

Village of Middlefield Planning & Zoning Minutes

AUGUST 13, 2026

The Village of Middlefield's Planning & Zoning meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present: Mayor Garlich, Mr. Scott Klein, Mr. Linberg, Ms. Carissa Shaffer, and Mr. Dietrich.

Also present: Leslie McCoy-Village Administrator, Mr. Mike Cicero- Village Solicitor, Mr. John Boksansky-Zoning Inspector, Ms. Sabine Weizer, Ms. Ann Wishart- Maple Leaf, Mr. Brian Guarniere, Mr. Anderson Ohman, Mr. Christian Ohman, Mr. John Bojec- Geauga Highway, Mr. Tim McGarry- Attorney for Geauga Highway, Mr. Chris Alusheff- Zoning Consultant for Geauga Highway, and Mr. Thomas Dudinsky.

Agenda: No Deletions. Addition: 3: in regards to Middlefield Village and Middlefield Township, the lay of the land on the East portion of the Village as you exit Glen Valley.

Minutes: The minutes of the July 7, 2026 meeting were presented for approval. **Mr. Dietrich made a motion to approve the minutes of July 7, 2026 as presented, motion seconded by Mr. Linberg. Roll Call. All in favor: Yeas (5).**

PUBLIC HEARING:

Mr. Klein opened the public hearing 6:02PM.

Mr. Mike Cicero had anyone who will be providing evidence to the commission for the Public Hearings raise their right hand to be sworn in under oath. "Do you swear or affirm that the evidence you shall give in the matter now and the hearing before the commission shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God, or under penalty of perjury? Mayor Ben Garlich, Mr. Scott Klein, Mr. Jim Linberg, Mr. Dave Dietrich, Ms. Carissa Shaffer, Mr. Mike Cicero, Mr. John Boksansky, Ms. Leslie McCoy, Mr. Christian Ohman, Mr. Anderson Ohman, Mr. Tom Dudinsky, Mr. John Bojec- Geauga Highway, Mr. Tim McGarry- Attorney for John Bojec, and Mr. Chris Alusheff- Zoning Consultant all raised their hands and were sworn in under oath.

- 1. 15651 W HIGH ST Geauga Highway Conditional Use Application as well as a variance for a lot coverage of 77% where 60% is permitted located in a General Commercial Zoning district.** Mr. Boksansky stated the discussion regarding this project with Mr. Bojec- Geauga Highway began in January of 2026. It resulted in an application for a zoning exemption as well as occupancy for the address 15651 West High Street and after a period of time of discussing the project and what essentially the property was going to be used for, Mr. Bojec's business was going to have his office there, as well as repair of vehicles and equipment for his business. Mr. Boksansky stated once that occurred, he went through a period of learning about his business and what he was going to do there which resulted in an occupancy permit being issued after the fire department had a chance to inspect the premises. The Fire Department gave their approval on March 27, 2026. Mr. Boksansky stated he issued the occupancy permit and a zoning exemption permit on March 31, 2026 and so it was legally able to operate there on that site with the intended use. Mr. Boksansky stated in mid-May of 2026 he saw that there was an alternate use going on there meaning storage of vehicles and equipment related to his business. Mr. Boksansky stated it is a paving business called Geauga Highway so in mid-May Mr. Boksansky issued a cease and desist order not to expand to additional areas on the site. Mr. Boksansky stated the original zoning permit granted was for office use and equipment repair within the structure located to the rear of the property. The cease and

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desist order were not complied with during the 30-day compliance period stated in that correspondence May 13th, 2026. Mr. Boksansky stated based on these facts the Village of Middlefield filed a complaint. Mr. Boksansky stated before that he actually wrote another letter dated May 21, 2026, stating the opportunity to come before the planning commission and essentially appeal for a conditional use for the premise and not seeing any activity moving towards what we ultimately wanted to have there was an application for a zoning permit to expand on the site. Mr. Boksansky stated the expansion on the site continued to occur and there was no compliance. The cease and desist order was not complied with. The Village of Middlefield filed a complaint in court on June 18th, 2026 regarding expanding out to the site without filing for a zoning permit, a violation of 1114.01, zoning permit, a variance or conditional use permit for said property. The Village of Middlefield continued to monitor the site and with each day, materials and vehicles occupied the non-permitted areas of the site. Mr. Boksansky stated the Village of Middlefield received several permit applications from Geauga Highway as well as a representative of zoning application fees on June 25th, 2026, and that's why we're here tonight. Mr. Boksansky stated the applications included applying for a conditional use, a lot coverage variance, as well as open storage and display of equipment and material and equipment. The applicant, Mr. John Bojec, is asking to be heard in this application request for conditional use and lot coverage variance on this date, August 11th, 2026, at 6:00 PM, as several of Geauga Highways LLC representatives were not available for the July 7th, 2026, meeting.

