

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
April 10, 2019



TYPE: Regular Meeting
PLACE: City Building, City Council Chambers
TIME: 6:00 P.M.

MEMBERS: Mike Friedman David McCauley-Myers
PRESENT: Paul Nenni Joanne Mejias
 John Langhorne

STAFF PRESENT: Ashley Combs, Planning Director
 Austin Eidemiller, Zoning Inspector

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Joanne Mejias called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and the roll was called by Ms. Combs. Mr. Friedman led the Planning Commission in the Pledge of Alliance.

Ms. Combs introduced Austin Eidemiller, Zoning Inspector, to the Planning Commission. The Commission welcomed Mr. Eidemiller to the City and said they looked forward to working with him. Mr. Eidemiller said that he is excited to be working for the City of Middletown.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Mejias introduced the acceptance of the February 13, 2019 Planning Commission meeting minutes and asked if there were any corrections. Corrections were noted Chairman Mejias. Ms. Combs said that she would make the changes and bring in a clean copy for signature. A motion was made by Mr. McCauley-Myers and seconded by Mr. Langhorne to approve the February 13, 2019 meeting minutes with the noted corrections. The Planning Commission unanimously approved the minutes through roll call.

PUBLIC HEARING: DEVELOPMENT CODE TEXT AMENDMENTS

Ms. Mejias introduced the Development Code Text Amendment Case #1-19 and asked for staff report. Ashley Combs (Planning Director) presented the case using a PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Combs pointed out that the Planning Commission would only be reviewing and voting upon the text amendments pertaining to Civil Penalties. She said that the Planning Commission would not be reviewing the Historic Preservation changes due to there being more required revisions from the State Historic Preservation Office to obtain the Certified Local Government status. She said that once the changes are finalized she will take the Historic chapters to the Historic Commission for review and then to the Planning Commission for final review.

Ms. Combs explained that the City of Middletown adopted a new Development Code on March 1, 2018 and it has now been in effect for over a year. As a part of the of the planning ordinance update, all of the City's zoning regulations were renamed, and the zoning regulations for updated and strengthened to reflect modern zoning practices.

Ms. Combs said that all of the updates made to the Enforcement and Penalties chapter were by the City's Law Department. The changes were made to add an additional tool for code enforcement through the use of civil enforcement, instead of only having criminal enforcement as an option. The added regulations pertaining to civil enforcement and penalties will assist our new zoning inspector by giving him an additional enforcement tool as well as tightening up the penalty process. The civil penalties process will help speed up code enforcement process and will create a ticketing process for everyday property is not in compliance. The civil penalty process is efficient and does not create a criminal record for offenders.

Ms. Combs pointed out that per the Middletown Development Code, published notice regarding the proposal of the text amendments was provided a minimum of 30 days before the Planning Commission hearing.

Ms. Combs concluded her staff report.

With there being no questions for staff Ms. Mejias opened the public hearing and asked if anyone was in attendance to speak in favor of the request. Seeing none, Ms. Mejias asked if there was anyone present to speak against the request. Seeing none, Ms. Mejias closed the public hearing and asked for staff's recommendation.

Staff Recommendation: Text Amendment Case #1-19

Ms. Combs stated that based on the staff report provided and compliance with the requirements outlined in the Middletown Development Code, planning staff recommends approval to the City Council of the Text Amendments to the Middletown Development Code pertaining to the Chapter 1226: Review Authority and Procedures and Chapter 1228: Enforcement and Penalties.

Ms. Mejias asked for a motion following staff's recommendation. A motion was made by Mr. Friedman to approve the Text Amendments to Chapter 1226: Review Authority and Procedures and Chapter 1228: Enforcement and Penalties as presented to the City Council. The motion for approval was seconded by Mr. Langhorne. The commission unanimously to recommend approval of the Text Amendments as presented to the City Council through roll call.

Ms. Combs said that the City Council would review the Text Amendments at their regular meeting to be held on Tuesday, June 4th.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business for the Planning Commission to discuss, a motion was made unanimously by all Planning Commission members to adjourn at 6:35PM.

MINUTES APPROVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION.

Joanne Mejias, Chairwoman

Ashley N. Combs, Planning Director

*The full meeting recording is available at the Planning & Zoning Department.