

Middlefield Planning Board

Meeting Minutes

October 23, 2012

USE TABLES

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm. Members present were Michael Hale, Janine Savoy, and Maureen Sullivan. Alan Vint and Terry Crean arrived shortly after the meeting commenced. Larry Smith, Planner from the PVPC was seated with the board.

The meeting opened with a discussion on the draft Use Table section “Raising and Keeping of Horses”. Members of the public expressed concern that the standards and conditions of this section would place new and undue limitations on the keeping of horses in the town, asked why this section was limited to horses and did not include other large farm animals, and why there is a need for this section in the Use Tables. The board decided to change the wording of the section to be entitled “Noncommercial Raising of Farm Animals on a Lot of Less Than 5 Acres” and eliminated the first standard and condition of minimum square footage/animal. The draft table, which specifies the requirement of a Special Permit for this use, was changed to Allowed by Right.

The standards and conditions section pertaining to Commercial Agriculture on parcels of land less than 5 acres, part e. Display and Sale of Natural products, was changed to meet the more rigorous standards as that for farm stands on parcels of 5 or more acres.

The standards and conditions for the section Retail Establishment Selling General Merchandise was changed from not allowing for the outdoor display of merchandise, to allow for outdoor display, but with language that would recommend that the SPGA give special attention to the details of the outdoor display and sales area of the application prior to the issuing of the Special Permit.

Lodging House, Hotel and Motel were removed from the list of uses.

All Allowed by Right uses in the Business District and Village Center District (with the exception of Bed and Breakfast Inn and Child Care Facility) were changed to allowed by Special Permit. This change was made because the town has no site plan review bylaw or other bylaws to control lighting, noise, etc.

It was decided that a definition for the term “screening” was needed and that section 1.4 e of the proposed Home-Based Business bylaw provided adequate language for a general definition of screening.

The board agreed it should to develop definitions for the terms Warehousing, Wholesale Trade and Distribution.

All Principle Uses in the Retail and Services and Wholesale, Industrial and Transportation sections, with the exception of Bed and Breakfast Inn, Amusement and Recreation Facilities, Aviation Field and, perhaps, Child Care Facility would be limited to 2500 square feet in both the Village Center District and the Business District.

Dining Club, currently allowed by Special Permit only in the AR district would be allowed by Special Permit in all but the Floodplain and Westfield River Protection Overlay.

Changed the use Establishments Selling Motor Vehicles and/or Accessories to Establishments Selling Class II Motor Vehicles and changed the Not Allowed status in the AR district to Special Permit required. The Planning Board needs to develop standards and conditions for this use. Those standards will give guidance to the Select Board, which is the board that issues Class II licenses. The board discussed the possibility of becoming the SPGA for applications for Class II motor vehicle sales establishments.

DEFINITIONS

Convenience Store – Change 5,000 square feet to 2,500 square feet.

Delete definitions for Housing for the Elderly/Senior Apartments and Life Care Facility as these uses will not appear in the Use Tables.

Light Manufacturing – add 2,500 (sq. ft.) as the maximum building area, along with a provision that the SPGA may grant a waiver to the applicant with a compelling reason for larger square footage needs. Place a limit of 25 employees per shift with the provision that the SPGA may grant a waiver to allow for more employees. Days of operation were limited to Monday through Friday.

COTTAGE INDUSTRIES AND HOME OCCUPATIONS

Home occupations would be allowed in accessory buildings constituting up to 33% of the dwelling unit square footage. This change was made to allow for occupations that are ill-suited to being conducted in a home.

Section 1.7 Special Permit Requirements – Delete the requirement that Special Permits for Cottage Industries be renewed following the first year of operation and change e. Special Permits for Cottage Industries may be revoked... to read Special Permits for Cottage Industries may be revised, modified or revoked...

SPECIAL PERMIT GRANTING AUTHORITY

The Planning Board will propose that the ZBA would be the SPGA for the following Principal Uses:

- Agricultural
- Residential
- Community Facilities

The following are the proposed Uses that the Planning Board would serve as the SPGA:

- Retail and Services
- Wholesale, Industrial and Transportation
- Accessory Uses

SIGNS

An additional category for Residential Signs was proposed. Such signs would be limited to 4 sq. ft.

The next meeting was scheduled for November 13th at 6:30.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11.

Respectfully Submitted,
Maureen Sullivan, Secretary