

## Middletown Comprehensive Permit

### Rosebrook Commons

#### Project Narrative

**Project Name:** Rosebrook Commons

**Applicant:** Mesolella Development Corp.

**Application:** Article 17 Low and Moderate Income Housing – Comprehensive Permit

**Narrative:**

Mesolella Development Corp. and its affiliates own 27 acres of land in Middletown RI at 1747 West Main Road on which it plans to build a mixed-use and mixed income housing development with select ground floor retail. The project site will use approximately 15.5 acres comprised of two lots (AP 111 Lots 8 and 9). The development will encompass approximately 132,000 square feet of residential space yielding 144 units of 1, 2 & 3 BR apartments. The approximate units mix stands as follows 70 one bedroom units, 62 two bedroom units, and 12 three bedroom units. The ground floor of the West Main Road frontage buildings will consist of approximately 22,000 square feet of retail space. It is anticipated that the tenants for these units will be users of 5,000 sf or less. There will be approximately 336 cars of surface parking serving both the residential and the retail uses. The site has approximately 1000 feet of frontage on state highway 114 with a RIPTA bus stop located on the norther corner as well as one nearby across the street. The existence of this RIPTA stop at the project site is a significant benefit to the project such that it meets RI Housing, Middletown Comprehensive Plan, and Middletown Zoning Ordinance goals to reduce demands on automobiles and provide residents with accessible transit options. The project is planned to be financed with a combination of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and other “gap” financing resources available to the project. The overall Affordable portion of this project is anticipated to be around 30 - 40% of the total project units with the remainder to be market rate. We anticipate this to make a significant contribution towards Middletown’s affordable housing deficit.

This project will be programmed into two phases with a total development cost estimated to be approximately \$55 million. Phase I of the project is anticipated to deliver 64 residential units and 23,000 sf of ground floor commercial in two buildings along West Main Rd. The developer is allocating 51 out of 64 of the Phase I units as affordable equating to 80% of the Phase I units mix. The units mix will include 1,2, and 3 bedrooms. Based on current market conditions, market rates, and LIHTC financing structures, the mixed use 80/20 with ground floor commercial is the MOST feasible way to achieve a successful affordable housing project at this site. Phase II will deliver the remaining 91 residential units in six buildings as market rate. The unit mix will include 1,2, and 3 bedroom units.

We believe that the site layout as designed substantially conforms to the criteria and goals the town has designated in Zoning Ordinance Article 27A Mixed Use Development Projects. We believe we are preserving community character while permitting appropriate development of mixed-use projects. This project encourages traditional architecture and historical village settlement patterns which are well integrated into the existing community, while avoiding the creation of large-scale shopping centers, business, or industrial parks having little or no relation to each other or to the surrounding community.

The site design promotes pedestrian friendly environments which provide both a safe walking atmosphere and a logical connection of destinations within and adjacent to the development. We provide for compatible mixed- uses and development densities that are utilized in similar developments. With 22,000 sf of small scale retail/commercial the site will provide areas for economic development in the community and allow for creative development of businesses that serve the residents of the development, the district and surrounding areas, and reduce the demand upon the automobile for access to business. We believe the architecture will enhance the scenic roadside view from major arterial roads of the town. Most importantly this development provides the residences, that meet the needs of the community as expressed in the Middletown Affordable Housing Action Plan.

It is anticipated that 30% - 40% of the residential units in the development will be deed restricted as affordable units for qualifying applicants at the 60% AMI level. This project will be a key component in the development of affordable housing in Middletown and on Aquidneck Island, and will enhance the progress of the Middletown affordable housing and mixed use initiative. It is an effort to embody current sustainable development and land use practices while embracing economic and social conditions. The project's goal is to leverage densities with the mix of uses and income levels in an attempt to integrate and destigmatize affordable housing while providing the desperately needed housing stock in a responsible manner.

The Applicant is seeking to utilize Middletown's Low and Moderate Income Housing Comprehensive Permit in an effort to expedite the required entitlements so the developer can deliver these desperately needed units on an accelerated schedule. As previously stated, Rhode Island is facing a housing crisis, and Middletown is significantly below the 10% affordable level at 5.6% and should understand the urgency to provide its residents with the adequate supply of safe and affordable housing in the near term. Upon review of the affordable housing section of the comprehensive plan, Middletown estimates reaching its 10% goal by 2034 with an average of 7 units per year being delivered to market. With housing prices at all time highs and residents being displaced, this project will aid in catalyzing the realization of its goal. Given that the Applicant receives approval of the comprehensive permit and its required allocation of LIHTC's, the applicant could begin construction as soon as Q1 2022. The need for affordable housing options in the state of RI has reached crisis proportions. In recent months the focus on Aquidneck Island in particular has been significant. In conjunction with Section VII. Housing of Middletown's Comprehensive Plan as well as more recent published data, the area has seen a tremendous level of price increases over the past few years and a resulting rapid decrease in the supply of affordable housing. This development will be a key component in achieving several important benchmarks including, the state mandated affordable housing goal for municipalities of 10%, the goals set forth in Section VII of the Comprehensive Plan including Goals IV,V, VI, as well as those stated in Article 27A00 (G) for Mixed Use Development Projects.