

Town of Middlesex Planning Board

Wednesday, May 6, 2026 • 7:00 p.m.

1216 Route 245, Middlesex, New York 14507

The following minutes are the official and permanent record of the actions taken by the Town of Middlesex Planning Board, as recorded by the Planning Board Clerk.

Meeting called by: Case Smeenck

Board members present: Nate Duffy
Terry Mott
Gordon Stringer

Alternate: (vacant)

Staff present: Alan Pearce, *Code Enforcement Officer*
Elizabeth Altemus, *Planning Board Clerk*

Mr. Smeenck called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **App# 2026-16-SPR:** Christopher & Amy Ford are seeking a site plan review for demolition of an existing home and accessory structures and construction of a new single-family residence and septic system at 670 Fisher Rd., Middlesex, NY, 14507, Tax ID# 11.50-1-9.

Rich Krenzer, architect for the project, and Mr. Ford were representing.

Mr. Krenzer explained that all revisions to the site plan requested by the Planning Board in April have been made, including the addition of limits of disturbance, downspouts, drains and gutter locations, and the proposed lot coverage has been reduced from 39% to 30.1% by incorporating permeable driveway material. He also indicated that the septic system has been approved by Tyler Ohle, Canandaigua Lake Watershed Inspector.

Mr. Smeenck requested that the location of the propane tank and its setback from property lines be added to the plans as well.

There was discussion that the lot coverage will be the only variance required for this project.

There was no public discussion.

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Mr. Smeenck made a motion to classify this project as a Type II Action under the SEQR regulations because it is construction of a single-family residence and, accordingly, this project shall be exempt from further SEQR procedures, including preparation of an Environmental Assessment Form. Mr. Stringer seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

Mr. Mott made a motion to approve the revised site plan as presented at this meeting, with the condition that the propane tank shall be shown on the map and shall meet all setback requirements. Mr. Duffy seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

Mr. Smeenck made a motion to recommend this application to the Zoning Board of Appeals for approval. Mr. Duffy seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

- **App# 2026-15-SPR:** James Bammel, Architect, is seeking a site plan review for demolition of an existing home and construction of new single-family residence at 660 Fisher Rd., Middlesex, NY, 14507, Tax ID# 11.50-1-12.

James and Nancy Smith, owners of the property, were representing as Mr. Bammel was unable to attend.

There was discussion that the revisions to the site plan requested by the Planning Board in April have been made, and that the Planning Board had requested the applicant attempt to bring the lot coverage within the 20% requirement by incorporating permeable driveway material. It was also noted that the proposed house will be less nonconforming than the existing house.

There was discussion that if lot coverage is brought into code, two variances will be needed: One for the corner of the house and one for the corner of the proposed terrace wall.

There was no public discussion.

Mr. Smeenck made a motion to classify this project as a Type II Action under the SEQR regulations because it is construction of a single-family residence and, accordingly, this project shall be exempt from further SEQR procedures, including preparation of an Environmental Assessment Form. Mr. Mott seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

Mr. Duffy made a motion to approve the site plan with the condition that a sufficient portion of the driveway be changed to permeable material to bring the lot coverage within the zoning requirement, and to recommend the application for two setback variances to the Zoning Board of Appeals for approval. Mr. Mott added the condition that the site plan and revision block shall be revised to show the permeable drive detail; Mr. Smeenck added the condition that the

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propane tank shall be shown on the map and shall meet all setback requirements. Mr. Mott seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **App# 2026-18-SPR:** Lodewyk Kuenen is seeking a site plan review for a lot line revision to convey approximately one acre from 5864 South Vine Valley Rd, Middlesex, NY, 14507, Tax ID# 12.03-1-39 to 5880 South Vine Valley Rd., Middlesex, NY, 14507, Tax ID# 12.03-1-12.

Mr. Kuenen was representing. He explained that he intends to sell his lot at 5864 South Vine Valley Rd., but to first convey one acre from it to 5880 South Vine Valley Rd., which he'll retain.

