

Planning Board Workshop Transcript - Middletown Center, April 21, 2022

Paul Croce: This meeting will come to order. This is a special meeting of the Planning Board for the purpose of conducting a public workshop on the proposed development of the Middletown Commons or Middletown Center, Middletown Center. I emphasize this is a public workshop. I emphasize this as a public workshop where between the public and the planning board, what will happen this evening is there. Will the topic be introduced by the planner? We will introduce the developers who will describe their proposal. The plan will also. Give a lot more detail on the process for this project. The planner will present the proposal, then there'll be comments from the Planning board and then we will open it up to the public. If a lot of people plan to speak, we'll put a five limit, a 5 minute limit on. Each person, and if time permits, at the end, people can come up with follow up comments with that Ron, I turn it over to you.

Ron Wolanski: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So just by way of introduction. And just to clear up any potential confusion about what we're doing here tonight, I just want to be clear that this is not a formal development application. Um. What's happened is that the town has entered into an agreement with the development team. To have that team present the town with a conceptual redevelopment scenario for the West Main Coddington redevelopment area, that's been talked about for many years at this point. That team was selected following a public solicitation process. The Council then requested that the team. Present the town with a concept for their development. That would be consistent with the work that's been done by the town over the years on the potential redevelopment of that property. So what you'll hear tonight is the team presenting their concept, and as Paul suggested, the planning board will have an opportunity to ask questions, make comments, and then we'll accept public comment. At the end of the Planning Board's review, the request would be that the board consider a recommendation to the Town council on the consistency of the concept with the town's comprehensive community plan. That's one particular area of recommendation that the Council is seeking from the planning board and then beyond that, any other comments, recommendation, suggestions that the board might wish to make to the town council following the Planning Board review and its issuance of the recommendations. The plan the town council will also hold a public workshop type meeting similar to this, where there will be additional opportunity for public input and ultimately the town council will decide if and how to proceed with the redevelopment project. So there's nothing written in stone. A decision hasn't been made by any means to proceed with any particular concept. We are very early in the review process and in the discussion, so want to make sure everybody is clear on that. And then just to set the stage, I want to run through a timeline of the history of where, of how we got to tonight. So you know, as I mentioned, this property has been discussed for many years and it really goes back 20 or more years back to and Art knows of history better than probably many in town being involved that long ago. When the Navy announced that there would be properties on the West side of the island that would be surplus, and again that goes back 20 or so years that that, that, that information was made available. At that time, the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission began work. To produce the Westside master plan. In that, that Westside masterplan, while not focusing just on the Navy, lands it did. Did focus on how those Navy lands and other properties on the West side of the island would be used going into the future. That plan was the Westside master plan was finally produced, presented, and endorsed by the three island communities back in 2005. And in that plan, there is discussion about this particular area of town being a mixed use development opportunity. So it does go back quite a way. Following that, the BRAC base realignment and closure process proceeded with the Navy working towards a surplus surplus of its properties. There was an islandwide group created that some of you may be aware of the Aquidneck Island Reuse Planning authority. That group was tasked with developing a plan for how the surplus Navy lands would be reused, and that plan was presented to the Navy and other other agencies in the federal government in 2011. And that plan also identified this particular area, the 15 acres on the corner of West Main and Coddington as a potential mixed use development opportunity. Moving forward and well, actually around that same time, the town contracted with a planning and engineering consulting firm, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, who produced West Main Coddington redevelopment concept

plan that was again in 2011. That plan has been posted on the town website for several years and that was really the first UM work done by the town to develop that concept; there was additional work done by a different firm matrix design group in 2014. In 2014, further refining some of the mixed-use concepts that the BHP plan presented. In 2014, 2015, the Middletown Comprehensive Community Plan was drafted and eventually adopted, and within that plan their specific reference to this, to this area and reference to that design work, conceptual design work that was completed by Vanesse Hangen Brustlin. And again, that the comp plan, I guess reaffirmed the town's goal that that property be considered for mixed-use development. In 2018, the town was finally able to purchase the three acre former Navy Lodge property on the corner of West Main Road and Coddington Highway for \$1.3 million. That was a culmination of, at least in Middletown's area, the transfer of Navy land. It's available for development and we're still working with the Navy as, as you all know, for the transfer of the shoreline property at the end of Green Lane for a park that's all part of that same BRAC process that goes back that many years, but we're still working to get that completed. So fast forward to 2020 and that's when the Town Council authorized the town administration to put out an RFI request for information and interest from potential development partners for the redevelopment of that property. The first attempt was in March of 2020, just as the pandemic hit, we received just one response to that request or to that solicitation, and it was actually from the Landings Group at that time. Given the limited interest and you know recognition that the pandemic was probably impacting our ability to get some response the RFI was reissued in June of 2021. At that point, the town received three responses. One response from the selected development team and then two others. The town council, as I said earlier, selected the team that you'll hear from tonight to proceed and provide a concept plan for consideration by the town. And I think that's all I have to say. I've already talked about what happens next. You'll issue your recommendation to the Town Council. Town Council will consider the proposal, except more public input. Consider the Planning Board's recommendations and decide how it wishes to proceed. So with that, I think we'll turn it over to the development team for their presentation.

Gerard Galvin: Mr. Chair, members of the Planning board, Gerard Galvin for the development team. First, I'd like to thank Ron Wolanski for that introduction for tonight's meeting and for all of his work facilitating this process to date. I'd also like to thank Peter Regan and Sean Brown for their active participation and collaboration to date. As Ron mentioned, we're at the initial stages of this public review and there's a lot of work that remains to be done and we look forward to continuing that work with the town staff. I want to run through the presentation we'll be giving tonight and who's going to be presenting. So you have a sense of who will be coming before you and addressing which topics. First, we will be having Chris Bicho who's principle of the landings, real estate group, and part of the development team. He'll walk you through the site plan and he will discuss the residential component of the project. Specifically the workforce housing component of the project. Next, Jim Karam from First Bristol Corporation will present his vision for the hotel and retail component of the project. Mr. Karam's Company has partnered for many years locally on the island with Kempenaar Real Estate. They have a number of successful hotels on the island and he can speak to the demand for additional units and specifically on the demand that the Navy has for extended stay housing or transient housing here and units here on the island. Next we'll have Paige Bronk address the board to summarize his opinions on the consistency of this project with the town's comprehensive plan. As you know, Mr. Brunk is a certified planner. He's been, he's testified in front of you many times. He's been accepted as an expert in planning by you many times. He has extensive experience both on the municipal side and on the development side and you have received his full report as part of this project in advance. It's been made public on the town's website, but he can present some of the highlights of that to you. And finally, we have Jeffrey Dirk from Vanesse and Associates available by Zoom. He is our traffic consultant and although we are at a very early stage, preliminary stage and a good deal more of engineering and permitting will be done on this project, he can share with you his initial thoughts on the traffic flow and impacts of this project and answer any questions you might have on that. So we look forward to your

questions throughout the evening, we look forward to the public comment, so we can better understand the opinions and concerns of the public. Ultimately, we hope you see this as a unique opportunity that we have to advance the town's interests and do something meaningful with this property that is consistent with the comprehensive plan before I have Mr Bicho come up. There was one element of the project that we saw raised in comments repeatedly having to do with the library, the size of the library, location of the library and I just wanted to address up front. As you've seen in the plan, there is designated municipal space. As part of this plan. The exact use of that space is yet to be determined. And we are, will be waiting for more input from the town in terms of whether they want to build a new library there they may want to build the new library elsewhere. But what we feel is important is that as part of this proposal, there is going to be. A good chunk of this land, designated for a municipal use. So that's an open issue more work will be done to determine how that will look ultimately. But as with much of this project, we're at a conceptual stage and there's more work to be done on that point. So unless you have any questions for me, I would call Chris Bicho up and Chris will walk you through the site plan and speak to the residential component of the project.

Christopher Bicho: My name is Christopher Bicho 96 Diane Ave, Portsmouth, RI I feel like I'm here constantly every month I could do a show. Thank you very much for having us tonight. I'm going to run you through the master plan. We can talk about the workforce housing and the market rate housing we're proposing. You know, first of all, we as a team are extremely excited about this project. I think this has been a long time in coming. I was fortunate enough to have the ability to purchase Landings apartment community, which is about 26 acres to the West of this property and quite frankly me personally, this has been, not only a goal, but a little bit of a dream to really make a community on the corner of Coddington and West Main Road where we have pedestrian, bicycle, vehicle, retail, hospitality and with you know, more than 3000 people being able to access this economic activity. And then use that access of economic activity to really leverage, leverage that success and bring that to the other side of the street, the east side of West Main Road and create, as I know, are you so most elderly speak of many times on East Main Road, a gateway to Middletown. This is a, the second, the busiest artery we have through our town and we have the ability to create an absolute special gateway right into the town of Middletown and that's the opportunity we're presented with. It's been studied ad nauseum, I mean, for years, for decades, between the Navy, the town, and I'm hopeful tonight that the plan we present before the planning board and people here who are genuinely concerned and excited, I would imagine at the same time for this to happen. It's a tremendous opportunity for our town. And you know, this is only a concept and I think, I know Gerard mentioned it, but we're just presenting a concept and this is a phenomenal opportunity for us to not only hear your ideas from the planning board and hear the ideas from the community. So with that being said, Ron, why don't we go through. The development team's been introduced, they'll speak following the presentation of the residential. Jim here will talk about the retail and hospitality and we have a great team of technical experts, CDA - Cordtsen Design, right there on West Main Road. J, Grover and his team has put there, honestly, Jay is the most excited person doing this. He's put his heart into this master plan and he's really come up with some innovative designs and ideas with his group. We have diprete engineering who's done an enormous amount of work for the Navy, understands this infrastructure here in Middletown and is going to help us through that part. And Venice will help us with. I think what is all obvious to us, the traffic concern. Ron. Well, that's it. It's 15 acres of a tremendous opportunity. Currently it's been used for school. It's been used for our library. It's been used as recreation. We are sensitive, I think the town's planning department is sensitive and everyone in town is sensitive to the fact that the displacement of some of these activities will need to be relocated somewhere in town and we appreciate that and we are working with the town through that process. In addition, part of this land, part of our development, does have the Navy's control in it, including the recreation easement as well as a piece of land to the north of this property. So we're going to be working with the Navy to help them help us make this an outstanding development. The components, if we go to the next slide, I think we can really get into it. These are some renderings of

what we're trying to create, and that's a pedestrian, and I'm just gonna move. *"(Paul Croce) If you do, could you take the hand microphone? Yeah, down there and hold it up close. I'm told to tell you to hold it up close."* OK. Thank you. What I'd like to do, Ron, maybe you could go to the overview first. And we could take, get you the overall 10,000 foot concept of where we're trying to get to and then then we can kind of slide back to the renderings just so everybody has a perspective of where we are, in the...I know the pretty pictures are great to look at but, OK. This is the nuts and bolts. This is where the rubber meets the road. What we're looking at is taking the opportunity of these 15 acres. And developing a vibrant, connected, economic driven neighborhood that has retail hospitality has people living, breathing, walking around, being entertained, being culturally satisfied, having opportunities for education, all in our cornerstone of Middletown. Right here we have Coddington West Main Road, which would be the anchor for the hospitality. And you know, we read a lot of the surveys, we understand people's concern about another hotel, and Jim is gonna be able to address that when he stands up and and and kind of demonstrate why we've selected this kind of activity for this site. We then moved through the site and along the front of West Main Road is retail. Obviously, economic drivers want frontage on West Main Road. We want our retailers to be successful. Within that, is the residential. And it's various types of residential. Our goal is market rate, yes, but our goal is also workforce housing. I think we all can appreciate that right now we're in a situation where people who are first year police officers, first year teachers, workers who really work hard everyday are having difficulty finding a place, not only finding a place to live, but being able to afford a place to live, so we're working with Rhode Island housing to ensure that we have a component of workforce housing in this development. So when our kids leave high school and want to stay on the island, they have a place to live. When they go to college and come back, they have a place to live. When they're working here on the island, they have an affordable place to live. And that is the driving force of this development. In addition, as Gerard mentioned, we have community space. And we also have a space allocated for municipal use. Now we did put the library there because obviously we have a replacement, we have to do something with the library. However, the town will drive that you'll drive that the community will drive that, we're making an allocation for it, and we're working with the town to make sure we integrate, if not the library some sort of municipal use. Some of the exciting things about this development is the connectivity of the bike path that was started on Coddington Ave and how that will be traveled right along West Main Road. Also, we are working with RIPTA and RIDOT. We're gonna move the public transportation to the interior of the development so the bus is not stopping on West Main Road. You also have a significant landscaping package to green up that part of West Main Road, and I'm sure the Tree Commission will be more than willing to help us, correct? *"(BJ)Thank you."* And so we feel and again this is our vision, but it's not the answer. There's gonna be many comments and we've read them in the survey, which is gonna help us and our team improve what's here. And so that's our master plan. That's our vision and with the comments we received from the Planning Board, observations received from the public, it's going to be better than this. And this is our opportunity here in Middletown to really create a gateway. So I laid out the master plan, Ron, if you can scan back I'll highlight some of the architectural ideas we incorporated into the development. So this is all about activity. It was all about getting people to wanna be in a destination. And so we focused a lot on street side entrance ways. We focus a lot on a kind of a village concept with a Main Street anchored by monuments that give it a visually pleasant but visual corridors through the development where you can see not buildings, but you get to see people in activity. Ron, if we go to the next few slides. Next one. It's mostly shingle styled. It's mostly brick. It's what we call coastal New England. It's not some contemporary architecture, it's more in fitting with Middletown. We're trying to use, you know, we're using the Gable roof concept. And using Windows that have light dividers in it. So these are the aspects and the characteristics of the architecture, along with wide sidewalks and light posts that we're trying to bring that bring more of a neighborhood feel. Next slide. And this is a little, you know, this is an area that we designated for, whether it be outdoor concerts, outdoor plays, you know again Community educational activities that are integrated into the development. I guess if you think of this, I think a lot of us have been to Garden City, a lot have been to South County Commons, maybe some of us have been to

Mashpee Commons up in the Cape. That's the kind of field. But on a smaller scale. And again, you can see it's all pedestrian driven sidewalk driven. With again, New England architectural style with gables and jogs in the building. And this is a continuation of the bike path that comes up off Coddington that will run down West Main Road. Again, really promoting that pedestrian bicycle kind of circulation, inviting the people in Coddington Cove, Landings, Harbor village to then walk into this development. And that would spur the economic activity. And this is just a visual of the bus stop that would be interior. Again, public transportation is very important to this development into the town. So we're working with RIPTA, we're working with RIDOT and they're excited about this because again, they're always looking for opportunities to promote public transportation. Do you wanna hold any questions? Very. Sure that when the traffic engineer comes up, he's gonna kind of go over all that. OK. Thank you. Gerard. Yep. *“(Paul Croce)Talk into the microphone please.”*

Gerard Galvin: Chris, could you just speak to the apartments themselves, the layout, the number of bedrooms and who we're servicing there?

