



## Town of Middletown Planning Department

350 East Main Rd., Middletown RI 02842 (401) 849-4027

### MEMORANDUM

To: Paul A. Croce, Chairman  
Planning Board Members

From: Ron Wolanski, Town Planner

Date: March 2, 2021

Re: Review and provide recommendation to the Town Council on proposed amendments to Section 400 - Definitions, Section 602 - Schedule Of District Regulations, Section 703 - Accessory Uses And Structures and Section 725 of the Middletown Zoning Ordinance regarding ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installation, including design requirements for all arrays and specific provisions for arrays mounted on carports and canopies.

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The Planning Board hosted a public workshop on February 9<sup>th</sup> to present and accept public input on the draft zoning ordinance amendments referenced above. During that meeting the Board requested revisions to the draft to more clearly distinguish solar carports from to other types of ground-mounted arrays, and to clarify setbacks and limitations on front yard installations. These revisions are included in the attached revised draft.

In summary, the proposal would amend Section 725 of the zoning ordinance to include provisions specific to installations using carports and canopies; amend section 400 to revise the definition of ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installation; amend section 602 to allow solar installations by special use permit in some districts; and amend section 703 to exempt carports and canopies from certain accessory use dimensional requirements.

1. Defines solar installations as small or large scale with a 1,000 square foot threshold.
2. Requires only large scale solar (greater than 1,000 sq.ft.) to go through Development Plan Review
3. Allows small scale solar in residential zones only as an accessory use
4. Provides additional dimensional regulations
5. Adds landscaping, site design, and soil preservation standards
6. Requires submission of utility company's preliminary approvals with the Development Plan Review application

Once the Board is satisfied with the final draft, it should be forwarded to the Town Council for consideration. The Town Council must then hold a formal public hearing before amendments are adopted.

In support of its recommendation to the Town Council the Board must make the following findings in accordance with the requirements of Section 45-24-52 of the Rhode Island General Laws:

(1) The proposed amendment is generally consistent with the Middletown Comprehensive Community Plan , including the goals and policies statement, the implementation program, and all other applicable elements of the comprehensive plan; and

(2) This recommendation is made in recognition and consideration of each of the applicable purposes of zoning, as presented in § 45-24-30 RIGL

Please contact me with any questions.

cc. Town Solicitor