Mr. Klein asked if there was anyone present to speak on this matter.

Mr. Tim McGarry- Attorney for Geauga Highway- 231 E 214th St Euclid, OH, is present to speak. Mr. John Bojec- Geauga Highway is also present but has been advised by Mr. McGarry to not speak due to the criminal proceedings that are pending. Mr. Chris Alusheff- Geauga Highways Zoning Consultant is also present on behalf of Mr. John Bojec.

Mr. Tim McGarry stated he believes that the Village of Middlefield Zoning Inspector- Mr. John Boksansky, stated much of it correctly in that the parties met together before Geauga Highway signed a three-year lease. Mr. McGarry stated that Geauga Highway explained its use of what the business was going to do. Mr. McGarry stated the only thing he believes was mistaken is that the zoning exemption clearly says that vehicles were going to be stored outside, waiting for their maintenance use. Mr. McGarry stated that was clearly provided for in the original zoning exemption.

Mr. Klein asked if Mr. McGarry has paperwork on this and Mr. McGarry stated he does in an email and gave it to Mr. Linberg.

Mr. McGarry stated in reliance on the zoning exemption Geauga Highway signed a three-year lease and brought about 100 jobs to Middlefield. He stated that he believes there's a bit of a misunderstanding here. Mr. McGarry stated this is not Geauga Highway's paving operations or where it operates. He stated Geauga Highway has two locations, a location in Painesville, and a location in Auburn. Mr. McGarry stated the location in Middlefield is a place that it uses as its office and it does have vehicles there waiting to be worked on for ordinary maintenance. Mr. McGarry stated Geauga Highway probably has 100 pieces of equipment and they're stored in Auburn and Middlefield and almost all of those have now been removed as a result of the criminal filing. Mr. McGarry stated there was clearly an implication that was needed to file for a conditional use variance, which he stated they

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have done. Mr. McGarry stated Geauga Highway wants to be a good neighbor and wants to be somewhere where they are welcomed. Mr. McGarry stated they are here tonight in good faith to see if they can resolve these differences.

Mr. Klein asked if there was anyone else from the public that wanted to speak. Ms. McCoy stated there were some letters that were submitted from the public and mailed to Zoning Inspector, Mr. John Boksansky.

Ms. McCoy reads the letters out loud at the Planning & Zoning meeting. The letters submitted and read were from Middlefield residents and Ruth Womack on behalf of the Helen Harrington Trust. An email that was sent from Shasta Properties, LLC was also read out loud. The first letter that was read out loud was dated 6/9/2026 and was to Mayor Garlich, Village Administrator, and all Council members from concerned Village of Middlefield citizens. The second letter was read out loud and was submitted from Shasta Properties LLC. The third letter was read out loud and was submitted from Ruth Womack- the trustee of the Helen Harrington Trust.

Once the letters were read out loud Mr. Klein asked Mr. McGarry if he had any final remarks. Mr. McGarry stated he does want to comment again that there are no materials being stored at the site as the materials are stored at other locations. Mr. Klein stated Geauga Highway is asking for a variance tonight for display of material and equipment. Mr. McGarry stated that is following what was requested of Geauga Highway in the letter. Mr. McGarry stated Geauga Highway does not have materials inside and there are some materials that they had that they were going to use for their own use depending on what happens with the area variance. Mr. McGarry stated there is equipment there that belongs to another tenant who supposedly have already moved out so he doesn't know if some of these issues or some of the photos are showing things that are not Geauga Highways property.