Chris Bicho: So we propose 150 apartments, three story, four story buildings, all under the height maximums in town. We're talking 1, 2, 3 bedrooms. And again, when you think about 80% of median income to 120% of median income and rent in that area, you're talking rents between \$1200 and \$1800 / \$1900 a month. The average market rent for a two bedroom in Middletown now is \$2000. So these are significant discounts to the market rent, which will allow much more affordability in the marketplace. So now, I think coming up, we'd like to have Jim, do you wanna take the retail in the hotel?

Jim Karam: Chris is always a tough act to follow, but I'll try my best to thank you and. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for having us on the board for putting this together this evening. I know there's a lot of discussion obviously in town about this and we're pleased to be here. So to answer questions and try to try to develop a dialogue with the community. So we end up with a project at the end that is something that everybody feels comfortable with and excited about. You know, we came into this and I've done this before with my company and I'll explain that in a minute. But we've come into this on the basis that this was a conceptual plan and what I define conceptual is a little bit more than the term conceptual development. It's a process where we work together. So when people know exactly what you're doing.

Pau Croce: Excuse me for one moment, could you identify yourself? I don't think you did it into the mic.

Jim Karam: I thought our Council did, my name is Jim Karam? I'm the president of First Bristol Corporation. We're a 40 year old real estate development company and I'm a 50 year and although the company is in Massachusetts, I'm a 50 year resident of Tiverton, RI, and um where I got to know Rocky over many years and we had formed a partnership on several developments in Middletown and as many of you know, the Hampton Inn, the Homewood Suites and the Residence and the Marriott Residence Inn in Middletown. *“(Paul Croce)Thank you.”* And I'm here tonight with my son, Jeff, who's the Vice President of our hotel operations. We have 10 hotels throughout Rhode Island and southeastern Mass all the way to Boston. We've done a lot of work and we've been in business for 40 years. We've developed from East Greenwich to Woonsocket from Middletown to Tiverton from Providence, RI to Warwick, RI. So we've been all over the state with developing and we do retail, office buildings and hotels. We have five hotels in the state of Rhode Island. So again, when I was getting into it, the conceptual basis is that we're going to work together, we're going to come up with a plan. And what we've tried to do today is to start off with our best ideas on what we thought that the town was looking for through the RFP process. I think people saw bits and pieces that they liked and maybe one of the reasons we were selected and now we'd like to refine that and that's going to take a lot of work. So some of the answers I won't be able to define 100% this evening, such as traffic flow, because it's going to take an extensive engineering analysis that will conclude with some recommendations that'll be run through with the, with the Department of Transportation in the state of Rhode Island and eventually there'll be a sign off by the state on what exactly has to be done to make sure the traffic works efficiently and safely.

And so this conceptual process is something that's going to come up in a lot of our answers and we'll work with you and the people that are here this evening to answer those questions and bring closure to. With those concepts, a little bit of what Chris has mentioned. So let me start with the three phases that we talked about. Chris talked about the multi-family and what I'd like to do is talk about the hotel. I know there's some questions we've heard some people say, Jesus is there really a need for another hotel in this community. I would tell you we don't go into this blindly. We don't decide like any major developer. We don't just decide let's build a hotel. It requires a lot of analysis. We use a company out of Boston that's very well known throughout the Northeast through nationally. They have been involved in developments in California, Texas, Florida, wherever Pinnacle Group. They also are consultants to the state of Rhode Island and Hotel development, and we conducted a market study based on our insight and the insight they received from many of the hoteliers and in the area and the tourism and economic development people in the area in terms of what's happening. We are very confident that the concept that we want to create on this site will be very successful. We're going to use a new concept, it's called a dual branded hotel. And what that does, it takes a brand such as Hilton or Marriott and you combine two brands. If somebody could put that site plan back up on. If you could Ron. Thank you. So we're going to put, put two... *"(Paul Croce) Hold it up close. Hold it up close."* Is that right? Can you hear me? So we're gonna put two brands in one hotel that will have a common entrance through the gateway entrance into here on one side of the hotel will be an extended stay hotel and the other side of the hotel will be a traditional hotel like a Hampton Inn, Marriott, Courtyard or something, something of that nature. Now, why are we doing that? We see a tremendous need in this community to support the Navy. I think many of you know as we've all read that the Navy has really created a training center Mecca for the Navy nationally in Newport, RI. We have the officers Candidate school. We've got Naval Water Underwater Research, we've got the War College and it goes on and on. The latest program they brought in a few years ago was the logistics program. The Navy has one of the finest logistics programs in the country and students and all of these programs are brought from around the country around the world to Middletown for courses. And these courses sometimes last three weeks, sometimes they last eight weeks, sometimes they last six months and so there's a tremendous demand for extended stay. An extended stay is merely a hotel suite that's a little bit bigger than a traditional sweet, and it's actually like a small apartment, but it has all the amenities that the hotel provides, including cleaning and breakfast and food service and things of that nature. And it's very popular with the military. And they have found it extremely useful in Newport. Now what we're concerned about is the Navy built a new hotel on the base about two years ago because they were concerned they weren't going to have enough rooms. And if, if we are able to take care of this need, we think we will satisfy, we will satisfy the Navy. And we also think the state and the town will have the benefit of three taxes that take place on a hotel. You have a room tax, you have a sales tax, and you have a real estate tax. If that hotel is built on the base, there are no taxes for the state of Rhode Island or the town of Middletown, Rhode Island. And we've also found thank goodness that the military personnel don't like being on the base. It's more of a college dorm than it is a hotel. And so for the same money they can get a much better product and a much better service package by being at, you know, at our hotel. So we're gonna do one side of the hotel for the extended stay market. And I would tell you that business runs 12 months a year. So our residents in and our Homewood suites are both extended stay. Hotels do extremely well. And then the other half, the other half of the whole hotel will be designed under a traditional hotel brand and that will service a great demand we have for the leisure industry. One of the great things that happen even through COVID is Newport and Middletown is a drive to leisure destination. It's not a fly to destination, so when you look at the East Coast after 9/11, one of the first places to come back like gangbusters after 9/11 was Newport, RI. One of the first places to come back through to a normal business cycle after Covid was the greater Newport, RI business. We are now exceeding what we did in 2019, which was one of the biggest years ever in the hotel industry in this region and it's come back quickly. Our hotels in Boston are not performing as well as the hotels here in Middletown, again because it's a fly, it's a drive to destination. People from New Jersey to Vermont or Maine feel comfortable, and everybody in between driving here, being in the outdoor settings and it's

very, very much a large demand. One of the things you'll see is that it's become an Event Center. It's probably Newport is probably now one of the largest, if not the largest wedding venue. In New England, the weddings I mean, I mean, I remember one of the operators of a wedding facility was telling me his new Saturday night is called Thursday. If you want a wedding in Newport, you we. Can we have room for you on Thursday, but we don't have room for you on Friday, Saturday or Sunday. And that's what's happening in this market. So with that, I would. I would now switch to the retail on the retail side, we want this, as Chris pointed out, we have several thousand people that live within close proximity to the retail location. And so we want this to be a workable, a walkable, I'm sorry, a walkable, accessible site we will have, we will have local, uhm, retail as well as national retail operators who will provide mostly services that are everyday community services. Being things like. Retail food restaurants, specialty service shops, medical office, banks, things, things of that nature. We would like to get some of the artisans from the greater Newport area, people that come into the area, open some local shops. We may have a store that might have three or four artisans working outta one store to create a unique local atmosphere of what Middletown is about. We're not looking for any big, major, you know, forty 50,000 square foot stores. If we have a food service company, you're talking something that's going to be specialty in, in a store that's five or 6000 square feet. And so those are the type of retail, neighborhood attractions we'd like to provide.

Gerard Gavin: Yeah, yeah. If you could just speak briefly to the financial impact that we believe this project will have on the town of Middletown.

Jim Karam: Yeah Great. Thanks again. As I mentioned earlier, that the wonderful thing about hotels is they pay 3 taxes not not just real estate taxes but three taxes. But and we've presented in this program and I'm sure many of the people in the audience have seen a pro forma that we did about what the income benefit would be to the community. Which is in excess of \$1,120,000 a year. And I would, I would tell you this is a very conservative estimate based on the real estate taxes, the revenue of the hotel and does not take any inflation into account, which we all know we'll be facing a over over the next several years. But the hotel tax, the sales tax on the room amount to about 13% to the state and they share that with the Community by giving them back two, I think it's two and a quarter percent, yes 2.25% which from those taxes alone from the hotel would be nearly \$200,000 a year from day one and will grow over. Over the years, as the hotel revenue increases, the meals tax would be about \$50,000 a year. And in the real estate taxes, I've got estimated that some current values and current tax rates, but the reality is as values increase as tax rate increases, the revenue will increase to the Community to keep pace with inflation. We also have a ground lease payment of \$350,000 a year and and again this is a ground lease. We don't own the property. The town will own the property for 99 years for the lease will be in place and we'll have periodic increases in the rent that are negotiated that will take place over those 99 years on a percentage basis. Yeah.

Gerard Galvin: OK. Any questions for Mr Karam?

Paul Croce: Why don't we hear everything and then we'll open it up for questions.

Gerard Galvin: Great. Thank you. Thank you. So. So with that, I'd like to ask page Bronck to come to the podium and you know page has been before you many times as an expert in planning and. We've received his report. It's fairly lengthy. He's going to hit on some of the highlights and he'll answer any questions you have on that point. *“(Paul Croce)Thank you.”*

Paige Bronk: Good evening. Paige Bronk from Newport, RI. Thank you for allowing me to comment on the comprehensive plan and the project this evening. As stated, I believe you do have a copy of the full report, which is approximately 20 pages in length. One of the things I really like about the Middletown Comprehensive Plan is it's fairly clear and concise. I'll try to do the same with my comments tonight. I'm going to try to actually fill in some of the gaps with the four bullets that you

see with this presentation. So basically in summary, the plan strongly supports mixed-use. More specifically at this particular property. The Middletown plan is clear as to where it likes to protect land and also where it likes to promote development and redevelopment. And this particular property is identified by the plan as being within the core of Middletown's commercial district, clearly at the intersection of Coddington and West Main. That's where there's density, intensity, transit, transportation, a mixture of uses surrounding the property. Residential multi-family residential to the West, also multifamily to the North, commercial to the South and commercial to the east. It also the plan also talks about the need for housing and the need for quality retail. A lot of communities desire quality retail. As people understand what's happening with retail nationwide, they understand that it's not a local issue. There's a lot of Condensing constriction, successful retail will go to key places that offer a great sense of place. Often mixed-use developments. The retail that was occurring in the 70s and the 80s that is prevalent in many locations in New England. Is not the common retail that's being promoted today. It's more successful in special development places, namely mixed-use development and I think the plan identified that. Identifies that they want special growth areas so that they can condense their development, housing, retail, office, hotel, etc. In key locations such as this. Also, it talks about promoting development where there are existing utilities such as this location, water, sewer, roadway, transit. And as I started out, I mentioned that not only does the Middletown plan promote development at certain locations for the sake of development, but it also understands that if there's a compression of development in certain areas, you're protecting the other areas throughout Middletown that you value the most. Your rural areas, agricultural areas, those with hydrox oils, other center, environmentally sensitive land. So it's somewhat of a two pronged approach in trying to condense development where Middletown believes it needs to be promoted but also in doing so it's easier to protect other land areas. There is narrative in the plan that clearly talks about mixed-use over and over and over again, and it's actually a layer that carries through the entire plan. I'll talk later about many of the elements, but it is well weaved through the entire document. This theme of promoting mixed-use development to benefit Middletown on various levels. There's also the reference to mixed-use being a smart goat growth approach again so that it's efficient, saves energy, protects environmental resources. That really it captures, it captures the smart growth strategy regarding numerous studies, this concept, this project is not something that happened recently. As was stated earlier, ideas about this property, this area date way back to the Westside master plan and actually probably before then. So we're talking about 15, 20 years of studies and the comprehensive plan actually captures those studies quite well. My role here tonight is not to go through the details of those, but to merely identify past documents, and I'm sure I don't have a complete list. The Westside master plan in 2005, done by the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission, the West Main Road/Coddington Development Center master plan done by the town of Middletown in 2011 which began to really refine the focus for this particular property. Also, the redevelopment plan for surplus properties that was done by the Aquidneck Reuse Planning Authority in 2011 as well. So this is an evolution starting from a concept through refinement, and then ultimately including reference to these documents in the comprehensive plan. It begins to carry more weight, some legal weight. Some of the ideas through implementation from the comp plan make their way into zoning and subdivision regulations. The concept of mixed use, for example, has been put forward and has been endorsed by the town of Middletown and incorporated into their zoning regulations as a part of implementation. So the plant the report that I've provided goes into fairly extensive detail by element as to how this project, this property is in conformance with the comp plan. And again, I am not going to go through each and everyone, but I've done my best actually, provide those in the document and provide page numbers to the best of my ability. What I would like to do is try to provide some highlights. One of the key items from the Middletown Comprehensive Plan is actually its executive summary. It's a fairly unique component in that the public sentiment survey or preference survey

