

TOWN OF MIDDLEFIELD PLANNING BOARD
DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
February 2, 2023

PRESENT: Chair Sydney Waller, Andy Baugnet, Roy Kortick (zoom), Johnnie Nemec, Bill Ralston, Arthur Weinstock
Also: Neal Newman, Middlefield ZEO. David Karl, Town Board Supervisor

Meeting called to order 7:07 pm by Chair Waller

Minutes from December 1, 2022 meeting were read. Motion to approve by J. Nemec, 2nd B. Ralston, all in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Solar Law update-Public hearing is scheduled for 7pm on February 14, 2023 at the Middlefield Town Hall.

Comprehensive Plan update-A. Baugnet reported the Comprehensive Plan Committee met on January 17, 2023 for the first time to review and update the Master Plan (aka Comprehensive Plan). The work group consists of Town Board Supervisor David Karl, Peg Leon, Jennifer Pindar-VanKampen, and Kelly Branigan (Town Board Members), Middlefield ZEO Neal Newman, and Planning Board Member Andy Baugnet.

The group discussed priorities and is in the process of creating a survey that will go out to all property owners in The Town of Middlefield. Social media and local newspapers will be used to inform the public of the survey and Otsego County Real Property Department will provide mailing labels. The review/update process is a Type 1 Action under the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQRA) and the long form will be filled out. All information about the comprehensive plan update process will be posted on the town website on a dedicated page for the purpose of keeping the public informed of the meeting dates, posting of minutes, and any other related activities.

Chair Waller reported she had met with a local resident in regards to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). She distributed materials for members to review, to follow up on the resident's concerns as presented to the Town Board at their January meeting.

Climate Smart Communities task force will meet in February. The March program is focused on community solar and Community Choice Aggregation (CCA). The purpose of Community Choice Aggregation is to allow participating local governments to procure energy supply service and distributed energy resources (DER) for eligible energy customers in the community.

Zoning law edits-Town Attorney David Clinton will go over the document to add previous amendments to the existing document.

ZEO Neal Newman reported annual building statistics were submitted to all planning board members

NEW BUSINESS

Neal Newman spoke regarding teleconference attendee regulations. While the use of video conferencing to conduct public meetings is authorized by the Open Meetings Law, the rules for doing so are stricter than those put in place during the pandemic. As of April 9, 2022, public bodies wishing to conduct meetings by videoconference must comply with the new requirements set forth in Public Officers Law § 103-a. “The local government must adopt a local law, or an individual public body must adopt a resolution, following a public hearing authorizing the use of videoconferencing for itself and its committees and subcommittees, or specifying that each committee or subcommittee can make its own determination”. Also, “The public body must adopt written procedures governing member and public attendance consistent with Public Officers Law § 103-a and post those procedures on the public body’s website.” And finally “Members of a public body do not have a right to attend meetings remotely, but may participate remotely by videoconference only at the discretion of the public body.” This matter will be discussed as one of our planning board members would like to continue teleconferencing.

Short Term Rentals (STR) were discussed. A. Baugnet obtained a list of 71 STR from Otsego County Treasurer’s Office that are currently paying Bed Tax. A map was created to show members the locations.

The process of how to go about looking into STR was discussed at length. It was decided the responses from the comprehensive plan questionnaire that will be addressing STR in reference to regulating them would help us better judge community sentiment on the topic.

Members also had reviewed Town of Canadice STR Law and NY State Model Short Term Rental Regulations in advance of the meeting in order to understand process. The PROPOSED 2005 Draft STR for Town of Otsego was downloaded from their website and distributed to members, but it was later discovered by Chair Waller the Town of Otsego has not adopted the law.

Motion to adjourn 8:38 pm by A. Baugnet, 2nd B. Ralston, all in favor

The next meeting of the Middlefield Planning Board will be held on March 2, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

Andrew Baugnet
Secretary