There was no public discussion.

Mr. Smeenck made a motion to classify this project as a Type II Action under the SEQR regulations because it is a lot line adjustment and, accordingly, this project shall be exempt from further SEQR procedures, including preparation of an Environmental Assessment Form. Mr. Stringer seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

Mr. Smeenck made a motion to approve the lot line revision as proposed on the plans. Mr. Stringer seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

- **App# 2026-20-SPR:** Faye Henrie is seeking a site plan review for a lot line revision to convey approximately eight acres from 1272 Kaltenback Rd, Middlesex, NY, 14507, Tax ID# 32.01-1-6, to the adjacent parcel at Kaltenback Rd., Middlesex, NY, 14507, Tax ID# 22.03-1-10.2.

Daryl Dunton was representing. He explained that the proposal is to add approximately eight acres from the Henrie property, which comprises approximately 103 acres, to his adjacent vacant lot.

There was no public discussion.

Mr. Smeenck made a motion to classify this project as a Type II Action under the SEQR regulations because it is a lot line adjustment and, accordingly, this project shall be exempt from further SEQR procedures, including preparation of an Environmental Assessment Form. Mr. Duffy seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

Mr. Smeenck made a motion to approve the lot line revision as proposed on the plans. Mr. Duffy seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

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- **App# 2026-17-SPR:** Marks Engineering is seeking a site plan review to rebuild and extend an existing landscape wall and stairs to access the lake at 858 Green Cove Dr., Middlesex, NY, 14507, Tax ID# 11.82-1-6.

Logan Rockcastle of Marks Engineering was representing. He showed a photograph of the block type to be used for rebuilding the wall and explained that geotextile will be used beneath the wall to further stabilize the bank. He indicated that the elevation of the wall base will not be below the Mean High-Water Mark (MHW).

Mr. Mott requested that the block type and construction specifications for the new walls and steps be included on the site plan.

There was no public discussion.

Mr. Smeenk made a motion to classify this project as a Type II Action under the SEQR regulations because it is construction of an accessory residential structure and, accordingly, this project shall be exempt from further SEQR procedures, including preparation of an Environmental Assessment Form. Mr. Stringer seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

Mr. Mott made a motion to approve the site plan with the condition that the entire area that is referenced as “wall and steps to be replaced in kind” be revised to indicate that the wall and steps are to be replaced according to the construction specifications for the proposed block type and the detail of such shall be included on the site plan and revision block. Mr. Smeenk seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

Mr. Duffy made a motion to recommend the application for two setback variances to the Zoning Board of Appeals for approval. Mr. Stringer seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

- **App# 2026-19-SPR:** Kevin Hefner is seeking a site plan review to install a new tram at 440 East Lake Rd., Middlesex, NY, 14507, Tax ID# 1.84-1-7.

Pete Gorman of Marathon Engineering was representing. He explained that the tram will run approximately 230 feet from the private drive to the lakeshore, with several deck landings along the way, and the existing steps that currently lie over the property line will be removed; five setback variances will be requested in total: One for each of three landings and two for the tram structure itself.

There was discussion that the tram was originally proposed at the northern property line, however the Planning Board recommended it be located near the southern property line as the property to the south also has a tram on that border, and consolidating the trams to one area

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would give a more cohesive look. It was also discussed that a geotechnical survey would not be required as it was not required for the neighboring tram, which has been completed.

There was no public discussion.

Mr. Smeenck made a motion to classify this project as a Type II Action under the SEQR regulations because it is construction of an accessory residential structure and, accordingly, this project shall be exempt from further SEQR procedures, including preparation of an Environmental Assessment Form. Mr. Mott seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

Mr. Smeenck made a motion to approve the site plan as proposed and to recommend the application for five setback variances to the Zoning Board of Appeals for approval. Mr. Stringer seconded. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

- **App# 2026-25-SPR:** Rochester Folk Art Guild is seeking a conceptual site plan review for construction of a new single-family residence at 1445 Upper Hill Rd., Middlesex, NY, 14507, Tax ID# 33.0-1-8.

