented next year. If town wishes to take advantage of this opportunity, it will enter into an agreement with Statewide Planning. Mr. Wolanski will consult with the Town Solicitor

to determine the appropriate town official to sign the agreement.

Following discussion, board members agreed that having the plan review under the interim guidance was the preferred option.

Motion by Ms. Rearick, seconded by Ms. Owen, to recommend that the town enter into an agreement with Statewide Planning to have the town's comprehensive plan reviewed under the interim guidance.

Vote: 7-0-0.

6. Discussion of process to complete necessary revisions and additions to the draft comprehensive plan, and process for town adoption.

Mr. Wolanski reviewed the comments received from Statewide Planning based on their review of the draft comprehensive plan. He noted that the most substantive comments are regarding the housing element, including the concern it does not provide an acceptable strategy for meeting the town's 10% affordable housing goal as required by state statute. The Planning Board and staff will have to work to revise the element to meet state requirements. The Board will also have to review the implementation action items in each of the elements to ensure that they call for specific action, and are not simply policy statements. Mr. Wolanski recommended that the planning staff address other comments that call for additional and updated data and maps. These revisions will be provided to the board prior to final incorporation into the plan. The staff will also work with the Town Solicitor's office to develop the required implementation program.

Board members agreed that this is an appropriate approach to

addressing the state comments.

Regarding the schedule for completing revisions and adoption of the plan by the Town Council, Mr. Wolanski recommended that the goal should be to adopt the plan by June 30th. This would avoid problems with scheduling meetings during the summer, and would ensure the plan is adopted by the current Town Council, given the fall election. To meet this deadline, he recommended that the bulk of the work to revise the plan and complete the implementation program be completed by April 1st, with public workshops to be held in April, and the required public hearings and Town Council adoption in May and June.

Mr. Marnane stated that the schedule seems optimistic.

Mr. Wolanski stated that due to the reasons discussed, the effort should be made to meet the deadline.

By consensus the board agreed to proceed with the recommended schedule. Special Planning Board meeting were scheduled for January 16th and 30th at 4pm.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Cirillo, seconded by Ms. Owen. Vote: 7-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Ronald Wolanski

Planning Director