



Town of Middletown Planning Department

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

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES – Special Meeting July 27, 2017

Police Department Community Room, 123 Valley Rd., Middletown, RI

Board members present:

Paul Croce, Chairperson
Matt Sullivan
Bill Nash
Jim Williams
Liz Drayton
Terri Flynn

Ron Wolanski, Planning Director
Chris McNally, Assistant Town Solicitor
Rita Lavoie, Principal Planner

Members absent:

Betty Jane Owen

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Croce at 5:00pm.

1. Discuss potential options for zoning amendments to provide for residential building size limitations.

Mr. Croce provided a summary of the board's progress on the proposed Bulk Zoning ordinance. Mr. Croce described the board's investigations into using a Floor Area Ratio, roof pitch restrictions, height limits, and changes to setbacks to limit the bulk of structures in the town. He explained that the current proposal includes a height limit of 25 feet and a Floor Area Ratio maximum of 0.5 for any lot under 10,000 square feet in a residential zoning district.

There was discussion regarding how the proposal would apply. It was clarified that the proposal would apply to all residential zoning districts.

Ms. Lavoie presented supporting materials including a map, visual aids, and graphs demonstrating affected parcels and potential home size impacts.

Mr. Nash and Ms. Flynn noted that homeowners can seek relief from the zoning board if the configuration of his or her lot presents a hardship for compliance.

There was discussion regarding what should be included in the FAR calculation. Mr. Wolanski explained that the FAR is meant to address the overall size of a structure. The board noted that garages should be included in the calculation.

Mr. Croce suggested changing the language for FAR calculations in conservation style subdivisions to reflect the actual resulting lot size.

Motion by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Ms. Drayton to approved the draft as amended, request review by the Town Solicitor, and schedule a public forum on Bulk Zoning.

Vote: 6-0-0

2. Discuss proposed zoning ordinance amendments to allow for mixed-use development in the general business (GB) and limited business (LB) zoning districts.

Mr. Croce provided a summary of the board's activities related to Mixed Use Zoning. Mr. Wolanski presented an updated draft, dated 7/27/17, which lists prohibited uses, relies on the current zoning use table in the LB and GB districts, and includes performance standards.

Mr. Croce asked board members for their input on the updated draft. There was discussion regarding the approach of listing prohibited uses and its impact on readers of the ordinance.

Ms. Flynn asked questions about prohibited uses including liquor stores, funeral homes, research and development, movie theaters and arcades, oil and gas, emergency medical clinics, churches, schools, commercial outdoor recreation, taverns, and cafes. The board agreed to add funeral homes to the list of prohibited uses.

Ms. Drayton suggested removing exercise center and saunas from the prohibited list.

Mr. Croce recommended changing language in section A.6. to reference any water view not just of Narragansett Bay.

There was discussion about the performance standards listed in section E.3. and the hours of operation allowed. Mr. Nash voiced concern about allowing dumpsters to be emptied at 6:00 AM. The board agreed to change the time to 7:00 AM.

Mr. Nash and Ms. Drayton excused themselves from the meeting at 6:00pm.

Mr. Williams asked a question about expert testimony as its relates to performance standards. Mr. Wolanski stated that the applicant typically provides required reports, but the Planning Board has the ability to require independent review of those reports by the town's consultant.

There was discussion regarding if clubs, lodges, social and community centers should be prohibited.

Motion by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Williams to approved the draft as amended, request review by the Town Solicitor, and schedule a public forum on Bulk Zoning.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion by Mr. Sullivan to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Williams. **Vote: 4-0-0**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted

Rita Lavoie, Principal Planner