Logan Rockcastle of Marks Engineering, and Paul Schliffer and Martin Renner of the Rochester Folk Art Guild (henceforth referred to as The Guild) were representing.

Mr. Schliffer explained that The Guild is working on a strategic plan, and the proposed home was identified as an urgent need for ageing residents and will be handicapped accessible. He indicated that The Guild has considered higher density housing to support the senior population, however the proposed single-family home would alleviate immediate need.

Mr. Smeenck commented that the site plan doesn't adequately show where the proposed house is going on the larger site plan, and it should be shown in relation to the other buildings and driveways on site. He also commented that the site plan should show the existing solar panels and all roads on site. CEO Pearce commented that having adequate ingress and egress for fire code is important. It was agreed that a comprehensive, larger scale site plan should be produced.

There was discussion that there is currently no Special Use Permit on file for The Guild, and there are already multiple residences on the property, which Mr. Schliffer indicated are designated as residences for the farm operation. It was discussed that there is a need to define and document The Guild's unique situation to protect and govern their future growth and operation.

There was discussion about whether the site plan for the proposed home should be considered before a Special Use Permit, or other such agreement, is put into place. It was agreed that, given the existence of multiple residences and uses already on site, a plan and documentation

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should be in place before considering new development. Mr. Smeenk commented that the Town Attorney should be consulted in this endeavor.

It was agreed that CEO Pearce, the Town Attorney and members of The Guild should work to develop and get approved a Special Use Permit or other special zoning situation before future site development is considered.

- **App# 2026-21-SPR:** Amy Holmes is seeking a conceptual site plan review for an event space at 6130 South Vine Valley Rd., Middlesex, NY, 14507, Tax ID# 12.03-1-18.

Amy Holmes was representing. She distributed copies of a concept plan for “The Venue at Vine Valley”, which she explained is a proposed year-round agricultural event destination with concert and event spaces to accommodate up to 3,000 people with outdoor seating and standing lawn space. She explained that farm animals, including goats, mini-cows, and chickens, will be on site year-round for the community to visit, and there will be barns and a greenhouse. New plantings to create corridors and shade will also be installed. The site is currently vacant and mostly in open field, and is owned by Jeremy Fields, from whom the business would lease the land.

Ms. Holmes indicated that The Venue is a for-profit venture, funded by investors and herself, and would be similar to Lincoln Hill, however through her research of that business and by garnering feedback at this meeting she hopes to identify and address concerns during the planning phases of this project. She indicated that she would be the CEO and operator of “The Venue”, and would employ a program manager for seasonal events, as well as security, marketing, animal caretaking and groundskeeping personnel. She commented that she doesn’t wish to disrespect the community, but rather benefit the community through employment, sales tax revenue, increasing regional visitor spending, and creating a new significant taxable assessed value for the property.

Mr. Mott expressed concern about the potential volume of people on site, and Ms. Holmes commented that while 3,000 people is the upper limit, she would expect closer to 500-1,500 people for most events, and she does not envision multi-day events. Mr. Mott expressed concern about the noise levels disrupting the rural neighborhood, the increased volume of traffic on a narrow, rural road, whether alcohol would be served and how the crowds and traffic would be managed. Ms. Holmes responded that alcohol would be served and the proper regulations for doing so would be followed, and the concept plan outlines operations. She indicated that parking will be on site, traffic control staff would be present for events over 250 persons, and the driveways will be planned for appropriate sight lines. Ms. Holmes also indicated that she has budgeted for private law enforcement personnel.

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Mr. Duffy commented that an influx of 3,000 people at the site when there is nothing there now would be a disruption to the Valley, and he would like Ms. Holmes to spend time talking with the community to consider their opinions and return with a plan based on that feedback. He also asked if she would consider starting smaller.