Mr. Linberg asked if the display requirements are for purposes of sales. Mr. Klein stated yes and all other displays. Mr. Linberg asked if there was any documentation of what the Village shared to Geauga Highway prior to them signing the three-year lease. Mr. McGarry stated it was via email discussion. Mr. Klein asked if all Geauga Highway is looking to do is have a couple vehicles that they're doing repairs on and office space, and it's a pretty big lot, why is 77% lot coverage needed as a variance.

Mr. Chris Alusheff- Geauga Clean Zoning Consultant for Geauga Highway, stated that in the site plan they are including gravel or asphalt grinding surfaces in the lot coverage percentage to be conservative rather than trying to argue over whether asphalt grindings are an improved surface so all the green on the plans is where there's currently equipment but that would be true green space and landscape screening. Mr. Alusheff stated the whole front half of the property is already at its maximum lot coverage and stated it could be argued now with the condition the property is in before Geauga Paving occupied the property that they have exceeded it just by virtue of the number of grindings that are in the back portion of the lot. Mr. Alusheff stated that this would clean it up, square off the areas, and the darker shade right at the bordering, the green, would simply be an open turnaround area for the purpose of moving vehicles in and out and then the lighter shaded pink would be the actual parking area while vehicles are on their way in or out of the enclosed maintenance space in the back of the building.

Mr. Dietrich stated he recalls that when they considered this outdoor storage and display areas in other locations in the Commercial zone, those areas have all been paved but

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there has never been a situation that there were asphalt grindings in those areas. Mr. Dietrich stated he does not recall anything regarding display being used in this context as it has always been used in the context of retail merchandise that is stored outdoors and offered for display. Mr. Boksansky stated that is correct.

Mr. Klein stated up until maybe 6-8 months ago lot coverage in the Village was 40%, and people would come and ask for 50% and it was recently changed to 60% so to go to 77% is almost double the 40% of where the Village was just 6-8 months ago.

Mr. Dietrich stated at the bottom of the paragraph in the materials it indicates that the applicant is actually requesting approval of exterior storage with variance to increase lot coverage to 84%. Mr. Dietrich asked if it is 77% or 84%. Mr. Boksansky stated he adjusted it because there was a gap in presenting that wasn't accounted for and it actually lessened the number that they need. Mr. Boksansky stated to also keep in mind that for Ace Hardware as well as this rear lot that is all one parcel so he had to view the lot coverage for the whole parcel not just the spot that Geauga Highway is operating on so in fact the lot coverage would be much more if we just calculated their use.

Mr. Dietrich asked Mr. Alusheff if the request is for temporary storage or for permanent storage for rotating vehicles and equipment. Mr. Alusheff stated it is for permanent storage but the individual pieces being stored would all be temporary because they'd be rotating what's there at any given time so this wouldn't be a machine graveyard or a dump site. Mr. Alusheff stated they would have it there until it's ready to go inside, be worked on, and taken back out on the road or one of the other facilities operated by the company. Mr. Alusheff stated there are proposed landscape screenings in the material provided and it is noted on there as an evergreen screening in accordance with what was in the suggestions in 1159.06 and then it said per the zoning ordinances that it was subject to approval of the planning commission so they put together this as a starting point to come for the approval of the planning commission whether that would be acceptable or if the Planning commission wanted a different form of screening. Mr. Dietrich asked if this is adjacent to a residential zone and Mr. Boksansky stated it is adjacent on the East side. Mr. Dietrich asked whether there was additional buffering and setbacks when a use like this is adjacent to a residential zone. Mr. Klein stated the setback is 50ft. Mr. Boksansky stated that the 50ft is shown on Geauga Highways site plan but it is currently occupied by materials for Geauga Highway.

