

**TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
February 24, 2025 | 7:00 P.M.**

The Town of Middletown Planning Commission meeting was held on Monday, February 24, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the town council chambers located at 7875 Church Street, Middletown VA.

Planning Commission Members Present

Chairman Mark Klein
Anothony Boring
William Kircher
Angela Morelock
Suzanne Obetz
George Smith, Council Liaison

Staff Present

Amanda Kerns, Senior Planner NSVRC
Town Manager Les Morefield

1. Set Agenda

Chairwoman Morelock called for a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Kircher motioned to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Boring. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Due to printing issues, the approval of the January 27, 2025 minutes was postponed to the next meeting.

3. Public Comments

None

4. Chairman Comments

The Chairperson provided an update on the bylaws review process, noting that the Commission made significant progress but would need an additional work session. The next work session was scheduled for March 24, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. to finalize the updates.

5. Planner's Report

Ms. Kerns provided updates on several projects. Holtzman Liberty Station will double its tree plantings to improve screening, and additional landscaping is being considered to reduce noise and light impacts from the future drive-through. Commissioner Kircher also discussed concerns about landscaping and screening near Holtzman. Commissioner Kircher clarified that previous discussions about plantings were intended to address screening along the front fence leading toward I-81, specifically to block the view of the truck parking lot. The Commission agreed that additional landscaping, fencing, or planter boxes should be considered to enhance the visual appeal at the town entrance. Staff agreed to reach out to VDOT to determine if improvements can be made within the right-of-way.

The Middletown Train Station project is approved through the Town but remains under review by the County, with the applicant exploring a force main sewer connection instead of a drain field. The Town Council is negotiating a lease with the Winchester Model Railroad Club, but questions remain about whether the facility could be used for additional town events. As it stands, only Club events are planned to be held at the facility. Additionally, preliminary wastewater estimates for the train station suggest it can accommodate planned uses, and would accommodate hosting larger community events.

Chairwoman Morelock shared that the Plan Review Committee is preparing for the Comprehensive Plan

update kickoff meeting scheduled for March 3, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. The consultant will join virtually to provide an overview of the update process, key objectives, and next steps.

The Commission confirmed that Commissioners Boring, Obetz, Kircher, and Chairwoman Morelock will continue serving on the committee. Chairwoman Morelock stepped down as Chair of the Plan Review Committee and appointed Commissioner Obetz to lead the committee moving forward.

To streamline the process and reduce costs, meetings will be scheduled before regular Planning Commission meetings whenever possible. The consultant's contract has been fully executed, and work will begin immediately following the kickoff session.

6. Update from Council Liaison George Smith

Councilor George Smith informed the Commission that he shared updates on key projects with the Town Council.

For the Holtzman Liberty Station project, he reported that the Council was satisfied with the planned increase in tree plantings to enhance screening and mitigate noise and light impacts.

Regarding the Middletown Train Station, Smith informed the Council that, as it stands, the facility will be used exclusively by the Winchester Model Railroad Club for their events. A brief discussion followed regarding the potential use of the property for additional town-sponsored events and the language within the lease agreement. Councilor Smith agreed to bring these concerns to the Council and keep the Commission updated as discussions progress.

Smith also conveyed to the Council that the Planning Commission has received two applications for open seats. The Council is expected to review and discuss potential appointments at an upcoming work session.

As Smith may be unable to attend the March 3, 2025, Town Council Work Session, he will provide written updates to Ms. Kerns to ensure the Council remains informed of Planning Commission activities.

7. Unfinished Business

The Commission continued its review of the Planning Commission Bylaws and determined that additional time was needed to finalize updates. A work session was scheduled for March 24, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. to complete the review.

8. New Business

None

9. Announcements

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

Chairwoman Morelock adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Amanda Kerns,
Senior Planner, NSVRC

Angela Morelock
Chairwoman