

Town of Middletown

Planning Department



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

PLANNING BOARD SUPPLEMENTAL MEETING

August 27, 2018

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

Board members present:

Paul Croce, Chair
Bill Nash, Vice Chair
Terri Flynn, Secretary
Liz Drayton
B.J. Owen
Jim Williams
Art Weber

Ron Wolanski, Town Planner

Paul Croce called the meeting to order at 4:00pm

(This meeting was not recorded)

1. Discussion of possible revisions to the Middletown Zoning Ordinance and/or Rules and Regulations Regarding the Subdivision and Development of Land relative to conservation subdivision/development.

A. Staff provided documents:

1. Conservation Subdivision Development power point pages
2. Comprehensive Plan excerpts (III-20 to 24, IX-10 to 11)
3. May 17, 2018 Mr. Croce to Council memo: proposed amendments Development Regulations Article 3, Zoning Ordinances Article 15, 19
4. Additional proposed amendments Development Regulations Article 3
5. Board Minutes: 5/15/2018 Public Workshop/Development Application Processes

B. Board Discussion:

1. Conservation Development regulations, in practice, not realizing goals/intent:
 - i. total dwellings allowed ambiguous (proposed amendment at Council)
 - ii. open space not benefitting all, or anyone at all
 - iii. smaller lots/R1 conservation subdivision problematic, less benefit
 - iv. developments not neighborhood character
 - v. density change not Comprehensive Plan intent
2. Current Regulation: 6+ lots=Conservation Subdivision Plan – No options
 - i. applicant's choice or Board's discretion better?
 - ii. Mr. Weber feels strongly applicants should choose
 - iii. Planner recommends Board retain discretion
3. Conservation Subdivision Regulation Preferences:
 - i. larger parcels: 5+ acres
 - ii. better defined lot count
 - iii. increase required open space
 - iv. avoid "cookie-cutter" homes
 - v. all applications: use current regulations' findings for Conventional Plan trigger ("4 Questions")
 - vi. retain from current regulations: calculation for dwellings same as Conventional, at Master Plan applicant submits Conservation Development, Conventional Plans

vii. eliminate from current regulations: subdivision 6+ lots/Conservation Development only

4. General Regulation Preferences:

- i. environmental/life safety (residential sprinklers) components
- ii. potential applications: Concept Review step
- iii. abutter notification: all subdivision applications (not just major, minor as well); max transparency, go beyond state requirement

5. Considerations Discussed:

- i. urban area appropriateness: smaller parcels/limited benefits
- ii. non-urban areas' wells, septic require larger lots
- iii. community septic not required; recent applications' feature
- iv. growth concerns: quality, neighbors, traffic, safety; traffic/water study
- v. tax consideration
- vi. maximizing square footage is not planning

C. Action:

1. Follow up; ordinance important to Town-avoid delay if possible
2. **MOTION:** request Town Planner work with Town Solicitor to draft potential amendments to the regulations, as follows:
 - i. require conservation and conventional concept submissions at Master Plan Stage;
 - ii. Planning Board has discretion to choose which plan most suitable for town, neighborhood;
 - iii. remove requirement that applications of more than five lots will automatically be conservation subdivision;
 - iv. proceed with previously discussed amendments on determining development density and limiting conservation plans to 5+ acres .
by Mr. Nash – Ms. Owen second.
3. **ADDED TO MOTION:** request Town Planner work with Town Solicitor to investigate options for more notice to abutters to proposed developments: both minor and major subdivisions, and all applications whether or not zoning relief sought, by Mr. Nash – Ms. Owen second.
4. **VOTE 7-0-0**

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Weber, Ms. Owen-second **Vote: 7-0-0**

Meeting adjourned at ~4:50pm

Respectfully submitted: Terri Flynn
Planning Board Secretary