is included in that executive summary, and that melds well with the other elements that are within the document. And some of the priorities from that executive summary focus on this property mixed use development. Condensing the development in protecting environmentally sensitive lands. In addition, within that executive summary, there is a special highlighted area or special area highlighted that focuses on a mixed-use development vision. So it exclusively pulls out this location. In the Two Mile Center district and there was some top survey preferences that identified smart growth principles and desires for redeveloping vacant and underutilized commercial properties, and people supported this area. Moving on to the land use element that's the largest element within the plan. There are several supporting goals, policies, action items including mixed-use, reuse of Navy land and this growth center that I previously mentioned at the two mile corner. The plan also does a pretty outstanding job and dealing with mapping throughout the town. And the mapping, in combination with the narrative, tells the story regarding the desires, and there are numerous maps. That actually supports this project, the town properties and facilities map, the sewer map, water services map, the land use Map 2025 which is map L1. It actually shows the growth center I previously mentioned, with a giant Gold Star right at this location as a future growth opportunity. Also, the public transit map, this property is well served by transit, the pedestrian bike transportation map, this property is well served by pedestrian and bike transportation, particularly on Coddington. The highway functional classification map, which basically shows that both Coddington and West Main are principal arterials state highways. The economic development element, it explicitly promotes the redevelopment of mixed-use. A mixed use along this property at West Main and Coddington. It also supports economic growth and job creation for new businesses, including hospitality. The recreation, conservation and open space element. Specifically, references that the existing recreation facility at this location is poorly suited and the location is better suited for a mixed, that this location is better suited for a mixed-use development, and that the existing recreation facility should be relocated elsewhere. Housing. It encourages mixed use and transit oriented development to serve housing needs. We had previously heard, which is true, there's a lack of housing units which affects affordability not only for affordable housing, but housing that's affordable. I'm not mixing words, but basically we're talking about all levels of housing so that everyone can afford housing within Middletown. The housing element advocates for a village style, a mix of multiple uses, pedestrian and bike travel, sense of place, economic investment, efficient use of land and infrastructure, and it guides development towards established areas and protects outlying rural areas. With environmental sensitivities. The last thing I would like to touch on, I did have a short quote here that says that the plan directly responds or the proposal directly responds to the plans intent to see this area transformed into a walkable and attractive destination to include a mix of commercial residential municipal uses. I have two excerpts from the plan that I'll close on. Basically this is a small excerpt from a larger section in the plan, mainly from the executive summary. I'll read the full description. It says West Main Coddington Development Center, located within the boundaries of the potential two mile Growth Center is the core of the West Main Coddington Development Center. The concept includes the redevelopment of town owned property in conjunction with surplus Navy land that the town is working to acquire. This predates the acquisition. It is described in detail in the 2001 W Main Coddington Development Center master plan and subsequent documents related to planning for the reuse of surplus Navy land. The concept envisions a walkable and attractive mixed use center at the intersection of Coddington Highway and West Main Road to include a mix of commercial. Residential and municipal uses that as well integrated with the surrounding neighborhood. The last excerpt I would like to read is also from the executive summary stating the town would like to see the area transformed into a walkable and attractive destination to include a mix of commercial, residential, and municipal uses that as well integrated with the surrounding neighborhoods. Overlay zoning should be drafted and adopted to ensure the town's vision for this special area is implemented when private development takes place. Specific

urban design and transportation goals that were aspects of the preferred scenario include multi-story buildings with ground floor retail. Create a multiple zone with a town common. Orient buildings towards West Main Road. Lining the internal street with buildings. Create pedestrian amenities through varied set back and building form. Place parking at the rear of buildings. Pedestrian connections to existing residential areas. Improve traffic flow and safety with a new full access drive with pedestrian crossings. Reduce curb cuts, consolidate entry exit points, and restrict turning movements. Enhanced landscaping along Coddington highway and plan for improvements to key intersections. I believe, in summary, the plan is well written and it explicitly targets this particular property for. Proactive development targeting mixed-use development. Aligned with the proposal that you have before you. *“(Paul Croce)Thank you.”*

Gerard Galvin: Ron, next if we could. Invite Jeffrey Dirk into the meeting via zoom. Hello Jeffrey, are you there?

Jeffrey Dirk: Hello, I am, yes. Can you hear me?

Gerard Galvin: Yes, we can. So Jeffrey is from Venasse and Associates. He's a professional engineer in Rhode Island. He's been accepted as a traffic expert in courts and before boards across the state of Rhode Island. And Jeffrey, if you could just explain your, I know we're at an early stage without significant engineering, but if you could explain your opinion relative to the traffic flow presented by this proposal to the planning board and walk us through that, that would be very helpful.

Jeffrey Dirk: Absolutely. And thank you and good evening. Members of the Planning Board and members of the public by way of introduction, as you'd heard my name is Jeffrey Dirk. I'm the managing partner of Vanesse and associates. Not to be confused with VHB who assisted the town with the master planning effort that was undertaken with respect to. On this site, as well as other properties within the town itself, I have extensive experience working on this type of project, both in the state of Rhode Island as well as in Massachusetts. I think from the standpoint of where we are with respect to the transportation analysis and I think I should mention 'cause I know the Chair had mentioned early on our place of business or my place of business is in Andover, MA. So we're just over the border in Massachusetts. With respect to mixed-use developments, I think consistent with what you've heard from all of the presenters tonight and I think as well as reiterated in the town's master plan as it relates to this development site is it's two pieces, it's really the mixed-use nature that you've heard presented here tonight and then the connectivity to these alternative modes of transportation. And I think those two things from our standpoint and I think is the way that the town is envisioned, this project are really key to reducing the traffic impacts from the project. I know that it's a very sensitive issue. It's not only sensitive in this community, but in all communities, one of the real ways that we can reduce traffic and parking impacts is to have a truly mixed-use project, and that's what you've had presented to you tonight is a mix of uses that really are rely upon each other, the residential use. A small size retail component that you had mentioned that's really focused on kind of a neighborhood or village type setting so that what we would have is internal trips where residents are able to patronize these types of retail uses that will be in the project site and therefore it reduces the amount of offsite traffic that might be associated with it and then having that community component as well. However, that ends up being envisioned, whether it's a library or Community Center or a mix of both of those things is really about creating a community in of itself, which reduces the amount of traffic and parking that's needed to support this type of use. And then that second piece of it is, is really the RIPTA bus service that is currently there that will be brought into the site. And then the town and the state and RIDOT have expended money to create infrastructure for pedestrians and bicycles. So really, this is a great setting that's building up on the infrastructure that's already been put in place and can complement that. So my goal is to transportation professional and you heard mentioned, you know we're very early on in the process we will have an extensive working relationship with the town and with RIDOT and RIPTA as well

as we conduct our transportation analysis and we'll be looking at the impacts of the project not only on vehicular modes of traffic but also on pedestrians and bicycles. And I think you heard with the previous speaker, the idea of really making sure that we want this to be walkable and bikeable, but very safe as well. So we're reducing traffic impacts by having a mixed use development. We will work with the Community to make sure that we have a mix of uses that complement each other, connecting it to this existing infrastructure that's in the area. And then the other part of it is the vehicular traffic. Now we've heard in, in. We have the benefit of a lot of the Community comments about, you know, congestion of traffic in the area, both in Coddington and West Main and and some of the feeder roads as well. So our goal will also be not only reducing the amount of traffic reproduced, but improving the flow of traffic along the corridor there. And some people may say, well, you know, how are you going to go about doing that 'cause, we're not going to be widening the roadway, that kind of defeats some of the purpose of the pedestrian and bicycle modes and the public transportation access. But the way that we're able to do that is having traffic move more efficiently. So that's done through communications or coordination of the traffic signals in the area. To make sure that they're operating in an inefficient manner, there is also new technology that can be introduced and some of you may have heard of what's known as adaptive traffic control technologies and those are it's almost artificial intelligence for traffic signals. You've got some very good infrastructure that was recently put in place by RIDOT. Having this adaptive traffic signal system in place allows for is the term kind of implies the traffic signals to adapt to not only vehicular flow, but also pedestrian flow. So as people are pushing the push buttons to cross the road a lot of times people say well then you know what that does. Well what does that do to traffic and cause it to back up? Well, the adaptive traffic signal systems allow for the signals to adapt to when pedestrians push the push buttons or there's increased traffic demands on one approach or another on due to seasonality or as Jim had mentioned, you know if there's conventions or other things happening at the Navy base that may affect traffic flow the adaptive system allows for those signals to react in real time to the changes in traffic flow. And it's a relatively new type of system that RIDOT is using in other place and it does account for seasonal traffic variations and allows for the signal systems to adapt to that. As we look at the development itself, which we know is a part of the master plan, this whole idea of access management, so controlling where driveways are located and controlling turning movements and driveways is very important. So our goal really in terms of looking at the project site is to have left turn movements happen at signalized intersections, so we do know that we do have access to the signal at Coddington and West Main. So left turn movements, we would encourage to happen at that location as they try to access the site looking along West Main primarily would have right in right out type of driveways there. So minimizing the left turn movements that would happen and then we would look at it adding a signal. Now the signal would either be somewhere in the middle of the development, or ideally, if we're able to locate it further north through align with Valley Road, that would be another location. You have an existing signal there, so maybe an opportunity to connect into that signal if land does become available. If not, we would locate a signal somewhere along the midpoint of the property, or maybe a little bit to the north, but that would allow for left turn movements to happen at a signalized intersection as well. This additional that signal signalized intersection also importantly allows for the connectivity across West Main so that pedestrians and bicycles are able to go back and forth across the roadway at a signalized controlled intersection. Again, very early in the process, but I think at this point, as we're looking at the development, you have a mix of uses that really compliment each other. The residential use, the hotel use are from a traffic generation standpoint, they're a relatively low traffic generators and very dispersed in terms of how the traffic occurs over the course of the day. And we will be working with the town with RIDOT during the course of our transportation analysis to make sure that you know we're not. We're not only addressing vehicular movements, also addressing pedestrians and bicycles. And we will not present a traffic study to that does not address the impacts of the project. So our goal is to make things better. It's certainly not to make things any worse. And really what we're trying to do is improve the flow of traffic and improve accessibility in this area. So I'll yield my time and turn it back over to the team. Certainly will be here to answer any questions from the board and the

public. *“(Paul Croce)Thank you.”*

Gerard Galvin: Thank you very much, Jeff. Mr. Chair, that would conclude our active presentation from the witnesses. Any of those witnesses are available to answer any questions you or the board have at this point. And then we would of course reserve for any opportunity to address any of the comments that come up later in the night also.

Paul Croce: OK. Thank you. *“(Gerard Galvin)Thank you.”* Before I open it up to the planning Board member. Has the development team received the comments that you have been sending to the planning board? So they've seen those also? OK, great. OK. Comments from the planning Board,?

Art Weber: I've got one alright. One of the things in responsibilities of good planning is to try to predict the future. And take uncertainty out of things. We do that every 10 years with the comprehensive plan. But this offers a special opportunity because we have a special problem on, on our future. We have an aging and declining population in Middletown. And what that means is. The residential side of the Ledger. May not be able to increase the funding for the town. It may decrease. That results in generally then higher taxes for everybody or reduction in services. So I have looked at this project, as Ron said for a long time, as not a nice project to have but a necessity. We keep our our town financially stable and I think the revenues from this project and perhaps other commercial enhancements in Middletown are important. And we need to look at them and try to put them in perspective for what they are. This certainly is not perfect in every aspect. I have always wondered how we're going to get people alive across from East and West side of West Main Road in this particular place. I'm not sure if you're gonna do that with a bridge or a tunnel, but I think that's an important thing we're going to need to take away from this. And I think we need to spend a lot of attention, special time for our library. If you've ever been in the library and dealt with the people that work there, it is absolutely heaven. And it's a special and important place, and we need to make sure that they get their due respect and get the building they need to provide the services that they want to provide, especially if you look at what they've done for everybody in this town in the COVID endurance contest, or just about maybe to crawl out of.

