

Minutes - Town of Middlefield Planning Board, October 2, 2025

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

Others Present: Neal Newman Town of Middlefield ZEO

Call to Order: Chair Sydney Waller, 7:01PM

Privilege of the Floor – None.

Minutes of September 4, 2025, Meeting

Read by Carol Kennedy secretary. Motion to approve September minutes as modified – Julie Joyce, second Abby Rodd. All in favor.

Projects from the community (in the order of application)

Application for potential subdivision of lot proposed by Stephanie Zanetti for Lot 86.00-1-11.01 on 328 Barnum Rd.

The owner was granted a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) on October 1st, 2025, to subdivide this parcel with only 194 feet of road frontage. Also, according to the deed, the property was subdivided in 2018 from a larger parcel that was sold in 1980. This now makes it a minor subdivision, rather than simple subdivision. A public hearing about this subdivision will be held at the Town Board meeting. Since the applicant did not attend the PB meeting the Board members reviewed and clarified the submitted documents including the submitted Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) for this subdivision.

The PB members had serious public safety concerns about placement of a driveway (or property access) on the proposed subdivision, which could be at a very dangerous part of the road with limited visibility from one direction. The main discussion focused on when an access to the new subdivision property is made, that it be done in such a way to create safe conditions for both drivers and pedestrians on the road. Because of this the “Condition” section on the minor subdivision form will include the PB concerns about driveway placement and public safety. One idea presented by the board to create safer conditions would be to propose to Stephanie Zanetti (the current owner of the property) to allow an easement on their property east of Russ Smith’s property to build an access to the new subdivision. Others included the placement of a mirror on the road opposite the future driveway, or to have highway signs stating, “limited sight distance” or “blind driveway ahead”.

Motion to accept the application for minor subdivision by Stephanie Zanetti of Lot 86.00-1-11.01 on 328 Barnum Rd as complete with the following conditions – to review the October 2nd 2025 PB minutes where serious concerns about driveway placement and public safety because of limited sight distance in the 194 foot road frontage area were discussed, including a suggestion from the Planning Board for a possible resolution of the issue by creating an easement on Stephanie Zanetti’s property on the east side of Russ Smith’s property for property access placement was made by Carol Kennedy. Motion seconded by Cleo Mook, all were in favor.

Old Business & Reports

Update from most recent Town Board meeting

Most important issue is finding people to fill the staff positions on Town’s highway department. The Town is offering an increased salary and to pay for CDL training and licensing if needed. Currently the Town only has 3 out of the 6 positions needed for the department. This is important since our Town has more roads than any other in Otsego County.

Another discussion involved the old schoolhouse and how the Town has had it painted, replaced the cupola and other renovations in time for the 150th anniversary of the schoolhouse. The Middlefield Historical Association is planning an event at the Schoolhouse celebrating its 150th year on October 12th.

The Town Board also discussed the wash outs due to flash floods, two of were on Pete Hendricks RD. FEMA funds were not available for those on Pete Hendricks since the wash outs were due to a beaver dam breaking and not part of a general widespread problem. The state highway funds will hopefully cover repairs.

Update on Climate Smart Community Task Force

Sydney sent minutes to PB for review via email. Key is that task force is working on the bronze certification and a Climate Smart conference in Schoharie County.

New Business

There will be a meeting of the PB with Trevor Fuller on Monday Oct 6th, 10 am at Middlefield Town Hall. He will talk in part about NY State funding for purchasing development rights to parts of farm properties. Abby Rodd suggested finding possible funding or

budget for education of local farmers on options for their properties other than subdivision and selling. Neal Newman put a notice on Town Website about this special meeting of the PB to discuss farmland and public space preservation through zoning law.

During the Town budget planning meeting they, after reviewing our draft request, recommended that the PB receive \$5000 for attending conferences or to organize educational events.

Announcements

Sydney Waller shared our Lake and Shoreline Protection zoning language with the PBs from the other towns on the lake (Springfield and Otsego) and they were happy to get the information since they are working on similar modifications to their zoning. The two Towns also shared how or if they received funds for doing this kind of work.

Currently there is a burn ban in effect for outdoor fires until Oct 15th.

Julie Joyce described further research being done about ways to control modifications to properties after subdivision or site approvals. This involves mapping the shoreline.

Workshops for PBs have been offered to learn how to better use county GIS maps.

Welcome to Rob Mol!

Motion to adjourn made by Abby Rodd; seconded by Julie Joyce. All were in favor.
Meeting ended at 8: 16pm. Minutes respectfully submitted, C. Kennedy