Mayor Garlich stated there is a car repair business there and they want to place a maintenance shed somewhere close to operate in there but stated this is a job site yard. Mayor Garlich stated he cannot connect the dots on how this is General Commercial since it is an industrial operation in a General Commercial. Mayor Garlich stated it is unfair to everyone around the business that has to look at that and put up with what is going on. Mayor Garlich stated it is not a good fit for this area and it was misrepresented from the start. Mr. McGarry stated Geauga Highway has in total about 120 vehicles and there is only 15-20 at the Middlefield location waiting to be maintained. Mayor Garlich stated an operation similar to what was there beforehand is what is expected. Mayor Garlich stated this is not a commercial area use and stated if they ask for 75% lot coverage all the storage would be outside, not inside. Mr. McGarry stated not all of the stuff there is Geauga Highways property. Mr. McGarry stated nobody said anything to Geauga Highway when they first approached about 3-4 cars and stated they can only have 3-4 cars. Mr. McGarry stated had that been a conversation they could have discussed the limited number of vehicles but stated there was no misrepresentation.

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Mayor Garlich stated that the pictures provided do show misrepresentation. Mayor Garlich stated that this does not look like a repair shop for Geauga Highway and stated that it is an operating yard for Geauga Highway. Mr. Linberg stated that in the email that was shared there was nothing that outlined anything of what is currently going on there.

Mr. Klein stated there is two variances and stated he personally wants to approve Geauga Highway based on the residents that have not wanted to be next door to this property and also based on the fact that it is not being used for what was intended.

Mr. Mike Cicero stated even though there is currently litigation regarding this matter the Planning and Zoning Commission should still act on the matter. Mr. Cicero stated all the chairman needs to do is call the question and if there is no motion it fails or if there is no second it fails. Mr. Cicero stated they can also make a motion to deny.

Mr. Klein stated there is a variance request for 70% of lot coverage where 60% is permitted and asked if anyone would like to take that forward. No motion. Motion is dropped. Mr. Klein stated there is also a permit request for open storage and display of material and equipment and asked if anyone would like to take that forward. No motion. Motion is dropped.

2. **16003 BUTTON ST proposed 1152 SF Accessory Structure garage at height of 26', where 15' is permitted. A 73% variance. Proposed project is for storage located in a R-2 residential district to the rear of a residential dwelling.** Mr. Cicero reminded those in attendance that they are still under oath. Mr. Boksansky stated this is property owned by Pierce St Properties- Briar Hill and stated they are proposing an accessory structure garage at a height of 26 feet, where 15 feet is permitted and it's on the site plan. Mr. Christian Ohman is present and stated they bought a decent amount of equipment mostly for snow removal like snow plows, and transporting residents like golf carts. Mr. Ohman stated they got a large Kubota tractor and things like that for the sidewalks that they will use for plowing. Mr. Ohman stated they also have a maintenance truck and have a lot of medical equipment and are just really tight on storage space. Mr. Ohman stated currently it is being stored on different properties where they can find room and some of it is sitting outside. Mayor Garlich asked why there is a height requirement needed. Mr. Ohman responded and stated there is a loft that would be used to store medical records and medical equipment. Mr. Ohman stated they own the property adjacent to where it would be. Mr. Boksansky stated this property received a variance to have two accessory structures on the property so with this one going in that would make it three and one of the sheds would have to be removed. Mr. Ohman stated they are getting rid of one of the sheds. **Mr. Klein made a motion to approve the 26ft height variance as it is in the character of the affected neighborhood with the condition that one of the other accessory structures is removed, motion seconded by Mr. Linberg. Roll Call. All in favor: Yeas (5).**

Mr. Klein closed the public hearings at 7:36PM.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **15651 W High St Geauga Highway Zoning Application for 1159.06 Open Storage and Display of Material and Equipment.** Motion was dropped.