Paul Croce: Thank you. Any comments? Mike?

Mike Fenton: In looking at the housing plot of the project, what kind of demographics did you consider you know what type of people are going to be living there? You know our family is going to be living there or. This is going to be couples. What's going to be the impact on the schools, you know, so forth.

Chris Bicho: Excellent question. So we're in a little bit of transition in Middletown right now. We've got a multitude of housing projects in front of you. We have one in the former industrial area, which is really geared more on a family oriented project. We also have the newest proposal, which is moving along for senior housing on the Forest Ave area. I think this housing takes a little bit of those two areas, but mostly targets the same type of workforce, housing young couples, single people living here on the island who are looking for one and two bedroom houses that's going to be the predominant makeup of this area. People who can access those type of amenities like retail and want to live more in the core of Middletown. So I think we're in a pretty fortunate position right now where we have three types of projects to serve as three types of demographics in our town right now and hopefully we'll be able to take advantage of all three. That answer your question?

Mike Fenton: Yes, just. Yeah, there's a lot more to it. I guess we'll have to talk about it. Sure as the project develops, you know? Yeah. So, OK. Thank you.

Paul Croce: BJ.

BJ: Thank you. I think that I remember one of the most important things that a friend once told me is that the only permanent thing in a life is change and this is something that we are going through right

now. And I think we have to remember that change can be bad, but it can be very good and I think it's up to us to examine all the prospects that have been put before us tonight and to remember that the most important permanent thing in life is change, and that's part of our responsibility. Thank you.

Paul Croce: Thank you, bill. I don't know Bill. And then Joe.

Bill Nash: Thank you, Paul. There's a lot of information here and it's not unexpected. As Ron said, it's been going on for 20 plus years back when I was also working for the town as well, I recall seeing a lot of information. I've tried to stay up to speed with it and it's been challenging. I can imagine what the public is trying to try to absorb much of what we have in front of us tonight. I think we need to understand that it is a it is conceptual and some of the comments that I read, that came through my email. I did not get a chance to read all of them, but I have those same questions and I'm assuming we'll hear some of that tonight. So I'm going to defer some of my questions and comments until I hear, and I know they'll come up that as we go forward, but, it's changing and it will change, determining as ultimately our charge here is to determine obviously approval towards the end, but compliance with the comprehensive plan we heard from an expert that certainly indicates that it's well on its way to conforming. In my eyes, I'm just not there yet, and I don't think we can be yet until we see the plan, but certainly on the right track with what we want to do here and what we need to do here. My only, from the very beginning of this, going back to when I first saw original plans and space that was going to be allocated for town space, and I know some of this came up during through the comments relative to the Community Center, the pool, the library, and I have some logistical questions on that which I'll hold off on, but, I guess I wanted to ask a couple of questions one relative to the hotel. Um. The mix, the mixed concept to me, is kind of interesting. Can you tell us how many total rooms and how many? What the percentage would be on? The extended stay to the typical hotel room.

Jim Karam: So in the concept we have before you there are 144 rooms and somewhere around 75 will be extended stay in the balance will be traditional hotel rooms. Both you know the typical layout of a king or a double queen, or you know, things of that nature.

Bill Nash: Thank you. That was. One specific question relative to the Hotel, know, the residential, know, I'm, I'm OK with all that. All of what you've put out there already. But I do have other and what specific question relative to the commercials to the Community space and what I was getting to. Thank you, Mr Karam. And what I was getting to is space on the from the Community and I'm, you know, I hear you Art on the library. I would agree wholeheartedly and the need for a modern library today. Um, the trend, however, with the schools is to be more of a Media Center. And a 10,000 square foot library to me may seem a little bit premature, but relative to the community space. I was an advocate many years ago for a, for some type of a fire substation. For the fire department, having and this was prior to the new station being built. Where it is today, but I still feel there's a need on the West side for at the very least an emergency facility, something of that effect. That, that's one of my asks or consideration to some type of a community emergency facility space; One bay, 2 bays, whatever it needs to be. And Mr be sure you alluded to, maybe you could, maybe you could help me out here with. You mentioned that when much of this was done in Navy property as it was acquired, there are some, Nate, Nate, there's some Navy control and or? Some caveats, or some conditions that need to be met, and much of your design, I think probably surrounded that, but maybe you could help us out and just kind of summarize. I don't need to feel sure,

Chris Bicho: Just real quick. I'm a Community Center just so over doesn't get confused, that's a leasing Center for the apartments. It's not a community public space, OK, just so we all understand. "OK." So, you know, apartments need a place where they can lease apartments, have administration and maintenance and all that and that serve the apartments, "(Bill Nash)Understood, OK." On the Navy, so currently with Patsy Field stands, there is a conservation easement that sits over that. That was provided by the Navy to the town at some point when it was used for recreation. That has to be

reconciled with the Department of Interior. So we're going to work with the town to accomplish that. That's the first restriction that's on the property today that needs to be dealt with. That easement we talked to in the town will lead this is to be relocated to somewhere else in town. Second of...go ahead, I'm sorry.

Bill Nash: So then the common open space is not that space that...

Chris Bicho: That's correct. *"(Bill Nash)OK,"* now to the north of the property. In order for us to accomplish the traffic signal. That we need at the corner of at the intersection really Valley and West Main Road. Right there is a sliver of Navy property that actually is a sliver up the north side and actually wraps around the backside. The back of the parking lot area where the library is and that municipal space where we have the open air shell will call it for lack of a better term, yeah, that is a Navy piece of land. Again, we will have to work with the Navy for them to transfer that land to the town to be put into the lease. *"(Bill Nash)On the north"* the north property and that will allow us to accomplish the intersection.

Bill Nash: Ok. That's good to know. And obviously you'll pursue that can you, can you? This may be going way out of the box here, but the space that's behind. The proposed library and open space that land there, that, that's an open area. Is that controlled by your company or ...

Chris Bicho: No, that is controlled by the Navy and Balfour Beatty. Yes, they control that land. That's where the previously proposed solar light farm was going to go. I don't know the status of that today

Peter Regan: And there is just to follow up on that there the town does have in the agreement when these transfer took place at town does have some rights to use that as a recreation area. So that's one of the things that we will be looking at as part of this is whether or not any of this is whether or not the common or municipal space can be extended or park area could be extended into that area.

Bill Nash: That's good to know as well,

Chris Bicho: But that is not our land.

Bill Nash: Understood there's potentially there's possibilities. There's always possibilities, right? And just by you there, Chris, last question. And I understand the whole traffic study and thank you for that explanation. That was what I was wanting to hear, of course. But you would mentioned no, you're bringing the public transportation into the property. The current plan shows a bus stop right on the main road. That's not in the plan or is that

Chris Bicho: No, no, we're hoping again we have to work with DOT with this. We're open. The bus stop gets off West Main Road and comes into the property almost...*"(Bill Nash) It's not on the plan now."* Correct, it's not on the plan but that is our goal.

Bill Nash: OK. Yeah. I just want to be clear that you had said you want to move it inside. I understand and I'm fine with that. Yeah. Other than that, I'm sure there'll be questions that I have written down that and from my previous review, but thank you up to this point so far with what you've done.

Chris Bicho: You're welcome. Thank you.

Bill Nash: Thank you. Paul.

Paul Croce: Well, thank you, Joe.

Joe Pierik: Chris, I was going to ask you if you can stay up here. I just I I feel lucky after 20 years. Here we are and I get to be a part of this. So thank you. Timing is everything. My questions kind of tie into some of what Bill and others have said so far tonight. I guess the biggest concern I have going forward

is I was on site today at 3:33 walking the property and the traffic was backed up from Coddington and West Main all the way to the signal at Valley. And I would look to my watch. I was like, wow. So we know traffic is an issue. I heard your traffic engineers say that. It needs to be studied and resolved so I know that's something I'm gonna be especially focused on. And then just listening to um, the narrative and some of the things I wrote down is just, you know, I'm going to be looking at. How do you integrate some of the best practices today from a sustainability, renewability standpoint? Things like irrigation, stormwater management? Electrical consumption.

Chris Bicho: It's a big challenge, right, because typically you have to, you know, maintain your stormwater on your site, so so we're gonna have to get innovative and manage this stuff underneath the ground, and we're going to have to try to minimize, you know, the environmental runoffs. And I think we're going to, I mean, I know we're going to get there, right. We got Diprete Engineering. This is what they do day in, day out. And I think we're all sensitive to that. And then how do we manage all those environmental impacts and still have a sustainable development? But I think it starts off with really good landscaping. I think that you know it, it's good landscaping, it's really attractive lighting at night and incorporating circulation among a neighborhood and a village that not only embodies community but safety. And I think if you keep your focus on those four or five real key items and I think Jay has done a great job from CDA and kind of designing that interaction, that's going to create a successful development at the end of day where people just don't only want to go 'cause, it's great if you want to go there, but you want people to live there because it's really the living and breathing. And the things that happen every day, that's the invitation of neighbors to come by and interact and be part of that community with outdoor space for restaurants, very walkable sidewalks. And, you know, having a municipal and I know you want you're looking for the fire station, right, but, you know, when you kind of envision a library, it's totally changed. I mean, I went to the University of Rhode Island Library the other day, I think the books now are on the very top floor. There's nothing in there as far as books go. It's a Cultural Center. It's an Education Center, it's a training center, it's a Community Center. And I think that's the type of, you know, whether it's a library, not a library or whatever it is working with the town to create that as part of this may be the location is not perfect, right, but finding a location, in this development that works breathes life to this development, not a transient life, but a community life, and that's that. That's the goal. I mean, most towns do not get the opportunity to do what can be done with this property. Very few towns have this opportunity. Newport would never have this opportunity. Tiverton doesn't have this opportunity. Portsmouth doesn't have this opportunity. I mean, this is really the center of the island. And you know, it's just a tremendous opportunity I think for the community. *"(Joe Piernik) Thank you."* You're welcome.

Paul Croce: John, do you have anything?

John Ciummo: Thank you. Chris, I'd like to back up what art had said. An example, my son, who's 25, my wife looked four months for a place in Middletown and Newport to find a place to live. He got the last unit in the Cranston, Calvert schools that have been redone and his friends are still looking. The housing situation in Middletown is horrendous for young people. And he's paying \$1800 a month for a single bedroom apartment. There's just no place to live in Newport and Middletown. I don't know where the summer help is going to live for these restaurants that we have here. I don't know if they're going to live in Fall River and commute, but we have a dire need for housing in Middletown. It's not going to stop.

Paul Croce: Thanks John. Let me give you my comments. First I want to thank you for being so responsive to what the comp plan calls for for that space. And I think we have a development team that will genuinely work with the town as these plans go forward. And that's a good thing. I'll give you some specific comments that I have. I like the idea of including workforce affordable housing. That's good. With respect to the pool and the amphitheater, you know, putting an amphitheater right beside a residential area. Raises questions and I would suggest you work with the town on really the need for the

pool and the amphitheater see how things develop with that. As for the hotel, if this is. Truly to be a gateway to Middletown and be called a Middletown Center, I would think you would want to diminish the impact of the hotel and increase the impact of the municipal building. Perhaps that corner location is a nice location for the town library rather than sticking it in the back of the area. After all, it's the Middletown Center, not the Marriott Center. Also, you talked about making this a pedestrian-friendly activity, I would ask you to consider whether there should be consideration giving to pedestrian access from the other side of West Main Road. Perhaps an overhead pedestrian walkway or something like that. I don't know if it's worth it, but I think it's something you can look into. And lastly, there's it's always good to have open space, so just consider that. Those are my comments. BJ, yes.

BJ: Just one more thing this evening I was approached by someone who mentioned the fact that we don't have a central meeting place like a Convention Center and they would like that tossed out as a possibility, even if it's not a huge facility. If it could be managed so I thought I would mention that. That's part of, I guess the only permanent thing in life is change.

Paul Croce: Thank you. Any other comments from the Planning board? Okay, we can open it up to the public. We have a 5 minute timer. When the green light goes on the time starts. The yellow light means you have one minute remaining and when the red light comes on I will ask you to terminate your comments, close off your comments, please identify yourself.

Valerie Gelb: OK, Valerie Gelb 94 shore drive. I'm very excited about this project. It's something that we really need in our town. I think it could be, you know, really a great stamp for the community. I want to clarify a few things 'cause people get very mixed up with the word affordable housing. Affordable housing is not Section 8 housing, which is the lowest income levels government housing. The next level is low income housing that's 60% of your mean income that be someone around \$30,000 to \$45,000 a year. This housing, which I think is very important, is workforce housing would be in the 80 to 120% median income levels and that's \$55,000 to \$130,000. And Chris, you could confirm that, but I think that's right. Thank you. I loved your comment Paul 'cause, the hotel on Coddington side to me, it'll block the whole development. The beauty of the community and kind of an entrance in the gateway. However, once you saw the land again, where the library is, and Chris mentioned that or maybe you mentioned Peter, that we could possibly get access to that land behind it, then you would want that not for a hotel side, right, but more for the community. And the piece of the library. I totally agree a library, it should be around a Cultural Center should be a community building. We don't have any place for our youth to gather at night or have any gatherings for the community, have Easter egg hunts, things like that, and uh in a confined safe area. I think that would be ideal. Let's talk about Valley Road. Thanks for bringing that up, Joe. It's a nightmare. Right, so now you can't turn right or left. It takes forever to get through that light. So the transportation I know we bring this up all the time, but it really is critical in this area and I would love for us to figure something out 'cause I think this is a great addition to our community. The hotel height, I would also worry about and I know it would have to fall within our zoning and I understand this whole area would have to be rezoned. Yeah, I've got it right here, 156. Would have to be rezoned, but four levels won't necessarily meet the 40 foot height. Thank you.

