



## Town of Middletown Planning Department

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

### PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

**AUGUST 17, 2016**

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

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

Art Weber, Chair

John Ciummo, Vice Chair

Jan Eckhart

Bill Nash

Ron Wolanski, Planning Director

Drew Pflaumer, Principal Planner

#### **Member absent:**

Matthew Sullivan

Paul Croce

Liz Drayton

*The meeting was called to order by Mr. Weber at 4:05pm.*

#### **1. Discussion regarding possible creation of Agricultural Overlay District in Middletown with assistance from Scott Millar of GrowSmart RI.**

Mr. Weber introduced Mr. Millar and explained, for the benefit of those not in attendance at the prior meeting, the background behind the creation of an agricultural overlay district and Mr. Millar's role in the process. Mr. Wolanski and Mr. Millar further explained the impetus behind this meeting and the progress that has been made thus far.

Mr. Millar began his presentation, focusing on relevant definitions- including those defined through State enabling legislation as well as more flexible definitions as laid out by other Rhode Island towns. This was followed with an explanation of performance standards and their implementation.

At this point the discussion was opened. Conversation initially focused on the scope of the potential overlay district and whether it should apply to all parcels located on prime agricultural soils or only those being actively farmed. Attention shifted to other potential ways to keep agriculture viable before being drawn back to determining scope, on which there was some disagreement.

Mr. Millar suggested he could draft a rough model ordinance to give the meeting attendees something to work from rather than asking them to create something from the very beginning, to which the Planning Board and others present agreed.

The meeting concluded with a list of items for staff to prepare prior to the next meeting, namely Mr. Millar's creation of a draft ordinance, research into the Town of Portsmouth's local equivalent to the Farm, Forest, and Open Space Act, revisions to maps and data

tables to focus on properties not currently developed or protected, and the scheduling of the next meeting.

*Meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.*

Respectfully submitted:  
Ronald Wolanski  
Planning Director