



## Town of Middletown Planning Department

350 East Main Rd., Middletown RI 02842 (401) 849-4027

### PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

**JANUARY 7, 2016**

Town Council Chambers, 350 East Main Rd., Middletown, RI

#### **Board members present:**

Charlene Rose-Cirillo, Chair  
Art Weber, Vice Chair  
Jan Eckhart  
Matthew Sullivan  
Paul Croce  
John Ciummo

Ron Wolanski, Planning Director  
Drew Pflaumer, Principal Planner  
Peter Regan, Town Solicitor  
Chris McNally, Assist. Town Solicitor

#### **Member absent:**

Betty Jane Owen, Secretary

*The meeting was called to order by Ms. Cirillo at 4:00pm.*

#### **1. Review and discuss draft documents related to proposed amendments to the Middletown Zoning Ordinance regarding mixed-use development in general business districts and building size limitations for residential districts.**

Mr. Wolanski noted that the agenda calls for review of draft documents regarding mixed use zoning and bulk zoning/FAR. There was consensus to focus first on the mixed use zoning due to the Town Council's current consideration of a moratorium on shopping center/big box development.

Mr. Wolanski reviewed the highlights of the rough draft, including areas requiring discussion and direction from the board to guide the drafting process. There was general consensus on the following points:

- Adequate incentives must be provided to encourage mixed-use development since it is not mandatory, but an option for developers to consider.
- Mixed-use development projects as defined in the ordinance will be reviewed by the Planning Board as major land development projects, and require review by the Zoning Board of Review unless a variance is requested.
- An appropriate threshold must be established to distinguish between larger projects that will be subject to the provisions of the new ordinance, an smaller projects, such as a single mixed-use building, which might not require the same level of review.

- In reviewing land development project applications, the process called for in the subdivision regulations should be followed, rather than inserting the review process in the zoning ordinance.
- Consider revisions to the draft criteria used for reviewing applications.
- List of prohibited uses requires more consideration.
- Regarding the allowed mix of uses, consider a sliding scale based on lots size. Also consider setting minimum and/or maximum percentage for residential use, and allow flexibility in the other uses (office, retail, entertainment) that could developed based on market conditions.
- Incentives for providing affordable housing or public amenities should be included.
- Mandatory inclusionary affordable housing should not be included in the mixed-use ordinance.
- Special use permits for hotels, shopping center, multi-family should not be required if application is reviewed under the mixed-use ordinance, provided that appropriate review criteria are provided.

There was discussion about the timeframe for completing and adopting the zoning amendment. Mr. Regan noted that the proposed moratorium, if adopted, would expire on March 2, 2016, which is one year from the adoption of the town's comprehensive plan. Under certain conditions the moratorium can be extended by up to 90 days.

By consensus it was decided that the Planning Board will next meet to discuss this matter on January 28, 2016 at 4pm. In the meantime, the Town Planner and Town Solicitor will work to revised the draft based on discussion to date.

**Motion** to adjourn by Mr. Weber, seconded by Mr. Sullivan. **Vote:** 6-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted:  
Ronald Wolanski  
Planning Director