Paul Croce: Thank you. Please.

Karen Biastre: Hi, my name is Karen Biastre. I'm a lifelong Middletown resident. I live at 207 Maple Ave. I'm also a member of the Affordable Housing Committee. This past weekend, my son and I went for a ride along West Main Road and we took notes. From the Portsmouth Middletown border near Prescott Farm to the Middletown, Newport border at one Mile Corner is a distance of 3.7 miles. Within those 3.7 miles, there are 13 existing hotels and Inns along the West Main Road corridor. That's 13 in 3.7 miles. Do we really need a fourteenth? Hotels in this area are underutilized during the winter months. I'd hate to see that precious acreage. Sit for nine months or so of the year without having full access for the residents, for something for us there I would be leaning more towards something like an indoor

recreational area that residents would be able to use 'cause we've lost a lot over my lifetime here. We lost the golf range, the mini golf, two bowling alleys, the drive-in movie theater. None of that was replaced. We don't have anything for our kids and families to do. For an example, I use the example of a, maybe a duckpin bowling alley, which is something that the young and the older members of our community would be able to enjoy. Um. Let's see. The new bicycle and the Walking paths on Coddington Highway do link the two mile corner neighborhoods to the development property, but it would dump them into the hotel, which really isn't something that would enrich the lives of our neighborhoods here in Middletown. Again, I would be looking for something more in an indoor recreational facility where for the entire year, our neighborhoods and our families can enjoy something on that property. I also have questions about the Community Center in the pool and the dog park. It sounds like from what I heard earlier that those areas would be restricted for use only by the people who are renting apartments. Again, that cuts a lot of the public off from areas and acreage where we won't wouldn't be able to use those areas. They'd be strictly for the renters. There, the project was referred to being like Garden City in Cranston. If anybody has seen Garden City in Cranston, it is a big box, Super Megastore complex. I don't want to see that in Middletown. It would be turning Middletown into Route Two in the Warwick Baldhill Rd area. I envision something smaller on the scale of Brick Market where you've got smaller shops, smaller walkways, cafe style venues, something that's more in line with a small town. Middletown is a small town, it's not a city like Warwick or Cranston. I also have a map that I printed that shows. The 3.7 mile stretch with all the hotels and I have copies for everybody. If there's a way I could give you these copies. OK. Thank you very much. "Thank you."

Mark Donahue: Hello, my name is Mark Donahue. I live at 600 Green End Ave. I'm a Middletown resident by choice. I spent 30 years in the Navy. Ten of those 30 years were here in Middletown and Newport. And the last assignment kept me here. And I've been here for 12 years since I retired. So. I'm happy to be here. I've been watching this, actually. The first place I ever stayed. The first time the Navy sent me to Newport was the Navy Lodge. I stayed there for a couple weeks while we looked for a place to find, to rent with my young family. It was a lot easier back then. It's a lot harder now. I'm not sure this problem. I'm happy to see something happening on this project, very happy and anything is good, but not anything I wonder about the hotel. My big questions on the hotel are, you know, we throw the Navy out there as the ones pushing for this hotel. I know they just built their hotel and base and they still don't have enough rooms. The per diem rate during this time of year right now is \$117 a night. Are they committed to making per day, per diem rates available in enough rooms in there such that the Navy could utilize them? 'cause, if you're going to charge, I just did a search on hotels.com to see what hotel would cost right now in Middletown, the cheapest hotel in Middletown for tomorrow Night, which is when a lot of families come in for graduations on the Navy base. It's \$139 at the Seaway of Sea Whale Hotel. They probably have about two or three rooms available there. So. We there is no affordable hotels. I worked at the Naval Academy Prep School for the last ten years. Families come in, they can't stay on the island. They can't afford to stay on the island. So they stay in seacock. They stay in Warwick and they come in here. This hotel is not going to solve that problem. I guarantee you they aren't going to be offering rates that would be affordable to these folks. So, then maybe I'm wrong, I hope I am, because otherwise I don't see the role of hotel place there. Um affordable housing, I know that just the generic term affordable housing when we talk workforce, I know the presenters talk about young police officers, young teachers, how about young hospitality workers? We're talking dishwashers, housekeepers in this hotel. Where are they living? You know, they certainly aren't they're not going to fall into the price range that can afford those "affordable" housing, workforce housing. So where do those people live? We are a, ya know, a resort community and folks can't afford to do the work that needs to keep people coming in here. My daughter got married here several years back in October, late October. And I mean, I had to ask my family to come up from Virginia and stay in the hotels we found. The Holiday Inn was the cheapest one that gave us a fairly decent rate. And that worked out. But for the most part, though, hotels were totally unaffordable. And that's late October, so. Other than that, um,

library, we need a library and the library is a Community Center. It should be a place that all the people go, so I know the discussion of what a library should be. If nothing else, it's a place for people to go, a safe place for people to go, a safe space. So keeping that up and I think that's about all I've got to say here. Thank you very much. *“(Paul Croce)Thank you very much.”*

Jennifer Barrera: Hi, good evening. I'm Jennifer Barrera. I live at 59 Beacon St in Middletown, RI, I am a lifelong resident of Middletown and you may know me from the 15 years when I served as the Executive director at Lucy Hearth and I'm now serving as the Chief Strategy Officer for the Rhode Island Coalition and Homelessness. But as a resident, I too share concerns about the terminology of workforce housing. I just want to point out a few things I know we've already talked some numbers. The area median income in Middletown is \$116,000 a year. That's the median. 80 to 120% of the area median income is in fact the range is that the first speaker indicated. So the range is for a one, two or three bedroom range from 55,000 to 114,000, I just want to point out the entry level salary for Middletown police officer and Sean could probably back me up on this is just over 40,000. So none of our actual entry level workforce in Middletown would actually be able to afford to live there. That being said, one of the things that does help develop affordable housing is market rent, housing being built, because when there's more housing, people tend to move up into it and it frees up other units. But I just want to be clear that this is not going to contribute to the 10% of affordable housing that the town needs to meet the threshold. The second point I have is the number of homeless children that are in the Middletown school system is the 4th in the state. So fourth in the State, 107 children. According to kids count, were designated as homeless, according to the McKinney Vento law, meaning they lack a fixed, permanent residence. This is not fully contributed by the children, the school age children that are in Lucy's Hearth. I want to be clear that we are rated the 4th highest number of homeless students in the state. And that is because people can't afford housing in Rhode Island. So those children, that's close to 12% of children in the state of Rhode Island are living in poverty. Those children are in our schools. Those children are accessing health care. Those children are needing emergency responders. All of these things, it's not just children that are homeless, it's children who are accessing all of these other systems within our town and are challenging for our schools and challenging for our health care system and challenging for emergency responders. So I just wanna point out that as a Planning Commission, we have a responsibility, I heard about taxes, but we also have a responsibility for our very low income and vulnerable residents, of which we clearly have a lot. I also want to point out, um this property doesn't actually address the child care spots that are being removed from the Kennedy location, so the early Head Start program and Head Start program, we're going to lose childcare spots. Those are childcare spots for some of the people who are in fact working and can't afford to pay child care at some of the market rent childcare spots. Secondly, there's vast educational opportunities within that Kennedy School for people who are low income, extremely low income. Additionally, the retail, hotel and restaurants that will be added are not places that are going to be paying a housing wage. A housing wage in Rhode Island is \$22.00 an hour. Find me a hotel staff member, restaurant staff member or someone else working in this complex that will be working, making the housing wage, which is \$22.00 an hour. I think it's challenging. I also am concerned as someone who raised children here in Middletown about the fields. That field is used every day for flag football, for basketball, it's just an open space for kids to go and gather and play. So I do want to just make sure I'm not opposing the process. This project to be clear, but we need to address all of these things in order for this amazing project to be in place. We need another space for our kids. We need to address the housing wage, we need to address affordable housing, and there's been a lot of progress with the Affordable Housing Commission, but I just want to be clear workforce housing it is not. And then lastly, you know, I've lived in Rhode Island, I mean, in Middletown for my whole life, this will be the third library that I've accessed in my little, well, probably not little anymore, lifetime. But I just want to be clear that like, in order for us to build buildings, we also have to have a capital plan to keep it up. And so I just want to make sure that that's part of the plan. Thank you. *“(Paul Croce)Thank you.” “(Bill Nash)Thank you.”*

Linda Finn: Hi, good evening. Thank you so much to the developers that have put together this proposal and thank you for your time tonight. This is a very important project for our town and I think my biggest concern with the project is *“(Bill Nash)Excuse me, you need to identify yourself, please.”* Oh, I'm sorry. I'm Linda Finn and I live on Compton view drive. Right, this is not. Made for people in my height. There we go. So my name is Linda Finn. I live on Compton view drive. I guess my biggest concern with the project is if the premise for the property use is to raise taxes, then this is a great plan. But if the premise for the use of a property which is town owned property is too. Serve the citizens of the town and to provide a pound Town Center. I don't see why we would need a hotel on that property and the talk of the bicycles and the, you know, pedestrian access and circulation is great, but it's an island unto itself where I live over Aquidneck Ave. I'm not going to ride my bike over there. There's no way to get over there on my bike, so it's great. It connects it down to Newport, to the bike path and to Newport, and that's great. But it's really not, it's really not connecting to the rest of the community in that sense. So I just. Also think that the library is such a huge part of this parcel and recreation and a sort of a Town Center. We, you know, I've heard them talk about a sense of place. I don't think a sense of place for Middletown is to have Garden City in the middle of it. It doesn't, it doesn't speak to who we are as middle towners. It doesn't speak to the whole community of what we need. And I think just, you know, I think it's just really important that instead of just using buzzwords about what it could be, that we really think about the use of the property. And I also think that. It's not something that I have seen in the comprehensive plan, but a lot has changed in the last couple years. A lot of people have been moving to Middletown because they can live in a wonderful place and work from home, work remotely. And I really think that we could really use this property as a place to have a Community Center and remote working hub for people that come here and they live in their house, they love to be here. But you know they get sick of being in their household for a long time, and so we could provide a place sort of in conjunction with the library to offer something a little bit different. So I just. Also, echo everything that Jennifer said about losing childcare and just the whole, just, you know, saying the word that this is for workforce development. I think we really need to look at the numbers of it and I just am very, very much opposed to putting a hotel on our own town property that doesn't benefit our citizens except for taxes. If that's what the if, that's what the premise is great. We should have a hotel, but I don't, that doesn't benefit me as a Middletown resident, I think there's so many things that we need to develop a Town Center with all the community activities that have been mentioned to have a place for things like that, I think it's much more important than some of the aspects that are in this property. And I do, I do applaud having residential and trying to make it seem more like a village in a community, but it shouldn't just be a village in community pop. You know, among itself, it's really should benefit the whole town. Thank you. *“(Paul Croce)Thank you.”*

Charles Earl: Hello there, Charles Earl at 6 Tony Lynn Terrace. And I just want to say that this is a great start at a concept design for this area. Uh, I think I echo a lot of the points that have already been made. The orientation of the hotel right at that corner, I think that might be better served putting the library in that location. Speaking to the housing situation, I wonder if what we're sort of scratching at is this value of the land and is there? Is there a reason that we're only doing where we have four to five stories is that? Is that what we have three to four stories? Yeah. If we're talking about trying to give something back to the community and if we don't want the hotel, can we go to four to five stories as the land started to get so valuable that we need to look at structured parking. I mean, are we just are we building for what we have right now or are we going to build for the future and I think the future value of land in Middletown, the destination that Middletown represents, is on par with new ports on par with anything in the area and I think if it means that we could get more housing into the project, get rid of the hotel, why not go structured parking, go four to five stories. You can look at the elevation change from Coddington to the north part of the site and it tapers. So there you could stagger that height. The elevation of those buildings and then start to get the massing a little less intense. Like you would have with a hotel right at the high point of the site. So I just wanted to throw those ideas out. Thanks a lot.

“(Paul Croce) Thank you.” “(Bill Nash) Thank you.”

Karen Barbera: Hi. Good evening, Karen Barbera, 36 Wolcott Ave. So one of the things that I'm looking at that I'm very interested in is the stormwater management of the location and there are so many new green stormwater intake aspects out there in, in the world of landscaping. So I would like to make sure that is very front and center. Another thing that I would probably argue with is, and I know this is very cursory landscaping plan, but I don't think it's a great landscaping plan. I would like to see more greenspace. I would like to see pocket parks, which are small, intimate parks where people can go. Maybe you have 12 people sitting in a park. But you can do that by carving out spaces away from parking. So I think those are important. One of the other things just just off the top of my head tonight looking at this space, I would like to see the library and the open space connected rather than have parking all the way around it. And then your parking, you're walking from the library. You want to go over to the open space, you have to walk through a parking lot that's a little bit dangerous. In my in my especially if you have a small child with you or several small children. The bandshell I think it's facing the wrong direction. It's facing West. So if you were sitting watching a show at sunset or approaching sunset, you'd be looking right into the. To the sunset. You know, bright sunset. So I'm also concerned about the lighting. I realized we use well, there's a new ordinance in town having to do with night Sky compliance, but I would like to make sure that this is not a greatly over lit space. So those are just some of my quick views on and I and I really hope you do consult the Tree Commission as far as the landscaping on this so that we don't see a monoculture of trees lining the street. So thank you.

