



## Town of Middletown Planning Department

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

To: Middletown Planning Board  
From: Ron Wolanski, Town Planner  
Date: November 30, 2020  
Re: Project updates

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Following is an update on the status of projects that the Planning Board is involved with, either as part of Comprehensive Plan implementation, or items otherwise initiated by or referred to the board for consideration:

1. **Atlantic Beach District Zoning Overlay** – Following subcommittee work and public input revised ordinance draft and draft design guidelines were reviewed by the Board during its March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Board requested that staff and the Town Solicitor review and make final edits to the draft documents and forward them to the Town Council for consideration. Final drafts were forwarded to the Solicitor for review on March 27, 2020. Planning Board recommendation and drafts sent to the Town Council for consideration on June 15, 2020, received by the Town Council July 6<sup>th</sup>. Town Council public hearing and first reading to be scheduled.
2. **Development impact studies** – Crossman Engineering completed analyses of impacts on water resources and traffic resulting from full buildout town-wide. A special Planning Board meeting was held on January 29, 2020 for Crossman to present the results of the study. Crossman provided the final revised draft, and during its March 11, 2020 meeting the Board forwarded the report to the Town Council with a memo with recommendations. A presentation of the findings of the report will be provided to the Town Council during its December 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.
3. **Mixed-use Development Amendments** - Consider modifications to the zoning ordinance regarding mixed-use development, including review of uses, business hours, and other restrictions. A subcommittee forwarded recommendations to the full board for review on August 26, 2019. Amendments were then forwarded to the Town Council with a positive recommendation on September 20, 2019. The amendments were ordered advertised for a Town Council public hearing. Town Council public hearing and first reading to be scheduled.
4. **Use Table Review** - The Board's use table subcommittee (Bill, Art, John) has completed review of the LB district use table and has begun review of the full use table. The subcommittee has met on a regular basis to continue work to review and propose revisions to the full use table. Per the subcommittee's preference, meetings will resume once in-person meetings are possible.

5. **Future Land Use Plan/Zoning Map Consistency Project** (Comp Plan)– All proposed FLUP amendments have been received by the Town Council and will be scheduled for public hearing. The first set of amendments was approved by the Town Council on June 17, 2019. The second set of amendments was approved by the Town Council on June 15, 2020. The final set of amendments will be advertised for a future Town Council public hearing.
6. **Rural Village District zoning amendments** (Comp Plan) – The Planning Board subcommittee met with subject property owners to seek input and buy-in. Given the lack of urgency on the part of impacted property owners, and the Planning Board’s current workload, the subcommittee advised the board that action on this item be delayed for the time being. The Planning Board agreed to table the matter.
7. **Historic Resource Preservation** - Consideration of potential Regulations and/or Zoning Ordinance amendments to promote preservation of historic buildings (Comp Plan) – Draft documents were revised based on input received during public workshop meetings and Board discussion. During its February 5, 2020 regular meeting the board voted to forward to the Town Council for consideration. Draft documents and cover memo have been forwarded to the Town Council. Presentation of the proposal has been delayed due to the potential budgetary impacts and current uncertainty on Town finances due to COVID-19.
8. **Application Fees** - Draft Regulations amendments to implement new application fees and revise application checklists (Planning Dept.) – Amendments approved and forwarded to the Town Council in February 2019. At the request of the Town Administrator, the Town Council referred the proposed fees back to the Planning Board for additional study, including review by the Finance Dept. to ensure that all overhead costs are included in the fees. We are awaiting response from the Finance Dept.
9. **Marijuana Zoning** - Draft ordinance on marijuana production, distribution & sales (Town Council) – Town Solicitor has secured outside consultant assistance, Dwight Merriam, Esq. Planning Board subcommittee established, and drafting is underway. New state regulations for medical have recently gone into effect and were reviewed by the Town Solicitor and legal consultant. A revised draft of the proposed ordinance was reviewed during a subcommittee held on November 24, 2020. An additional subcommittee meeting will be scheduled to review additional revisions.
10. **Airport Zoning** - Draft overlay for airport zoning (Comp Plan) – Subcommittee asked staff to create a draft ordinance based on the Westerly ordinance, which was approved by the subcommittee and forwarded to the Planning Board. During its March 11, 2020 meeting the Board requested that a public workshop meeting be scheduled. Due to COVID-19 the meeting will be scheduled once in-person meetings are possible.
11. **Light Pollution** - Consideration of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to limit light pollution (Comp Plan) – Draft Zoning Ordinance amendment provided to the Planning Board for the May 13, 2020 meeting. Discussion included on the Board’s October 14<sup>th</sup> agenda, when it was decided that a public workshop should be scheduled. The public workshop is scheduled for January 7<sup>th</sup>, 6pm.
12. **Ground-mounted Solar Arrays** - Consideration of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to allow solar carports and to clarify limitations on ground-mounted solar arrays in residential districts – Draft Zoning Ordinance amendment provided to the Planning Board for the May 13, 2020 meeting. Discussion included on the Board’s October 14<sup>th</sup> November 18<sup>th</sup> meeting agendas. A revised draft will be provided for discussion during the December 9<sup>th</sup> Planning Board meeting.

13. **Transportation Options** - Consideration of amendments to the Regulations and/or Zoning Ordinance to promote transportation options (Comp Plan) - Planning staff research of options underway.
14. **Building Height Definition** - Draft amendment to building height definition to be consistent with statutory change adopted by the General Assembly in 2019 – Proposed amendments approved by the Planning Board on September 11, 2019 and forwarded to the Town Council with a positive recommendation. Town Council public hearing and first reading to be scheduled.
15. **West Main/Coddington Development Center** – During its Dec. 2, 2019 meeting, the Town Council voted to approve a contract with 4<sup>th</sup> Economy to conduct a developer request for information (RFI) to solicit input on the viability and interest in development options. At the request of the Town Council a public workshop was held on February 26, 2020. The RFI was issued on March 9<sup>th</sup>, with responses due on April 6<sup>th</sup>. One response was received from The Landings Real Estate, Inc. (Chris Bicho) which was forwarded to 4<sup>th</sup> Economy. Due to the limited response, consideration being given to reissuing the RFI or proceeding with discussion based on available information. To be discussed with the new Town Council during an upcoming meeting.

Cc: Town Administrator  
Town Council