

BURGESS AND COMMISSIONERS OF MIDDLETOWN MARYLAND

TOWN MEETING MINUTES

VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING

February 22, 2021

The virtual meeting of the Burgess and Commissioners of Middletown was called to order on February 22, 2021, by Burgess Miller at 7:00 p.m. Present via Zoom were: Commissioners Christopher Goodman, Jennifer Falcinelli, Jean LaPadula and Rick Dietrick.

PERSONAL REQUESTS FOR AGENDA:

Eric Ware – Washington Street Streetscape Public Input Feedback. - This project will provide a safe walking path along Washington Street from the Elm Street parking lot to the downtown core. It includes replacing all curb, gutter, sidewalks, lighting and replacing the asphalt. There will be some storm drain improvements. All proposed improvements would conform with Town standards. The project involves Washington Street from Rt. 17/South Church Street west to the Elm Street and is part of a planned economic development super block which would include from Green Street south to Washington Street. Eric Ware is the appointed neighborhood liaison for this project. As such he contacted each resident living along the proposed updated area of Washington Street to gather their input on the proposed project plans. Mr. Ware reviewed his report provided to the Town Board. Identified topics included parking along Washington Street (clearly marking parking spaces and possibly making them permitted parking after 6pm), possibly making Washington Street one-way between South Jefferson and South Church Streets, questions on sidewalk placement on both sides of the street, proposed grading changes, the crosswalk to Boileau Drive and the low retaining wall noted on the plans.

Greg Lomb, 9 Washington Street, is concerned with the proposed drainage showing towards residences. The proposed inlets tend to clog, and he does not want water heading toward his home. He thinks that the sidewalks should be increased to meet ADA requirements, but not moved. This is an initial discussion with residents and will continue. This is an agenda item for the March workshop and the Director of Public Works will be available to answer questions on this proposed project.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- **Town Meeting Minutes**
 - *February 4, 2021 – Town Workshop*
 - *February 8, 2021 – Town Meeting*

Motion: Commissioner LaPadula motioned to accept the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Goodman. Motion carried (5-0).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ordinance 21-01-01- Amendments to Establish Expiration Date(s) for All Site Plans – There is a sunset provision within the Town Code which states once a site plan is approved the individual has 3 years to complete the work before the site plan will expire and the site plan would have to come before the Planning Commission again for review and approval. There are two grandfathered properties within town limits with site plans that were approved prior to the approval/addition of sunset provisions to the Town Code in November 2010. Neither property has had any type of action/development taken since the approval. If the ordinance is approved, the two property owners would have 3 years from the effective

date of this ordinance approval in which to begin work on the property. Public Hearings by both the Planning Commission and the Town Board will be scheduled. A vote on this ordinance will take place at an April Town Board meeting.

Comprehensive Plan – Chapter Review – Commissioner LaPadula provided an initial review of Chapter 7, Water Resources Element, in the new format. The Planning Commission has yet to review this chapter. The Water & Sewer Standing Committee will review this chapter and provide input to the Planning Commission. Town Board members were directed to send any comments or suggestions to the Staff Planner or to Commissioner LaPadula.

Planning Commission Appointment(s) –Dixie Eichelberger current appointment to the Planning Commission has ended. She is available for re-appointment for another term.

Motion: Commissioner LaPadula motioned to re-appoint Dixie Eichelberger to the Planning Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Dietrick. Motion carried. (5-0)

NEW BUSINESS:

Constant Yield Tax Rate - EXEMPT – Middletown has received an exemption again for 2021/2022. There will be no change in the tax rate.

Request from Sowers Farm Holdings for Renewal of Land Lease - Sowers Farm Holdings has been renting the farmland owned by the Town since May 2018. The current lease ends May 21, 2021. The current lease includes 6.7 acres on Hollow Road by the reservoir. As of the 2020 season this parcel is no longer farmable due to reservoir construction. Sowers Farm Holdings would like to omit that property from any new leases and adjust the rental price accordingly. Sowers Farm Holdings proposes to continue the lease agreement for another 3 years of the 28.7 acres (2 parcels) near Remsburg Park at the current agreed lease price of \$205.00 per acre. Discussion on whether the lease should be put out to be occurred. Sowers' previous bid was much higher than others who had bid. It does not seem that any bid would match their current lease.

Motion: Commissioner LaPadula motioned approve the extension of the farm lease with Sowers Farm Holdings for another 3 years at its current lease rate minus the Town acreage off Hollow Road. Seconded by Commissioner Dietrick. Motion carried. (5-0)

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Cable Franchise Committee – Bob Smart reported that the committee has met 2 times and invited anyone interested to attend their meetings which are held weekly on Wednesdays at 1:00PM. The committee is currently working on a survey. If finished, it will be presented to the Town Board at the March workshop.

Special Election 2021 – The voting for the special election ends tonight at 8:00pm. All ballots will be kept in the safe until Wednesday morning, February 24, 2021. At that time, they will be counted by the election judges (following covid guidelines). Both candidates will be notified of the results prior to making the results public. Commissioner Falcinelli wished Goodluck to both candidates. Commissioner Goodman stated that no matter the outcome, there are always ways to get involved with the Town.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Alberghini
Office Manager