

A special meeting of the Village Board was held on July 30, 2025 at 6:00 PM at Village Hall

Present: Mayor Timothy Knight; Trustees: Sheryl Adams, Amanda Fernandez, Robert Tinker, Kevin Young.

Also present: Julie Pacatte – SEEC, Marilyn Wyman, Carrie Foland, Juanita Reyes, Mike Donovan, Diane Stewart, Terry Pavoldi – Middleburgh Library Director, Katie Hagan, John Wingfield – Village ZBA, Arthur Falco, Richard Rolland, and Tanja Konwinski – Project Lead.

Mayor Knight called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM with Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Knight requested ZBA Chairman John Winfield take Minutes, which Mr. Wingfield agreed to do.

Mayor Knight welcomed attendees and established the ground rules: (1.) Tanja Konwinski would present her Middleburgh Commons proposal; (2.) the Board would ask questions about Ms. Konwinski's proposal; and, (3.) members of the audience would be afforded a public comment and question period.

Ms. Konwinski presented the Board and public with an overview of the proposed project:

- At the 319 Main Street lot, which is owned by Marge for Middleburgh, there would be a publicly accessible green space that incorporates a garden, public water fountain, shade pergola, and an under deck cover area. Marge for Middleburgh has agreed to donate this lot.
- At the Baker Avenue lot, which is owned by the Village of Middleburgh, there would be a three-story, 5,000 square foot building that incorporates a community center, art gallery, apartments, tele-health rooms, and science center.

Ms. Konwinski stated that the revenue for Middleburgh Commons, which would be a not-for-profit, would come from events, community rentals, apartment rentals, beverage sales, merchandise sales, and fundraising. She estimated the annual expenses at \$424,601.62 to operate the facility and programming.

Ms. Konwinski asked the Board to act as the legal applicant for the BRICKS Grant through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, which is intended to fund new and existing community centers, and to commit to taking out a \$6,693,584.62 bond if the grant was awarded that would be reimbursable up to 80% of project costs; she stated that the remaining 20% of the costs or \$1,905,956.92 would be offset by fundraising.

Upon completion of the presentation, the Board asked a series of questions about the project:

- Trustee Fernandez questioned the fundraising process, to which Ms. Konwinski stated she had just received her first fundraising commitment from Marge for Middleburgh for \$50,000; Trustee Fernandez asked about the existing infrastructure so far as parking, to which Ms. Konwinski said she anticipated an additional 200 people would be coming to the Village during events and that the Village could redevelop its Baker and Dexter Avenue Parking Lots; Trustee Fernandez asked if a feasibility study had been conducted, to which Ms. Konwinski said no.
- Deputy Mayor Adams stated she would have to look into the bond components of the proposal as the price tag is significant, and she asked if the Village of Middleburgh is the first place she looked at, to which Ms. Konwinski explained her personal connections to the area with her fiancée.
- Trustee Tinker noted that he loved the idea but thought the liability to the Village taxpayers was too high, and he raised concerns about the potential for flooding to impact the proposed facility, to which Ms. Konwinski said that some mitigation measures had been factored into the plans.

- Trustee Young echoed his colleagues concerns by noting that the bond amount was significant, and he asked if she had researched similar facilities in comparable locations, to which Ms. Konwinski said she had not but that the model was not unheard of.
- Mayor Knight asked if the Village's current parking could be sufficient to accommodate this new facility if 200 more people would be coming to Middleburgh and roughly two-dozen parking spots would be eliminated by the facility's construction, to which Ms. Konwinski stated her answer was the same as before; Mayor Knight asked if this proposal was duplicative of the Middleburgh Library and the new Community Center/Shelter built on Cotton Hill Road; to which Ms. Konwinski said she had already eliminated some duplications of Library services and would be mindful of that; Mayor Knight asked how confident Ms. Konwinski was in the fundraising capability of this project because \$1.9 million is a heavy price tag to ask Village residents to potentially bare if the economy downturned or fundraising lagged; Ms. Konwinski stated she was confident in her ability to raise the necessary funds.

Upon completion of the Board's questions, Mayor Knight opened up the discussion to the floor: Library Board Trustees Marilyn Wyman and Juanita Reyes, Library Director Terry Pavoldi, Village Residents Michael Donovan and Arthur Falco, and SEEC representative Julie Pacatte questioned Ms. Konwinski and offered comments, the consensus of which was that this proposal was "too much, too fast."

Upon completion of the public comment and question period, Mayor Knight requested that the Board recess for a period not to exceed 5 minutes so that he and Deputy Mayor Adams could confer privately. Trustee Young made a motion, seconded by Trustee Tinker, to take a 5-minute recess at 7:31 PM. Upon a roll call vote, this motion was unanimously carried 5-0.

At 7:36 PM, Mayor Knight called the meeting out of recess.

Mayor Knight and the Board thanked Ms. Konwinski for her proposal, but due to concerns about the price tag associated with the bond, lack of parking availability in the Village, and the Board's desire to pursue other grants that may require bonds to revitalize the Village Pool and Main Street, they would not be able to support this project.

Mayor Knight proposed the following motion be adopted: While the Village of Middleburgh appreciates the hard work by Tanja Konwinski, we will respectfully decline to support this BRICKS grant application for the proposed Middleburgh Commons project. Trustee Tinker made a motion, seconded by Trustee Fernandez, to approve the proposed motion as offered. Upon a roll call vote, this motion was unanimously carried 5-0.

It was the consensus of the Board to continue an open community dialogue about the proposed Middleburgh Commons project between the Village of Middleburgh, Middleburgh Library Board, SEEC representatives, and Ms. Konwinski moving forward.

Trustee Tinker made a motion, seconded by Trustee Adams, to amend Resolution #6-2025 to increase the local match amount from \$7,500 to \$8,340. Upon roll call vote, this motion was unanimously carried 5-0.

Trustee Tinker made a motion, seconded by Trustee Young, to adjourn at 7:41 PM. Upon a roll call vote, this motion was unanimously carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted by,

ZBA President John Wingfield & Mayor Timothy Knight.