



PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
April 6, 2023, 6pm
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall
350 East Main Road
Middletown, RI 02842

Board members present:

Bill Nash, Vice Chair
Michael Fenton, Secretary
Art Weber
B.J. Owen
John Ciummo

Ron Wolanski, Town Planner
Michael Monti, Assistant Town Solicitor

Members absent:

Leon Amarant
Paul Croce

Mr. Nash called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

1. Presentation and public input on draft amendments to the Middletown Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 152, to create a new section to implement inclusionary zoning for affordable housing.
 - a. Mr. Wolanski provided a presentation of the proposed inclusionary housing ordinance. He described the background for the proposal, including its inclusion as an action item in the Middletown Comprehensive Community Plan. He provided a summary of the requirements.
 - b. Mr. Nash opened the discussion for comments and questions from Planning Board members. Mr. Weber asked about the ability for developers to provide the number of affordable units at an affordable price. Mr. Wolanski explained the density bonus provision of the ordinance.
 - c. Mr. Wolanski read comments provided via email from board member Leon Amarant. Mr. Amarant commented on the possible impact of the ordinance on development, and possible discouragement of development. He also suggested making clear that the ordinance would require a minimum of 20% of units being affordable, meaning rounding up to the nearest whole number of units when completing the calculation.
 - d. There was additional discussion of the density bonus providing an incentive to developers, as well as discussion of the need to have the affordable units consistent with the market rate units, at least from the exterior. There was discussion of how

affordability for the required units is achieved, including the possible need for zoning relief.

- e. There was discussion of seeking information on how similar ordinances have been implemented in other communities and what impacts on development have been observed.
 - f. Mr. Nash opened the floor for public input.
 - g. Charlie Roberts, a resident of 27 Oliphant Lane, questioned the definitions of affordable housing, which Mr. Wolanski addressed. He stated that he had experience working on similar projects in Massachusetts which were successful.
 - h. There was discussion of the types of units that could be included in the inventory to meet the Town's 10% affordable housing requirement, such as mobile homes, if changes are made at the state level.
 - i. Attorney Robert Silva stated that the costs and market, and possible need for zoning relief will determine if developers are able to successfully complete developments.
 - j. There was discussion of how the ordinance would apply to different scenarios.
 - k. Edward McPherson, a resident of 120 Oliphant Lane, stated his support for the concept, including dispersing affordable units throughout the town. There should be consideration of providing a limit of 120% of AMI as the income limit for home ownership units. He also suggested making the program voluntary.
 - l. There was discussion of wanting to get input from developers, as well as discussion of potential impacts on sales price of the market rate units in inclusionary developments.
 - m. By consensus it was decided to continue the matter to the May 10, 2023 regular meeting to allow for additional research to be conducted.
2. Motion by Ms. Owen, seconded by Mr. Ciummo to adjourn. Vote: 5-0-0

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Fenton, Secretary