Paul Croce: Thank you. The Tree Commission will be included. So will the conservation. Permission so the water circumstances will be addressed as well.

Joe Pratt: Meaning I'm Joe Pratt. I'm the chairman of the Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce. Want to thank you for the time you're providing us and for your service to the community. We've submitted a letter of support for this project for this conceptual project from the Chamber. So I'm here representing the Chamber, and I'll just, if you don't mind, hit a couple of the highlights. The letter. Rather than read the whole thing, we wrote our letter in support of the project, the conceptual plan for the redevelopment of this property. The Greater Newport Chamber is one of the states largest business advocacy organizations. We are a trusted and reliable institution in the community for more than 100 years. We're a vibrant, collective body of regional business members with about 1000 members on an annual basis representing about 50,000 employees. We work to create valuable strategic partnerships, promote strong economic growth, diversity and prosperity to not only serve our Members, but the Community. We've been so supportive of the town's efforts to seek interest from developers to present ideas and concepts for the use of this property for a number of years. We believe the redevelopment of this area will be an economic engine for the town. We believe it has the potential to significantly revitalize the area and impact the broader economy on multiple fronts. A couple of points that have been mentioned repeatedly, workforce housing is something we pay an awful lot of attention to at the Chamber. We're concerned about it. It's desperately needed on Aquidneck Island to meet the needs of our labor market. To offer affordable housing stock for families and individuals at all income levels and to enable locals to remain in their communities by increasing inventory. In terms of the hotel, now we believe the rising costs of hotel rooms, the high occupancy rates, the increased demand for Air B&Bs indicates that the market is in need of additional hotel rooms and particularly to serve the Navy community the military community here on the island, and their need for extended stay rooms, we believe it's very important. We believe this concept will have the ability to transform the property into a vibrant, attractive and pedestrian friendly community. We, we believe we've looked at the developers history, they spent decades developing quality projects and they've shown a commitment to the community. We also believe this proposal has met the goals that have been outlined by the town for potential development. So we ask you to consider this proposal again. Appreciate your time and the opportunity to share our thoughts. *“(Paul Croce) Thank you.”*

Allen Bradley: How you doing today? My name is Allen Bradley and I used to work in the Navy housing over in the Anchorage area. All I wanna know is, what is it we're actually going to see in these buildings that are going to be designed and we're going to see a concept of, now, the anchorage housing has small units. You're proposing 2 bedroom, 3 bedroom, 4 bedroom. Are we going to be seeing something or what is going to be coming of those? How are we going to be seeing the actual amount of production, money that's gonna be coming from these actual buildings? I mean, we got the ones over at the Landings over there, says he has those. Those are going for like a month right now. They're like \$1800 for a two bedroom unit. Now, how do we know? We got three years down the road, this may happen. How do we know what the pricing of these are going to come up when it comes up to the extra finish on these? And so that's all I'm going to ask tonight. Thank you. *"(Paul Croce)Thank you."*

Chuck Allet: Mr. Chairman, members of the Planning Board, my name is Chuck Allet. I am the executive director of the Aquidneck Land Trust. I live at 11 Whitwell Avenue in Newport. We have submitted a letter in support of this development and I do that on behalf of my Board of trustees. We have discussed this. In 2019, the Land Trust did a build out analysis that essentially provides within 30 years all of the. Open space that isn't otherwise constrained is going to either be developed, or we're gonna have conserved it, but it's not going to be available in 30 years. And, so, with that in mind, two recommendations came out of that report, one is we need to conserve more open space. But the second is that we have to change our land use patterns on the island. We have to do more innovative mixed-use, higher density development, which takes pressure off our open space lands, and so we are very much in support of this type of mixed-use affordable housing, higher density development conceptually. I mean clearly we need to see more details on this project before we can, you know, finalize it. Uh uh. Feeling that it meets all the requirements, but conceptually we think this is exactly the kind of thing that the town of Middletown and the other communities on this island need to be doing to take the pressure off the farmland so that it can be protected. So when we look at open space, we shouldn't just be looking at the open space being provided in this development because this development is taking the pressure off the other open space in our community. So we think it is very important for this board and the town to be looking at this kind of development proposal and we are very much in support of that. Thank you. *"(Paul Croce)Thank you." "(Bill Nash)Thank you."*

Carol Ann O'Connell: So I may have to put this up. My name is Carol Ann O'Connell, and I live off of West Main Road in Middletown. I have worked 40 years with the elderly. I have two degrees in health. Psychology and other and I find Middletown to be. A great need for those that are elderly, we don't need 2/3 level apartments. We need a ground floor where the elderly can go out their front door and go out their back door with a piece of land that they could sit at with family or friends or on their own. We don't need three levels, we need one. We have now a great need of elderly that live in Middletown. And we don't have that, there's just very few buildings or apartments that have one floor where they can go in and out. OK. I can understand one building to be used if you want to do first floor, second floor or third floor 1. But the rest should be looked at for elderly that live in Middletown because we have a great amount. That's number one. Number two, I completely disagree with the fact of having another hotel as the woman here mentioned with her son, and she was quite well written of what she said. We have eight different hotels or motels. We certainly don't need another one. That's a massive size obstructing that particular area. That's number 2, #3 as far as retail shops are concerned there, there's nothing to say that they're going to last like that in the Newport area alone, which is very close to Middletown. They have the shops that come and go, come and go, come and go for retail shops to be there, I don't approve of that either. As far as our library is concerned, I've been going in there for 45 years. Do we need a new one? Yes. Do we need to make it smaller? No, that's small enough as it is. That's the other, other, but other thought that I had. Restaurants we don't need anymore of those either, we have plenty of them here and it's congested with them. We need this space to do something for our children, OK, that are in need of doing something 'cause we have nothing here for them. That's the next

thing. That's all I have to say, but we need to consider the elderly that live here on the island and in Middletown. Thank you. *“(Paul Croce)Thank you.”*

Lori Bradley: Hi, my name is Lori Bradley. I live at 4 Barton Lane and... *“(Paul Croce) Move closer to the microphone please.”* OK, I echoed some of the sentiments already said by some other residents tonight about the loss of recreation at the ball fields to our youth here and also the loss of the educational services that are provided at JF Kennedy School. Both the head start and the adult educational services that provide vital training for our adults here. And I would also like to ask about the impacts that this large development would have on our sewer and water capacities here in Middletown. You know, we are talking about this development as well as a couple of other large developments along West Main Road, and I would imagine that we would have to significantly upgrade our capacities to account for this and I am wondering, you know, we're talking about the tax money that will be gained by this development, but I am wondering about the cost to residents for upgrading our sewer and water capacities here and how that's going to affect them financially. Thank you. *“(Paul Croce)Thank you.”*
“(Bill Nash)Thank you.”

Lori Verderosa: Good evening. My name is Lori Verderosa, 426 Third Beach Rd. I speak as a resident to you tonight and also as the director of the Middletown Prevention Coalition. I've heard it mentioned a couple of times already this evening about a Community Center. We do not have a Community Center. As an individual, in my professional role offering health and Wellness activities to all segments of our population youth, primarily I can't begin to tell you how many times we try to offer workshops or activities and there's not space. The schools are booked, there's after school programs, there's other things going on sports. We are in sore need of a Community Center here in town, so I would hope that you would consider adding that to this plan. Thank you. *“(Paul / Bill)Thank you, Lori.”*

Lee Fenton: Hi, I'm Lee Ferrara Fenton, 53 Berkeley Ave. Two, you know several things. Once when you have two and three bedrooms, your family families are coming in. So that means the increase in the school population. Along with that. Someone had mentioned the homeless, how Rhode Island counts the homeless. Is that you have one family per house. If there's two or three families that are living together in that home, the second and third families are considered homeless for the school population. And so we have that. Next, what I would like to do is could we put the library and maybe add a STEM center to it, but also this playground or this recreation area could we get that closer to the library so our town children could also? Come home from the library and play right there along with the residents that are at this center. For the traffic study, I hope that someone is looking in the evening. At the Kennedy School, we have a high school robotics team there and the traffic, the trucks, the rescue trucks as far away as far as Bristol they are coming through continuously. And then are we going to have solar panels on these units to help out? Thank you. *“(Paul Croce) Thank you.”*

Michael & Deborah Murphy: My name is Michael Murphy, this is Deborah Murphy, we live at 102 Ridgewood Rd. Before we begin, I just want to thank you all, every all the Members and you people in the place. Obviously, when we received the newsletter with this, it raised a lot of questions. Many of them were answered tonight. I'd like to address a few things. First of all, the lady, the first lady you spoke saying how she went up the road and counted 13 hotels. My wife and I did that yesterday, actually, and we, but we kind of expanded beyond West Bend Road and in the town of Middletown. And within a half a mile of this projected hotel, we have 22 hotels or Inns now and I don't even know how many Airbnbs there may be. I mean that that's an awful lot. You know, I wanna get off track just a little bit. Bear with me. You know, I listen to the radio all the time and I hear Langley, Toyota Newport. But it's Middletown. OK. Middletown is not a destination. The destination is Newport. And we're taking some of the precious open space that we have in this town, and we're going to put another hotel on it. We're going to take a library, which we just recently not too long ago. Put a lot of money in. We expanded it. Obviously it wasn't enough. OK, so we're going to spend it. But now we want to raise it and move it to make. That does not make sense to me that I'm sorry that makes zero sense for my upstairs window, I

can look across the road and I can see. People playing rugby, soccer, softball, basketball. Families having picnics. I don't know what the price of that is. I don't know what the value of that is, but I say it's high. I say it's higher than whatever is coming in with this hotel. I'm also concerned about... *"(Paul Croce) Speak into the microphone, please."* I'm sorry. I'm Deborah Murphy and we've been at this House in this neighborhood, and I guess it's the east side. I'm across the street from this proposed development. So we're across the street behind the restaurants. And been there for 36 years and that field has always been for community use that as long as I've known, I don't know why we can't. Use what I'm concerned about the retail space is that like someone else mentioned, these retails may close and you're talking about foot traffic and where, I mean, we can't cross that road safely. I know someone mentioned that. The traffic is horrible. You also have in this plan something for two drive-thru restaurants. So the drive-thru restaurants I don't know where they're going to be, but if it's supposed to be pedestrian friendly, then why would you have a drive-thru rest, two drive-thru restaurants in that proposal address traffic. Alright, I would like to address the traffic just real briefly. A few years ago, we were coming to all the meetings that we're having about the roundabouts. They wanted to put a Figure 8 roundabout on the two mile to Coddington intersections which got shut down eventually. Thank God. We look at this now. Mr Fenton, we were speaking with your wife earlier and she was saying how she likes to cut through our neighborhood. OK. And I don't blame them. OK. But she likes to cut through our neighborhood because the traffic already is so bad. OK, well, traffic is only going to get worse. Just a quick calculation, OK. You're going to put 144 rooms, 150 apt houses. OK, that's 300 plus cars a day through the intersection and in addition. Plus now you're going to put what? Another Burger King, McDonald's, Chick-fil-A, whatever drive-thru places and other types of retail. So how many more cars is that in that intersection daily? I say it could be up to four, five, 600. I don't know if you have the exact number. I believe there was a study. A number of years ago by the Newport Daily News in the state of Rhode Island, where they were saying there was like around 20,000 cars a day through the intersection there. And maybe I'm wrong and remembering that, but that kind of sticks with me. That's what that's an awful lot of cars through that area. And I know we're probably getting close to our five minutes, but I am concerned about the adult learning. I think that's important and the open space is important and I hate seeing vacant buildings in Middletown on West Main Road already east side Marios or and Ruby Tuesdays. That building has been. I mean, so I hate to see these buildings being built and then 2-3 years later they just leave because they can't get help or whatever. But then one other thing last and certainly not least, there's a real problem with watershed, the drainage coming from West Main Road into the adjoining neighborhoods is awful. We have rivers that literally run through our yard there. The people that are in the neighborhood behind us get flooded out. They really have a lot of problems with that and I'm not sure that this is something that if this should ever go through that, we really have to look at the drainage problem within the town. Also the cutting through if this goes through more and more people are going to be coming through a very residential neighborhood with a lot of children and we're going to have speed bumps, people the, the speed limit on my street is 15 miles an hour. If you if somebody is going less than 30, I'm really happy. The fact is people, people drive 40 miles an hour down our road.

Paul Croce: Thank you. I want to point out we gave you extra time 'cause there were two of you.

