

Minutes - Town of Middlefield Planning Board, March 5, 2026 (Approved)

Board Members Present: Carol Kennedy, Sydney Waller, Cleo Mook, Julie Joyce, Rob Mol

Others Present: Neal Newman Town of Middlefield ZEO, Kelly Branigan Town of Middlefield Board Member

Call to Order: Chair Sydney Waller, 7:05PM

Privilege of the Floor – None.

Minutes of February 5, 2026, Meeting

Read by Carol Kennedy secretary. *Motion to approve Feb 5, 2026, minutes as modified Cleo Mook, seconded by Rob Mol. All were in favor.*

Projects from the community - None

Old Business & Reports

Update from February Town Board meeting

- Jeff Woepfel will serve on the Watershed Supervisory Committee as Town Representative
- Report on Middlefield Zoning Department actions

Middlefield Climate Smart Community Task Force

- No new updates

Update, Farmland Protection definitions status

- David Clinton – Town Attorney has turned the definitions into something that looks like our Zoning Law and if Planning Board members are ok with them the definitions will be sent to Town Board for review. Neal Newman and Kelly Branigan were working on the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) for them.

Farmland Protection Subcommittee Updates

- Minutes from the Subcommittee were presented and reviewed.
- Reviewed and discussed Town of Middlefield Zoning laws and possible next subcommittee meeting possibilities.
 - Discussed adding an additional protection of agriculture – based on the comprehensive plan - to the Purpose and View - Part C, Article 1 of Zoning. There was some discussion about where else in the Zoning Law any modifications might be made (Site Plan Review or Submission Requirements - for example), as well as, where any new definitions (Prime Farmland – for example) or expanded descriptions may be useful.
- Reviewed Goals and Actions for Planning Board as outlined in Comprehensive Plan with the goal of marking those as completed or still in progress. Marked as completed – “Reviewed existing zoning laws to ensure that they are farm friendly”. Marked as in progress – “addition of Agricultural Data Statement”, and “encouraging the appointment of a farmer to the Planning Board”. Additionally, we are studying the Otsego County Farmland Protection Plan as a guideline during site plan and subdivision reviews.

New Business

Initial Report and Data on Short Term Rentals (STRs) in Middlefield

- Shared and discussed:
 - Current periodic STR data collection in Middlefield, including the percentage of Bed Tax that goes to Tourism Bureau and county highways. For 2022 STRs in Middlefield generated over \$49,000.
 - Review of email responses from neighbors of STRs about impact or concerns
 - Communication with County Treasury Department about spreadsheet data and any other data they can share with us, including requirements for access
 - Research on county codes, STRs, and possible connections to Middlefield zoning
 - Regulations for STRs in Middlefield vs Village of Cooperstown
 - Ideas for future areas of focus

Conversation with planner Nan Stolzenburg

- Notes of conversation will be shared with PB members
- She may be able to meet with us via Zoom

Announcements

- NYPF Conference, Otesaga, April 19-21
- Pace University Land Use Conference, free, June 1-3 in Yorkville
- Next meeting April 2nd, 2026

Motion to adjourn made by Julie Joyce, seconded by Cleo Mook. All were in favor.

Meeting ended at 8:51 PM. Minutes respectfully submitted, C. Kennedy