Mr. Stringer commented that the agritourism aspect is interesting and could be more palatable to the community, however the larger concert venue is out of keeping with the neighborhood. He also expressed concern over medical issues on site, and Ms. Holmes indicated that for events over a certain capacity, first aid personnel would be on standby. Mr. Stringer expressed concern about emergency vehicles having clear passage on the road to other destinations should traffic cause congestion.

Matt Duffy, resident at 6037 South Vine Valley Rd, commented that he lives across the road from the site and believes this is inappropriate development for the site and for the character of the neighborhood. He commented that this project would make the unlined road dangerous, and traffic already increases in the summer, so having increased traffic year-round would further disturb the quiet. Mr. Duffy also commented that while some local stores might see an increase in business from events at "The Venue", most of the profits would go to "The Venue" itself. He asked whether Ms. Holmes had considered properties closer to more developed, higher population areas and whether she would consider paring it down to just the agritourism aspects. Ms. Holmes responded that this site feels authentic to agritourism, and she envisions it to be more of a community venue than a commercial space, with both the agritourism and the concert/event aspects.

Chris Braun, resident at 5906 South Vine Valley Rd., commented that the liabilities for such a project should be considered, including insurance if an incident were to incur, and if permits from the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board aren't granted the business would lose a major funding source. Mr. Braun also commented that Yates County Law Enforcement has very few personnel to spare for events, and Ms. Holmes indicated that she would seek out private, off duty officers for security. Mr. Braun asked what sets The Venue apart from Lincoln Hill, which is a direct competitor very nearby, and expressed concern about what would happen to the site should the infrastructure be built but the business fail. Ms. Holmes commented that The Venue has different programming and is aiming for a less commercial experience.

Mr. Braun and Mat Duffy inquired about the water source for The Venue and expressed concern about a well on their site affecting the hydrology of surrounding wells, which often go dry in dry summers. Ms. Holmes commented that she will engage with professionals to address these issues.

Ted Carman, resident at Fisher Rd., commented that having potentially 3,000 people and an average of 1,500 cars and a venue site active multiple times per week would dramatically change the culture of the area. He also commented that he believes the project is not congruent with the Town Masterplan; while it could create jobs, economic development and

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increase the tax base, the noise, traffic and visitation numbers are not in keeping with the Master Plan's intent to maintain a rural environment. Mr. Carman also commented that there is no sewer system in that area, so a large amount of infrastructure and land will need to be dedicated to sanitary facilities, and an analysis of ROI would be needed given the amount of infrastructure needed. Ms. Holmes responded that she will be investigating traffic studies and waste management with professionals. Mr. Carman noted that without staff housing, it will be hard to attract full and part-time staff.

Dave Hudomint, resident at Tuscan Lane, commented that he lives a quarter of a mile from the site and agrees this is an inappropriate place for this project, which he believes will change the culture of the Valley. He expressed concern over the loss of quiet and peace and the consumption of alcohol at "The Venue", and commented that he believes it would be better suited to a site closer to a higher population center.

Ms. Holmes agreed to perform community outreach and consider feedback from the Planning Board, residents in attendance, and neighbors of the site.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Smeenck made a motion to approve the April 1, 2026, meeting minutes. Mr. Stringer seconded. Mr. Duffy, Mr. Stringer and Mr. Mott voted in favor, Mr. Smeenck abstained as he was absent from the meeting. The motion passed.

Mr. Smeenck introduced Andrew Coots, in attendance, as a potential new Board member. Mr. Coots explained that he lives on Bare Hill and has a background in mechanical engineering.

It was agreed to move the July Planning Board meeting to July 8th due to the July 4th holiday week.

There was brief discussion that the Planning Board will revisit the process of making amendments to the Zoning Code and will submit a comprehensive list of suggested changes to the Town Board for review.

Mr. Stringer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. All Board members voted in favor, none opposed, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:54 p.m.