



Town of Middletown Planning Department

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

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES- SPECIAL MEETING

Use Table Subcommittee Meeting

December 7, 2017 4:00pm

2nd Floor Conference Room, 350 East Main Rd., Middletown, RI

Subcommittee board members present:

Bill Nash, Subcommittee Chair

Terri Flynn

Jim Williams

Rita Lavoie, Principal Planner

1. Approval of the minutes of the November 6, 2017 and November 20, 2017 subcommittee meeting.

- There was a motion by Mr. Nash, seconded by Ms. Flynn to approve the minutes of November 6, 2017, amended November 16, 2017.
- Vote 3-0-0
- There was discussion on what should be included in the minutes of November 20, 2017
- Ms. Flynn requested that her statement regarding the unsuitability of general contractors including outdoor storage in the Limited Business district (LB) be noted in the minutes
- Mr. Nash asked for an updated draft of the November 20th minutes to be distributed to the subcommittee to review the proposed amendment.
- Motion by Mr. Nash, seconded by Mr. Williams to continue the approval of the minutes of the November 20th meeting to the next subcommittee meeting, which has yet to be scheduled.
- Vote 3-0-0

2. Discussion of potential amendments to the use table of the Middletown Zoning Ordinance, Section 602.

- a. Ms. Lavoie reviewed the staff memo dated November 27, 2017, which summarizes the results of staff research requested at the subcommittee meeting of November 20th.
 - Ms. Lavoie confirmed that the community residence language in the Middletown Zoning ordinance matches that of the state's definition.
 - She also reported that the age of 55 years-old for senior facilities is derived from state and federal regulations.

- Finally, she mentioned that the Town Planner recommended striking the phrase “except with a cluster development” from the multifamily dwelling structure or project use.
 - The subcommittee agreed to recommend striking the phrase “except with a cluster development” from the multifamily dwelling structure or project use.
- b. The subcommittee reviewed the uses from “Parking or outdoor storage of more than one commercial vehicle over 1 1/2-ton capacity” to “High voltage electric transmission towers” in the Limited Business (LB) district and recommended changes, flagged the items for review by the whole planning board, requested further staff research, or flagged items for input from the Zoning Officer.
- It was agreed that “**Parking or outdoor storage of more than one commercial vehicle over 1 1/2-ton capacity**” relates to general contractor activities, which was previously flagged by the subcommittee for review by the whole planning board.
 - The subcommittee noted that large scale general contractors are not compatible with the LB district, but small, or indoor uses related to general contractors could be.
 - There was discussion regarding allowing a certain quantity of vehicles or certain sizes of lot to store vehicles.
 - This item was flagged for review by the whole planning board and to be included in the discussion with other general contractor uses.
 - There was discussion of inviting contractor stakeholder to the discussion at the appropriate time.
 - Ms. Lavoie recommended tabling the discussion on “**Miscellaneous special trade contractors, including outdoor storage**” and “**other extractive and industrial non-manufacture not elsewhere classified**” due to their inclusion in a gravel process ordinance amendment currently before the planning board.
 - No change was recommended for “**salvage yard operation**”
 - There was discussion regarding manufacturing uses in the LB district including encouraging bakeries, and other small-scale operations. The subcommittee felt small-scale manufacturing was compatible with residential areas, but not large-scale manufacturing.
 - The subcommittee agreed that the language in the table was too broad and did not allow for a distinction between uses such as a bakery with a retail store front, and a large-scale bakery operation, for example.
 - There was discussion regarding tying such uses to the lot size, building size, or percentage of total gross leasable square footage to encourage businesses that the subcommittee felt was compatible with the LB district.
 - Noise and debris impacts were mentioned
 - There was a request for a definition of manufacturing in the zoning ordinance.
 - After discussion regarding food products, apparel products, wood products, and glass products manufacturing, **it was recommended that the entire manufacturing section be flagged for review by the Zoning Officer in order to amend the table to be more flexible with desired uses and prohibit uses not compatible with the definition of the LB district.**
 - “**Ground mounted solar photovoltaic installation**” was discussed. After hearing the details of the zoning ordinance, which requires development plan review of ground mounted solar installations, the subcommittee choose to leave the use as a

Special Use Permit "S". There was a question regarding its fit in other zones but that discussion was tabled as the committee is only concentrating on the LB district at this time.

- There was no change recommended for **"highway and transportation services, including terminals, storage yards, etc."** or **"airports and heliports"** or **"commercial dock or pier"**.
 - **"Warehousing, self-storage, public and private"** was flagged for review by the whole board. There was discussion regarding allowing the use on a small scale or dividing the category into one or more uses by square footage or lot size. It was agreed that the language is too broad. Scale was again mentioned as a factor in the subcommittee's decision making.
 - No change to **"commercial off-street parking"**
 - **"Electric power substation" and "high voltage electric transmission towers"** were both flagged for review by the Zoning Officer. The relevancy of such uses today was questioned and the potential impact on human health was noted. It was also recognized that such uses are not beneficial to neighbors, but must be permitted in some areas in town.
- c. There was a motion to adjourn by Ms. Flynn, seconded by Mr. Williams.
- Vote 3-0-0

Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:30 pm

Respectfully submitted:

Rita Lavoie
Principal Planner