Antone Viveiros: Antone Viveiros 45 Bayview Park, Middletown. This project was to go will certainly change the face of Middletown. And in the development, there's 673 parking spaces now. Can you imagine just half of those people trying to get out in the afternoon? You're looking at 336 cars. I don't care how you synchronize those lights, there's no room. I just wanted to address one thing Mr. Nash said, he proposed a fire sub-station. Well, when Mr. Kempenaar gave his property to the town behind Shaw's, that came up. It was estimated that you would need 8 new firemen to man that station. Shortly after that, the chief retired and he said you're looking at 24, eight per shift. So I prefer, that you know, I mean the main fire station. How long is it going to take with the lights and the sirens going for them to come from Wyatt Road down to Coddington? I don't think it'd be you know that long. Another thing

would be with a four story hotel, with the present ladder truck, will it be able to reach the 4th floor? If not, we've got to buy a new one. And if that was the case, because this project was the goal, I'd like the developers to absorb half of the, at least half of the cost that have been put on our of taxpayers and then things that were mentioned today, where would our children play if that field was taken away. We've got the soccer fields, and then what? So I would urge the Committee to look at this very closely and rather than looking at the \$1,000,000 that the Town's going to get. I have to ask the question, is it worth it to the citizens of this town and the children? Thank you. *"(Paul Croce) Thank you."*

Kim Blass: Hi, Kim Blass 111 Compton View drive. I just have, I agree with everybody about the hotel. I don't think the hotel needs to be there. If you look at the hotel, it looks like a duplicate of what's across the street next to Applebee's. So I don't think that's an appropriate place for a hotel. And if it's accommodating the Navy, we, the community, shouldn't have to accommodate the Navy for a hotel. The Navy has plenty of room on the base. They can build another hotel. They can afford it. The rest of it, needs to be tweaked. A Community Center I agree with. I also agree with the new library. I think that would be great and that's a perfect spot where the hotel would be now. Also the traffic they say, Oh yeah, we're going to do traffic. You know, studies and we'll get to it, but the traffic there and everybody knows West Main Road, the traffic is just unbelievable and nobody is doing anything about it. Now you're going to put 144 rooms, you're going to put 150 in the housing. Those all have cars. Nobody mentioned if you're going to have a hotel, you're going to have restaurants, you're going to have to have people coming in with trucks delivering. So you have trucks and buses going in and out of that community. And I always thought when I heard what they were going to do with this land was for the community and looking at this. Tonight does not look like it's for the community, and I know it needs a lot of tweaking and I accommodate all of you for, you know, doing this and coming up with a solution for us at in Middletown. Thank you.

Paul Croce: Thank you. There anyone else who would like to speak?

Ron Wolanski: Mr. President, we had some folks online, at least one that would like to speak, and anyone who is online that would wish to speak, please raise your hand. First one is Michael.

Michael Cunningham: Hello, can you hear me? *"(Paul Croce) Yes."* It's Michael Cunningham, 21 Allston Ave. It's been a great meeting. I'm very, very much in favor of something on that property, on something along the lines of what we're seeing make sense. I think all the residents' comments so far have been spot on. I'm not necessarily against the hotel, but I understand the arguments on you know a lot. A lot of what's been said I won't repeat, I will say, as far as the economic impact, I spent many years working for Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation. I'm doing several developments myself, though not residential. And what I've always noticed is that you know, we always talk about the net. We always talk about the you know, the impact is 1,000,000, a lot of residents and some of the members of the planning Board have have mentioned the the aspect of what's the net, you know what is the impact to schools, what's the impact of water and on in this process as we go forward. On we just have to remember that, like, what's this going to? Who's moving in and what's that going to cost our community long term as far as the traffic? All of us recognize that the state of Rhode Island does a lousy, lousy, lousy job with their traffic studies. Look at all the development in the last 15 years in the island and on the state roads. They never get it right. I've literally talked to them and asked if they've done, you know? Well, we did it. We did a pedestrian study, but we didn't do a vehicle study. We do vehicle study but we didn't do a pedestrian study or well we did it and it's fine and all you have to do is look at the project. So all that leaves a lot to be desired with the state of Rhode Island having said that. On I think we need it now. We need a center turn lane on that road and we have for a long time and looking at the plans as they set forth, I would get rid of the bike path on West Main Road. That really is a path to nowhere. I would move that just to the property. You know, I think it's great to connect the property, the bike path that exists, but just stop it at Coddington. Move the use some of that land and First off extend the the right hand turn and Cotting team, which I think overtime with this bridge re connection we're gonna

need more right hand turn space and then and then allow for a Senate turn lane which the stage out regardless of this property on and then I absolutely looked at some designs. Absolutely could make a pool, one mile bury the utilities, you know, do a pedestrian bridge, you know, with the gateway to Middletown right over the top. There are some designs that work. The problem is a ADA and the ramps on the left and the right side. How do you get people up on and then on and then some sort of block grant availability coordinated with the town and the state for the businesses on the right hand on the east side of the road that desperately needs some economic development. And this would be great for them if we connect it with a bridge. I think pedestrians across West Main nonstarter. There's no way that doesn't even make the current situation worse on and, but, but the idea of finally, I mean I've and I've been on, I'm sorry, 21 Allston Ave. I've been in this town for 50 years and have any of those seen much of a change? My parents used to own Mr Sparkle car wash. The bagpiper was there and the rest of those buildings. You are essentially just reuses of the same thing that's been there. Finally, as far as traffic, there's 1, 2 and three Harbor Village. That building at the intersection of Valley Rd. If there's enough land. Right now in front of it, that would be fine, but I think that reclamation of that building is necessary to align that property at that intersection to get in. I just don't know if there's enough before the building, but that would solve the problem as far as you know the in and outs with the people that want to go north out of that property. And then, I think that's about it today. I think in general it's great that we're doing something, but we certainly are at the beginning of the concept. Thank you.

Paul Croce: Thank you. Anyone else Ron? No. For anyone else here, please.

Sarah Gauch: Sarah Gauch, 18 Donald Dr Middletown, RI, and the chair of the Library Board of trustees. I initially came to talk and address the library. Several things have been said. I think they're wonderful things. Little background for those who may not have lived here that long. Our library started out as a daycare center and was a Quonset Hut. We built the library around it and our building is sinking, our floors are cracking, we need a new library, no question about it. However, we currently have 14,000 square feet. Not the 10,000 square feet that we've been given and that's very disappointing because you kind of had the impression, my own impression of fact, is the fact that, you know, you built the \$1,000,000 mansion and then you remembered you had to have a shed for your bicycles for your kids. So a bone was thrown, so we got this 10,000 square feet. So I just asked the committee to make sure you reconsider that. The other concern I had had to do with the. Several things I heard tonight. About the location of the library, I'm looking at residential housing in front of it on this plan that you have. And I don't think I'd ever want to be in a residential housing on West Main Road that close to the road because the noise of the traffic. And yet we're stuck in the back. That's another issue. The other thing too, I have 8 grandchildren and many of them are playing soccer and they're playing baseball and there's no indoor location for anything on this island, and that is the nature of what's happening all around us they've got Longplex in the Tiverton/Fall River area, you've got Somerset, you've got the concept Warwick. That's the direction of the future for our children. A lot of indoor activities to keep them occupied in the middle of winter. So that's another thing I think you should consider. A hotel, I heard those mentioned if you counted the banks one of the drive through might be a bank. Do we need another bank? We start on East Main, Bank America, we got a bank down there by the BJ's, we've got two banks opposite one another, pretty much another one, Chase, just getting ready to open at two mile corner. We've got bank Newport. Do you see where I'm going here? Do we need another drive-thru bank? I don't think so. There it's worth developing this land. No question about it. Another concern I might have is the building is sinking for us because of the way of the books. Is this there, or has there been a geological study done relative to the underground area? Are there springs running through the areas and porous those kinds of things right? Those are things I think you need to think of, so with adjustments. Let's develop the land. Thank you. *“(Paul Croce) Thank you.”*

Alex Scofield: Hi, I'm Alex Scofield. I live on Maple Ave, just up the street and I was just looking at the square footage of the hotel and I had something I wanted to bring up. It's 22,000 square foot per

story times four stories divided by 144 rooms. That only leaves each room at around 600 square feet. That's no hallways. No, no amenities. So all of these rooms are modest, and if you do have apartment style rooms, that means the remaining rooms are even smaller. These aren't luxury hotel rooms, this hotel doesn't seem to have any character or anything interesting about it. It doesn't have an event hall. You know, if weddings are booked Friday, Saturday, Sunday and we're just gonna put 140 empty tiny rooms here. Why not put a wedding hall or something more interesting? I just, I wish the hotel at least had some character. And it wasn't just a big empty box again. Thank you.

Paul Croce: Thank you. You. Anyone else wish to speak? Anyone else online Ron?

Dorothea Bantal: Dorothea Bantal or 92 Blvd. I'm also the president of the Friends of the Middletown Library and I did submit something but I did want to thank everybody for making their comments about the library and it makes me very happy that there are so many people that are very interested in it. As Sally said, the current library is much larger than the library plant, the library planned spaces. We do need something bigger and better, and I've noticed that a lot of people have said things about a Community Center. Well, the 21st century library is very much a Community Center. And I am also a retired librarian. I worked in Tiverton and they bought, built a beautiful library. I think that's about 24,000 square feet, but the things that they could put in it are what we need. And I'd like everyone to think about looking at that library. Thank you.

Paul Croce: Thank you. Oh yeah, OK. I might have been coming up to the mic.

Deborah Murphy: Hi I'm Debbie Murphy again. I, just one more thing. Speaking about grandchildren, and we have two young grandchildren and we took them to Linden Park and Linden Park needs a lot of work, so I would ask the planning committee to think about our young children and playgrounds that are really, really nice for them and good for them to be out there. And an example would be the Wickford playground off anyone's ever been there. It's state of the art. It's absolutely gorgeous. The kids love it. They would rather do that than watch TV. I mean, they absolutely love it. So maybe we could think about something like that as well.

Paul Croce: Thank you. Anyone else?

Gerard Galvin: Wrap up I wanted to address one particular comment related to. The per diem granted by the Navy for stays in hotels and the partners who are involved with the current hotels that exist. They currently do accept the per diem year round off season and in season And they would maintain that policy with this new hotel as well. There's just one specific point I wanted to address. The other points I want to make are a little more general in nature and I want to express and promise that we will we, we've heard all these comments as you have tonight. We will be discussing them, we respect them, we understand them. And I'll hearken back to something member Owen said, which is change is hard. We understand that. There were a lot of questions raised tonight about water runoff, traffic engineering. We know all of those things have to be addressed, but we will not get to that point of answering those questions unless we move forward from here and find what I think are very clear consistencies with the comp plan and that that brings me to sort of a final point. Many individuals have expressed their voice tonight but the town's collective voice is also expressed. And Paige Bronx spoke to it earlier in the comp plan in the zoning code that's been amended to call for mixed-use. And maybe most importantly, in the request for proposal, authorized by the town council that we responded to and that we were chosen from. So, those are also expressions of what the town wants to see happen here. And I think Mr. Bronx spoke pretty clearly about how we are consistent with the comp plan. So we hope we get a recommendation from you to the town council that you find we are consistent with it. We know that there's a tremendous amount of work that will be done. We'll consider all of these comments at any comments that you have as you consider this. And so I just wanted to wrap up with those comments. *“(Paul Croce) Thank you.”* Thank you.

Ron Wolanski: Mr. Chairman, we have one person Online with his hand raised. I believe it's Mr Bagwell. John, if that's you online, you need to unmute yourself.

Paul Croce: John, if you can hear, you have to unmute yourself. There you go.

John Bagwill: Have I unmuted now or not? *“(Paul Croce) Yes you have. We can hear you.* The Town went out and asked for outside groups to submit a proposal. And pretty clearly they're not doing this, but they have put together, you got one proposal and it's a proposal designed to, because this was a comp plan designed to make money for the developer. And I think to the extent you for example, open provide more open space, eliminate the hotel, basically what you've done is created a concept that might be, meet some of the comments tonight, but will not provide the revenue or a profit for the developer. So that's the town's problem. But so how do we, and I got one approach and that is that \$1,000,000 a year they may come in in additional revenue, perhaps the planning board can figure out where it can direct that money to some of the other open space in town that would replace some of the recreational opportunities that are now available in this space. But I think it's, I don't think you're going to find a developer that will come in and meet somebody, the observations and some of the comments tonight, without, I think they'll find themselves unable to make the kind of profit that will encourage them to go ahead with this development. So anyway, that's my comment.

Paul Croce: Thank you, John. Do we have anyone else who wished to speak? Anyone here? OK, so our job then is to make a recommendation to the town council. Not only on this project in general, but any specific recommendations that the planning board wishes to make. On this proposal going forward, so my question is...

Art Weber: I think we also have to certify based on what we've heard tonight is consistent with the comp plan, right?

Paul Croce: Yes. So my question is, are you prepared to do that this evening or would you like some time to think about all of the comments that we heard before we put our recommendations together?

Art Weber: Well, I think we need to do something tonight, but I do think that the Council needs to get a list of everything that we've heard tonight. *“(Paul Croce) Yeah.”* And I don't know if that's been captured, but I think when we make our recommendation on this, we need to include those comments because the Council needs to understand the concerns of citizens that came out here tonight and on the computer.

Paul Croce: My question was going to be can we, is it possible for us to get a transcript of this meeting? And do it in a timely way so that by the next meeting we could make recommendations.

Ron Wolanski: Well, a transcript means having a stenographer view the video.

Paul Croce: Well, something that captures all of the comments we heard tonight.

