



STAFF REPORT

Application: PZC-19-017
Application Type: Zone Change – I to R-4
Location: 98 Middletown Ave.
Date: October 2, 2019

An application has been received for a Zone Change at 98 Middletown Avenue. As shown on the attached map, this property is surrounded on the north, east, and west by the Industrial Zone, and is bordered on the south, across Route 16 by the R-4 Zone.

The Commission has asked for information regarding this area, its current use, and its history. Included with this report is a map of the area in question with 98 Middletown Ave highlighted. This report will discuss eleven lots in the Industrial Zone to the west of 84 Middletown Ave. (Beyer's Autoworks). These eleven lots currently contain non-conforming residential uses.

Nature of Request: The request is for a zone change from I to R-4. This parcel is approximately 50,965 square feet. The minimum lot size in the R-4 Zone is 85,000 square feet.

History of Zone: The area north of Middletown Avenue and west of Skinner Street has been targeted as an industrial zone since the 1968 East Hampton Plan of Development. It appears that the majority of this area was put in the IX Zone in 1972. In 1990, a consolidation of zone types resulted in the existing I Zone. The parcels to the north along Childs Road were initially proposed as Commercial in the 1990 update, but were revised to Industrial after Bob Riley (Economic Development Coordinator) submitted comments. The 1989 POCD recommended retaining the existing Industrial Zone along Route 16 and expanding it to the south and west. It does not indicate an expansion north of the Airline Trail. The 2016 POCD recommends retaining the Industrial zone in its current configuration.

Existing Uses: The industrial zone to the east of 84 Middletown Ave. is mostly Industrial and mixed uses. Some uses include Beyer's Autoworks, Suburban Sanitation, and Higgins Electric. West of 84 Middletown, there are eleven parcels with non-conforming single family houses, which included 98 Middletown Ave until the house was recently demolished. The legal non-conforming use is still in place for one single family dwelling at this property. One parcel is an active farm.

Considerations: The Plans of Conservation and Development have continually shown this as an area for Industrial uses since at least the 1968 Plan. At that time, the railroad was still partially active and a new Route 66 freeway was proposed to run just South of Route 16 in this area with an interchange proposed at Route 66 near Childs Road and another for Route 16 near Harlan Place. Since that time, the rail line has turned into a scenic recreational trail and there are no plans for an expressway in this area. However, the area is now served by Sewer and Natural Gas, and would likely be included in any future water system. Road access is good considering its location along Route 16, proximity to Route 66, and relatively easy access to Route 9 and 2.

A Change of Zone from Industrial to Residential would be consistent with current and previous use at this site but inconsistent with the land use plan in the POCD. In addition, it would preclude any future industrial growth in this area. The minimum lot size in the R-4 is 85,000 square feet. The parcel is more suitable for the R-2 or R-3 Zones which require minimum lot sizes of 40,000 and 45,000 respectively when connected to sewers. A change of one single parcel could preclude multi-lot development in the future and prevent this lot from being combined with others.

The Commission should take careful consideration when determining whether a change of zone is appropriate in this area. If the Commission desires to conduct a wholesale change for multiple lots, it should not be completed prior to an update of the POCD. It would not be appropriate to change the zone type in the area against the recommendation of the PCOD, especially considering the longevity of the recommended use in this area.

Excerpt from 1968 Plan of Development

Plan for Industry

The locations proposed for industrial uses are shown on both the Land Use Plan and the Lake Center area. Industrial proposals for the Center are described under the General Plan in Chapter 6.

Basically, the plan for industry proposes that industrial land follow Skinner Street from the business center south to Route 16, and along Route 16 to its junction with Route 66. Highway access is good along Route 16. The Plan of Circulation shows an interchange between the future expressway and Routes 66 and 16, and this should give good highway access to the industrial areas mostly over state highways.

Futre Land Use Plan from 2016 Plan of Conservation and Development

