



Town of Middletown Planning Department

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

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

FEBRUARY 25, 2016

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

Board members present:

Art Weber, Vice Chair
Matthew Sullivan
Paul Croce
John Ciummo
Liz Drayton
Bill Nash

Ron Wolanski, Planning Director
Peter Regan, Town Solicitor
Jack Kane, Building/Zoning Official

Member absent:

Jan Eckhart

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Weber 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 reviewed the highlights of the latest rough draft, dated February 5, 2016. Revisions include those discussed during the last special Planning Board meeting.

Points of discussion included the following:

- Mixed-use developments will be allowed in the General Business and Limited Business districts, but not in the Office Business districts.
- Regarding section D. Permitted Uses, there was consensus that the ordinance should include a list of permitted uses, rather than attempting to identify all prohibited uses. Mr. Wolanski will work with Mr. Kane to develop a list.
- Consideration to remove the minimum open space requirement from the draft, and rely instead on the 25% minimum landscaping requirement of the development regulations. Mr. Wolanski will review other ordinances and provide graphic examples, including So. County Commons in South Kingstown.
- Consensus that there be a maximum amount of retail development 35%, and a range for percentage of residential of 25-60%. The mix of other uses should be determined by the market rather than being prescribed by the town.
- Consensus to remove the specific reference to golf course and driving range from the list of allowed uses in open space areas.

- Consensus that buildings associated with a recreational use, such as a clubhouse, would be counted as a commercial use.
- There was discussion of possibly removing the limit on number of residential units per building, unless there is a valid purpose for the limit.
- The discussions in section F. Density & Dimensional Standards regarding what defines a bedroom, and the necessary separation between buildings might be unnecessary, and might contradict building code definitions. Mr. Kane will review.
- Regarding potential incentives, there was consensus that a 15% bonus of residential GLFA, to 75%, should be provided if a minimum of 10% of proposed units meets the definition of affordable housing. The proposed incentive of 15% additional retail space in exchange for dedication of public parkland was supported. It was suggested that consideration be given to providing an incentive, perhaps tax incentive, to projects that incorporate energy efficiency and/or alternative energy into the proposed development.

It was decided that the Planning Board will meet again to discuss this matter at a time to be determined.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted:
Ronald Wolanski
Planning Director