Bill Nash: Well, let me make it a little easier maybe. So. Look at. There's an awful lot of information here, and I don't want to be the one to delay this any further. It's been 20 years, right? Um, but. You know, there's a lot of good comments that came from the public tonight, some good comments I think from this board developers are sitting there and they've heard much of it. I would prefer to have them. Take those comments and spit out something else in short order, as short as they can do it, I don't. Feel 100% comfortable to make a determination in the comp plan tonight without seeing one more, one more conceptual plan. That's just my opinion, but that's where, that's where I fall.

Paul Croce: Make it brief please.

Jim Karam: I just want you, the committee to know, on behalf of the developers, we listened very, very

hard this evening. I took notes on and will be happy to share the notes. There were many wonderful and good ideas. Some of them we will be able to incorporate and some of them we won't. But I want to echo what the last person said who is online. This development could never pay for every one of the ideas that we were given tonight. I just want that to be a reality. What I think this development will do will be a first step in paying for many of those developments, including traffic, traffic improvements and things of that nature. So I'm happy to share our notes with your notes and delivery.

Paul Croce: I don't think we need your notes. If we can get a transcript of the meeting, I would like to point out that this is the Planning Board's only opportunity to make recommendations to the Council before they go forward with this. It'll come back to us, but at that point, you know, it's a done deal as far as concept is concerned. So I would like to get something that reflects the comments from tonight distributed to the planning board, let us look at it and maybe prepare recommendations to the Council at the next meeting. *"(Ron Wolanski) That's fine."* By the way, this is, it has been a long process. You've waited a long time, but we're talking one month. So that we can make knowledgeable recommendations to the town council.

Ron Wolanski: Were you suggesting to have it on the next regular planning board agenda? *"(Paul Croce) Yeah."* May 11th. *"(Bill Nash) Yes."*

Art Weber: I think we need to do two things. We need to separate out the comprehensive plan. Number one for his consistency and I think that Mr Bronk, a magnificent job of putting that together for us and making sense where this plan gems with what we've written in our comprehensive plan, number one. But separately are the individual comments from everybody here, come, a lot of the comments that are made by a lot of you have nothing to do with the comp plan, but they are relevant concerns. I think we need to have a separate vote on the comprehensive plan and then perhaps we need to get going on the, how to forward the comments of concern from our citizens to the Council.

Peter Regan: Just to follow up on that. The Council will be holding another session just like this, another session, the purpose of which is to solicit input from the public. So I think one of the things Council is looking for from the Planning Board is the recommendation in terms of consistency with the comp plan, but also any specific recommendations that you have regarding the concept plan after hearing from the public, because the comments that were filed prior to this evening the Council will have access to the comments that were made tonight the Council will have access to, but they're also interested in your distillation of those comments and your suggestions.

Paul Croce: My concern is not with consistency with the comp plan, and I think a mixed-use development of this space is compatible with the comp plan. My concern are the details, the specifics and that's what I would like to see captured so that we can review them carefully before we make our recommendation. *"(Bill Nash) I agree."* John.

John Ciummo: Paul, I agree, we heard some prudent and powerful testimony tonight from Middletown residents. Very eloquent people that care about this town and I made a list of the hotel, crossing Community Center, library, stormwater, lighting, traffic study, playing fields or those are important issues to the citizens of this town and I certainly believe it falls in within the confines of plan, but these are major questions we have to sort out before we move on.

Bill Nash: I mean, it's been, it's been 20 years, right. And and here we are being put respectfully asked to make a recommendation after three hours of 2 1/2 hours of. Doing so I think that's a lot to ask. You know, I I'm not 100% convinced. I I'd like, and I'd like another couple of weeks. I'm even willing to come back doing a special meeting if need be.

Paul Croce: If, especially if the board would prefer a special meeting, I'm open to that as well. But I do think we need to see these comments and mull them over before we put our recommendations

together. *“(Art Weber) Can I add another comment?”* Yes, please go ahead.

Art Weber: I think it's important to go through one other thing, and I, it may be confusing to you, but it's not for us. Once this thing is, goes to the Council and the Council says it's OK, then a formal application has to be made by the developers at that point this board will go through this plan again, in three phases. The first one, which doesn't make any sense to you or me it's master plan approval. You would think master plan approval meant the world is perfect and let's go. No. It goes back to the conceptual idea that the developers have provided, OK. If it passes muster there, it gets more difficult and complicated because they have to come up with a preliminary plan, which includes everything you think that's important for engineering and traffic and all the lot of the little things we've talked about tonight are put in that preliminary plan. OK, maybe they pass muster, maybe they don't. The Towns Technical Review Committee also gets a look in between our analysis, these are the professionals in our town, the public works, and the engineers and everything else. So if it clears master plan and preliminary plan, then it goes to final plan. Final plan is what? If it's approved, will be done on that property. So we're a long way from saying this is a green light to go. We're debating what's going to go to the Council right now and then you're going to have a complete development review from this Planning Board and those three phases I just discussed. So it's going to be analyzed exactly the way it should be in a professional manner that we have. We do this all the time, so there's a long, long way to go. That's what I'm saying with a lot of eyeballs and examination and evaluation.

Paul Croce: Thanks, Art. That's a good summary. Any other comments? So let me know how the board feels in terms of receiving comments and would you prefer to do it at the next meeting or would you want to have a special meeting?

John Ciummo: I don't mind having a special meeting.

Paul Croce: We would at the next regular meeting.

John Ciummo: I don't mind having the special meeting.

Bill Nash: I wouldn't mind if we can fit it into the schedule. Sure.

Paul Croce: So why don't we do a poll to find a date for the special meeting? And get out some list of the comments as quickly as possible.

Ron Wolanski: I'm going to investigate the transcript options. So we'll figure that out one way or the other. You certainly have all the written comments that have been submitted today. And of course, folks can continue to submit written comments through the online survey or the paper form and those would be continually distributed to the board. So we'll figure out the best way to make sure we capture everything that was heard tonight.

Paul Croce: Yeah, 'cause, there are a lot of good comments made tonight that we need to see.

Art Weber: I have a question. Should we determine tonight, even though we're going to have another additional meeting to cover another portion of this, should we decide tonight whether we are in agreement that this is consistent with the comp plan?

Paul Croce: Yes or no? What's the sense of the board? How do you feel, deal with that?

Comments, Joe.

Joe Pierik: I think we should, I follow Art's direction on that.

Bill Nash: So. Yeah, I mean, I would, I would be OK with. I would say generally consistent with the comp plan if we can use language to that effect generally consistent, I would be comfortable with that. But I

wanna, I want, I'd like to ask the developers collectively, is there anything you've not to put, I guess I'll put you on the spot. Is there anything that you've heard here tonight that may cause you to, I mean radically or not maybe not even radically, but there is there anything that stands out that something that you may point to. I mean, the hotel was discussed an awful lot. You know, I'm not suggesting you eliminate that and come back to us, but is there anything that you heard tonight that may cause you to? Modify this in a way that is going to. In any, in any capacity that might,

Paul Croce: This is the plan they've brought before us. This is the one where..

Bill Nash: I just want to. I just like to see if we want to share that...

Paul Croce: We have to make recommendations on this plan.

Bill Nash: I understand. I just figured if they, if they're willing to answer that, then I I'd like to hear. Jim.

Jim Karam: Look at our Hampton Inns. For the Hampton Inn hotels like, as Joe knows hotels, chains like prototypes, they want every hotel to look alike. That Hampton Inn doesn't look like any Hampton Inn in America. That was done in conjunction with the town of Middletown because we were in a historic district and they wanted it to look more appropriate to Newport and Middletown and Portsmouth and that's the design they came up with, we got that approved by Hilton and that's what we built. So in the same thing with the Homewood suites across the way, so will we, we work in this day.

Bill Nash: My question was, my question is more this plan is the one that you intend on bringing to the Council?

Paul Croce: No, this is this is the plan that's in front of us now.

Peter Regan: I'm going to interrupt just for a moment. Mr. Galvin said that they had listened to the comments they were going to take it, those comments, into consideration, so I don't know that it's appropriate to set, to ask them right at this moment, are you going to make any changes to the plan? At you know when they haven't had the time to digest those.

Paul Croce: Not only that, we have to make recommendations to the Council as to what we think about the incident.

Peter Regan: They were going to, that they'd listen to those plans and taking notes and they were going to take them into consideration.

Gerard Galvin: Well, if I but I think the district Mr. Nash's point my sense from my work with this team is that this plan, you know, substantially is going to be the substance of these elements, the hotel, the retail and the apartments. Those are elements that *"(Bill Nash) community space"* the open space. *"(Bill Nash) Community space."* the community space, correct. We have listened to these and there are elements of those concerns raised tonight that we will certainly discuss and try to incorporate or address. But in terms of, you know, elimination of the hotel or drastic reduction of that, I think those would be a non-starter for the development team. *"(Bill Nash) That's fair."* If it can't happen without these elements, insubstantially, the size and format that they exist. I, we would appreciate a iteration of general consistency with the comp plan tonight, which would allow us I think, to start planning and thinking about how do we incorporate some of these things. How do we present to the Council? How do we address some of these things? *"(Bill Nash) Understood"* With that initial hurdle having been crossed.

Bill Nash: Yeah, that's fine. That's what I was looking for.

Paul Croce: Thank you, Mr Galvin, I would like to understand, based on the comment you just made, eliminating the hotel is a nonstarter. Is that correct?

Gerard Galvin: I'd have to say, you know, certainly we'll talk about it, but I think this team has come together with expertise in these three areas trying to answer the request for proposal. And this is what they were able to put together to make it work, that for them, while addressing the many needs that they could link to in the comp plan. And so...

Paul Croce: You haven't said that the hotel is a nonstarter.

Gerard Galvin: Well, again, so that question was asked two minutes ago and my perception working with my clients so far is that yes, that would be a non-starter. That this team in this project could not advance without that being part of this proposal.

Paul Croce: I just wanted to get that on the record. Thank you. I Before we take a vote on consistency with the comp plan, I have a question. If we were to vote this evening on the consistency of this proposal with the comp plan. Does that in any way restrict us with any recommendations we would make to the town council.

Peter Regan: No. No and just so you understand this, this process, you know, the town is entered into an agreement with this development team, whereby we've agreed to work with them and nobody else for a certain period of time till we either reach agreement on a development going forward or we decide that we can't reach agreement on that. And so, this is just part of that process to solicit input from the public as well as recommendations from this Board that will then go to the Council and the Council will do this all over again with, and review any revisions that the development team may make in the plan as a result of what happened this evening and as a result of your recommendations, yes.

Paul Croce: It is just and just for clarity, if we were to vote on consistency of this proposal with the comp plan, what we are essentially saying as is that the concept of a mixed-use development of this space that includes residential, commercial and community space, is compatible with the comp plan? It says nothing about the details within the plan. Is that correct?

Peter Regan: You're saying whether this plan is generally compatible with the comprehensive plan *“(Paul Croce) Yes.”* that the plan that's been presented to you this evening? *“(Paul Croce) Yes.”* And then with the idea that you are going to at the next meeting to give any specific recommendations *“(Paul Croce) Yes.”* that you have with regard to the details of the plan.

Paul Croce: OK, I just wanted to make that clear to the members of the Board and the members of the public.

Bill Nash: Can I capture that in a motion what Peter just said? Both concepts general consistency and further recommendations. I'm good with that.

Paul Croce: BJ you have a comment?

BJ: I believe in the general consistency of this. I do have my personal views and I think that others of the committee might have it also about the details and it's the details that we've become hung up on. And we haven't seen the, what is it, the forest for all the trees.

Paul Croce: And before I call for a motion. Then Mr. Viveiros, this is a public workshop. Let's hear your comment.

Antone Viveiros: Antone Viveiros 45 Bayview Park, Middletown. I was gonna say instead of getting a transcript if the board went if meeting state meeting with state you go to YouTube and watch it and make your notes and get what everybody said. It would save a lot of time.

Paul Croce: Yes, there are video records. Yeah. Thank you. Yeah. If everyone is ready, I would entertain a motion to say that this proposal and concept is compatible with the comp plan. *“(Art Weber) Generally.” “(Bill Nash) Generally Consistent” “(BJ) Generally consistent.”* Generally consistent.

Art Weber: I'll make that motion.

John Ciummo: Second that motion.

Paul Croce: Motion is made and seconded. Is there any discussion?

Bill Nash: Yeah, I think we want to add some language to suggest that we will have further recommendations, I mean, if we could do that in this motion or a second.

Paul Croce: We have to do that anyway. We've already said we're going to use this motion to simply declare compatibility with the comp plan. We still need to develop our recommendations that we will make specifically to the Town Council. Well, we'll do that at the special meeting. He's going to conduct the poll for a special meeting. We'll discuss that and develop those recommendations at that meeting.

Art Weber: So we have a motion which has been seconded.

Paul Croce: Any discussion on that move. Any discussion on that motion, all those in favor, say aye. *“(All) Aye. Aye.”* Oppose nay, motion passes. Is there anything else that we need to take up at this meeting? May I have a motion to adjourn?

Bill Nash: Are we going to do a special meeting? Can we?

Paul Croce: He's going to take a poll.

Ron Wolanski: I need to poll the board.

Paul Croce: He's going to do a doodle poll to set up a date for a special meeting.

Art Weber: Motion to adjourn.

Paul Croce: Motion seconded

BJ: Second

Paul Croce: Motion's made and seconded to adjourn. Any discussion, all those in favor say aye, *“(All) Aye. Aye.”* Oppose, nay. Meetings adjourned.