

MIDDLETOWN PLANNING COMMISSION
31 West Main Street
Middletown, Maryland

Regular Meeting

February 21, 2022

The regular meeting of the Middletown Planning Commission took place on Monday, February 21, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. via in-person and Lifesize. Those present (quorum) were Commission Chairman Mark Carney, Commission members Sean Mahar, Commissioner Jean LaPadula (Ex-officio), Chris Mills, Bob Miller, Eric Ware (Alternate), and Robert Wilkes (Temp Alternate). Others present in official capacity: Cindy Unangst (Staff Planner) and Patty Guyton (Recording Secretary).

FEBRUARY MONTHLY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING:

I. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

II. Minutes of the January 2022 Planning Commission Workshop – Approved as submitted.

Minutes of the January 2022 Planning Commission Meeting – Approved as submitted.

III. PLAN REVIEW – none

IV. ZONING –

Fencing section text amendment – Planning Commission members reviewed the text amendment and had many suggestions on changes to the amendment. The Planning Commission suggested changes are:

- remove diagram #1 and #3 and include them in the definition section of the Town Code under “yard” since the amendment does not reference them
- renumber diagram #2 to #1 and diagram #4 to #2
- delete the arrows on all diagrams and include a “line key” to show what the different dash lines mean regarding the height requirements (example: ---- 6 ft max back/rear yard)
- add statement on diagrams “Front yard ends at property lines”
- revise current “Front Yard 2” definition, in section 3B, to make it easier to understand
- add “standard” to the heading of section 2 so it reads “Side and Rear Yard Standard Lot”
- move paragraph 2B "unmaintainable or hazardous conditions" language (with slight wording change) to the main body since it applies to all fences and not just side/rear standard lots.
- delete entire 2D section because this section talks about commercial requirements not residential
- add “Regulations” to the header of section 3
- change the language in section 3C, replace the word “placed” to “setback”
- change the word “streets” to “roads” in section 3 – Corner Lots because "road" is more broadly defined and applies to alleys, lanes, etc.
- delete “See Diagram #4” from section 3A and 3B
- add “See Diagram #2” in section 3 to the right of “Corner Lots”
- on diagrams #1 (formally #2) and #2 (formally #4) change “Min. 5 ft. from curb, sidewalk or property line” to “Min. 5 ft. setback from curb, sidewalk or property line” – this statement should also be shown on the left side of diagram #2 near the vision triangle
- in section 1C – add the language “No chain link or wire fences are allowed as primary fencing but wire fencing may be attached behind allowable primary fencing as long as it remains largely transparent”
- change vision triangle on diagram #2 to show 35 ft from road to road instead of sidewalk to sidewalk

Commissioner LaPadula will make changes to the text amendment and send it to the Planning Commission members for review before submitting it to the Town Board.

There was also discussion on changing section 17.04.030 - Definitions in the Town Code to add different language in the "Side Yard" definition. The new definition will coincide with the new ordinance.

Sign ordinance revisions – Staff added track changes from February Workshop and language from Hagerstown sign ordinance for the Planning Commission to review. Members suggested removing the Commercial shopping section from the ordinance. Staff will make changes and add more information for the Planning Commission to review at the March meeting.

V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter 8 Municipal Growth Element – Staff reviewed the changes to the chapter to include adding language "Town Infill" and a foot note at the bottom of Impacts of Town Infill/Redevelopment Growth chart about the impact on schools. Planning Commission members suggested labeling the charts/tables with the same time frame, so they are consistent with each other. Members also suggested removing a statement in the Maryland "Smart Growth" legislation section and adding it to the Priority Funding Areas text box. Staff will make the changes and submit it to the Planning Commission for review at the March meeting.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

Annual Report 2021 and Map – Staff is waiting for information on water and sewer usage numbers for the previous year from Town Administrator. Once she receives this information, she will update the report and submit it to the Planning Commission for review.

VII. Additional Public Comment – none

Meeting adjourned at 8:42PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Guyton
Recording Secretary