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2. **16236 Kinsman Rd PP# 18-076100 + additional home (16228 Kinsman Rd) Potential annexation from Middlefield Township to the Village of Middlefield. Additional lot split as well as consolidation would occur within Middlefield Township jurisdiction. Lots proposed within the Village of Middlefield are proposed to be on ½ acre of land.** Mr. Tom Dudinsky has spoken to the township about possible annexation and has given Mr. Boksansky the preliminary survey information. Mr. Dudinsky stated he is doing a lot of work to clean up the property. Discussion held regarding the potential annexation of land from Middlefield Township to the Village. Mayor Garlich expressed concern regarding the 7-acre parcel remaining in the township which could allow for unrestricted industrial use. Mayor Garlich indicated a preference for the entire parcel to be annexed to ensure village zoning protections and stated he would call the property owner to discuss.
3. **Addition-Middlefield Village/Middlefield Township Properties at Kinsman Rd:** Mr. Klein stated across from Glen Valley Dr. there are stacked pallets and dumpsters on township property. Mayor Garlich stated he spoke to the property owner and the property owner stated the roll-off dumpster company is supposed to be there weekly and is not showing up so he is going to work on getting it cleaned up.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **16011 Pierce St: Briar Hill adaptive reuse of Jordak School and additional multifamily building located in the R-PUD Senior Housing zoning district. Review of project update materials.** Mr. Boksansky stated the project is becoming more refined in the exact footprint of how they will occupy the site. Mr. Anderson Ohman is present and stated the front of the building is where they will have most of the amenities like the café and the dining room area which will seat about 80 people. Mr. Ohman stated there is also an outdoor area that will have two exits, a fire pit, raised garden beds, a stone patio, and things like that. Mr. Ohman stated they plan to also have a pub area that would serve beer, wine, coffee, and other drinks as well as a salon, treatment rooms, and bathrooms. Mr. Ohman stated there is also going to be a club room that will be for socializing, card room, and a library. Mr. Ohman stated they plan on keeping on the gym and just updating it and adding a fitness studio. Mr. Ohman stated the lounge area would be open to the public and the fitness area will only be open to residents 55 years or older. Mr. Klein stated there is no formal action needed by the commission tonight.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

ZONING INSPECTORS REPORT – Mr. Boksansky stated the report is included in the packet. Mr. Boksansky was able to issue 8 zoning permits for the month of July.

PENDING

- 1) Smallwood Subdivision (23 homes). GSWCD Plan review input received, reviewed at 3/11/2025 PnZC mtg. No update available.
- 2) Heritage Point (209 homes) Lake Avenue 38 homes in the first Phase. Grading and infrastructure construction underway.
- 3) Proposed Lot Split regarding PPN 19-043400 (in que) application is pending. Involves Geauga County Airport.
- 4) 15885 West High Street Property Nuisance Property update. Incremental progress is being made regarding improvements.
- 5) Noise issue in vicinity of S. State Ave/Industrial Parkway/Kenwood. (Periodic updates as available, remediation project in planning stages. Contract agreement has been prepared).

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6) 14958 South State Ave Coffee Roaster seeking conditional use (granted 1.6.2026) in a GC - General Commercial District Space previously occupied by Middlefield Nutrition. Tenant was seeking the Conditional Use with approval by the Property Owner Robert Potocar. Occupancy pending. A March opening is planned.

7) 1.6.2026: at PnZC Discussed the Open Storage of materials and equipment, and any changes to the ordinance that might be contemplated for renewal on a bi annual basis. Draft ordinance approved and is before council. Public hearing scheduled at Council 2/12/2026 @ 7:30 PM. Third reading approved and adopted 3/12/2026. Permit holders Were informed via mail and Email.

8) 15511 West High Street Middlefield Express, LLC future Oil Change business. Applicant is seeking final approval based on altered site plan. Approved pending final site plan review by zoning inspector. Plans being finalized for approval.

9) Circle K approved pending VE approval, GCSWCD approval. Plans being finalized for approval.

10) PP# 19-072865 Self Storage Business. Conditional Use required & Variance for Lot coverage: 65% lot coverage where 60% is required. Tare Creek access is also required to be approved, + make recommendation to council to approve. (permit pending)

11) Data Center moratorium established.

12) Briar Hill rezone process began for 16011 Pierce St.

13) Hartville Hardware variance for signage approved on June 9, 2026.

Mr. Klein made a motion to adjourn the Planning & Zoning Commission at 7:15pm, motion seconded by Mr. Dietrich. Roll Call. All in favor: Yeas (5).

Next regular meeting is on Tuesday, September 8, 2026 at 6PM.

There being no further business before the Planning & Zoning Commission the meeting adjourned at 6:33 pm.

These Planning and Zoning Meeting Minutes are to be supplemented by any audio recording of the Meeting, to the extent any such audio recording exists and is kept by the Village.

Leslie McCoy – Village Administrator

Scott Klein-Chairman