

MIDDLETOWN PLANNING COMMISSION
31 West Main Street
Middletown, Maryland

Regular Meeting

September 21, 2020

The regular meeting of the Middletown Planning Commission took place on Monday, September 21, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via a Zoom meeting. Those present (quorum) were Commission Chairman Mark Carney, Commission members David Lake, Rich Gallagher, Commissioner Jean LaPadula (Ex-officio), and Eric Ware (Temp Alternate). Others present in official capacity: Cindy Unangst (Staff Planner) and Patty Guyton (Recording Secretary). Others present: Commissioner Christopher Goodman, Brian Riesett (St. Thomas More Academy), Patricia Neumark (St. Thomas More Academy), Ana Lomp (Resident)

SEPTEMBER MONTHLY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING:

I. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

II. Minutes of the August 2020 Planning Commission Workshop – Approved as submitted.

Minutes of the August 2020 Planning Commission Meeting – Approved as submitted.

III. PLAN REVIEW –

St. Thomas More Revised Site Plan - Proposal: Amendment to site plan to add one classroom addition and breezeway to the school property instead of previously approved temporary classroom structure.

The previous conditions of approval in April were to include the building height on the plans which was subsequently submitted and shown as 14.5 feet, that the building meet town code requirements, approval by Frederick County (including the Office of Life Safety) and that the site plan be revisited after 5 years to ascertain that the temporary classroom didn't become a permanent structure without approval from the Planning Commission. Frederick County would not approve the temporary structure, so the applicant has had to revise the plans. The County stated that the temporary structure would have to include bathrooms which was not cost conducive for the applicant. Without the necessary bathrooms, the structure would need to be attached to the existing building by a breezeway.

St. Thomas More Academy submitted a new drawing/site plan a few hours before the meeting. In the new site plan, it shows that they moved the temporary building 15' away from the north property line instead of the original 6'. The new plan also shows a new entrance to the bottom paved overflow parking lot and the new location of the dumpster. The structure is proposed to be constructed on site with the same look as the previously approved temporary classroom structure.

There was discussion about the new dumpster location not being ideal for the trash truck drivers. Planning Commission members asked if it would be possible to move the dumpster closer to the entrance of the parking lot for more convenience for trash company when dumping. Also, it seems to be a safety issue for children if the trash truck would have to turn around in a narrow parking lot. Also discussed was parking and if they would be losing any parking spaces due to the new location of the building and dumpster. Mr. Reisett stated that since they will have the new paved overflow lower

parking lot, they will not be losing any parking spaces due to the new setbacks of the building. Staff questioned whether this proposal is still for a temporary use or whether the applicant intends for it to be permanent. The applicant responded that they intend for it to be temporary for now.

Action: Commission member Lake motioned to approve the St. Thomas More Academy Revised Site Plan, upon the ability to come back and propose an alternate location for the dumpster and that the site plan be revisited after 5 years to ascertain that the temporary classroom doesn't become a permanent structure without approval from the Planning Commission. Seconded by Commission member Ware. Motion carried (5-0).

IV. ZONING

Temporary Sign Regulations – As discussed during the workshop last week, Cindy will work with the Town Attorney and the Town of Myersville to revise the sign regulations to make them content-neutral before bringing them back to the Planning Commission for review. Cindy emailed the Town of Myersville and the Town of Middletown's attorney and is waiting on their responses.

Downtown Revitalization Zone – A draft Downtown Revitalization Zone document outlining the purpose for the zone, qualifications for the program, and incentives for the developers in the zone was submitted to the Planning Commission for their review.

There was discussion on the Expedited navigation through Planning Commission/Board of Appeals with the 30 days or less processing timeline. The Planning Commission members do not think that 30 days is enough time to properly process site plans. The Planning Commission is willing to work with developers but with a 30-day deadline it might cause misunderstandings and the Planning Commission does not want to feel pressured to push site plans through.

There was also discussion of the draft DRZ checklist that was prepared by Cindy. Planning Commission members suggested rewording some of the DRZ checklist items and adding sub-titles to it. Commissioner Falcinelli is taking it to the Town Board workshop on October 1, 2020 for comments.

V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter Four – Land Use – The tables and pie charts were the main topic of discussion. Cindy will make the adjustments and bring back to the October meeting for review.

Chapter Three and Chapter Four Maps – There was discussion on revising the legend on the Floodplain and Wetland Map. Also, color needs to be added to the pond area. Cindy does not think the colors on the Zoning Map are clear enough, and she will be changing them for future review.

Chapter 5 - Transportation – New information was added to this section of the Comp plan that includes the State Highway's Streetscape Project, and the total number of miles for streets/roads and sidewalks. The Town administrator was asked to gather information about how many sidewalks were installed using funds from the State Highway Retrofit program, and Cindy is still waiting on that information. There was discussion on getting the total number of sidewalk miles from the North end of Town to East Main street.

Comp Plan Survey – Cindy stated that the survey has 140 responses already. The comments that were made on the survey will be presented to Planning Commission, once the surveys are complete. The information gathered from the survey will be put into a report at the end of October.

VI. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT - None

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Guyton
Recording Secretary