

**NORTHFIELD ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 22, 2010**

Members present: Polly Mills Fife, Phil Cain, Keith Murray, Kent Finemore and Dave Liberatore. Also present: Peer Lund-Kraft, LRPC and Eliza Conde, Secretary.

Minutes: Dave Liberatore moved, seconded by Keith Murray to accept the minutes of September 27, 2010 as read. Motion passed.

Spaulding Youth Center: Application for a Special Exception (Article 7 Table 1 of the Northfield Zoning Ordinance) to allow construction of an educational facility at 130 Shedd Road (Tax Map R10 Lot 3/R14 Lot 1) on 329.39 acres in the Conservation Zone. After review by Peer Lund-Kraft, Dave Liberatore moved, seconded by Keith Murray to accept the application as complete. Motion passed.

Erin Reardon, Nobis Engineering, representing the applicant presented a plan showing the location of the proposed building and the associated parking lots. Rather than create one large parking area with an extensive storm water management plan, the plan calls for smaller lots in locations convenient to various buildings. It is felt that this would be more in keeping with the Conservation zone and lead to fewer drainage issues. Susan Calegari, President and CEO explained that Spaulding is a non public school for special education students who are referred by school districts throughout the state when they are unable to provide the services needed. Spaulding is now receiving more referrals from public schools for day students with high end special needs. There are currently 47 full time resident students and 18 day students. The trend for the future is more toward the day students. The classrooms are currently in 3 older buildings that are not adequate. The new building will allow them to be under one roof and for the gradual expansion to 100 students. The current classroom building would be used for a multi-purpose room and the other two buildings will be used for office space. The total percentage of additional building space is about 5-7%.

The proposed building will be located in the current parking lot area. The new smaller parking lots will decrease the amount of traffic that currently happens within the campus. Kent Finemore asked how they had determined the number of parking spaces that would be required for the building. As there is nothing in our Ordinance, the engineers visited other town's regulations and considered the number of staff at Spaulding to determine that 160 spaces are needed. The portion of the old parking lot that is not used for the building will become green space. Erin

Reardon noted that there are some wetlands in the field that are being avoided. Scott McGuffin commented that the wetland area has been hayed for years and is not wet but has wetland vegetation.

Peer Lund-Kraft explained to the Board that he has concern over whether this is an expansion of an existing use or a new use. Since both situations require a Special Exception as it is in the Conservation zone, it is not a problem for this application but the Board should consider what they are dealing with. Mr. Lund-Kraft added that this proposal is not a major impact the Conservation zone as it is all centered in the developed area of the property. He cautioned members to include a reference to the plan as submitted if a motion to approve is made.

Public Hearing opened: Kevin Waldron, abutter asked what an approval of the expansion would do to his property value. He was concerned about additional traffic on Bay Hill Road with more students and staff as well as the impact on police and fire services in town with little tax return from the Spaulding Youth Center. Susan Calegari responded that Spaulding pays approximately \$24,000 “in lieu of” taxes and another \$5-6,000 in taxes on the land. With the completion of the new building Spaulding would be re-negotiating the “in lieu of” amount with the Selectmen and Glenn Smith. As for the police impact of the school, Ms. Calegari had recently spoken with Chief Adams who indicated that there have been very few calls for police service. The school has its own health services department, therefore the fire and rescue service is only called for a crisis which does not happen often. She encouraged the Board to ask both departments about the impact of the school on their services. Dave Liberatore indicated he did not see any reason that property values would be impacted. Public hearing closed.

Kent Finemore reminded the Board that this application is requesting a Special Exception because the School is located in the Conservation zone. As for whether it is an expansion of a non-conforming use or a new use, Polly Mills Fife pointed out that the new building is on a separate lot from the other buildings and therefore could be considered a new use on that lot. Kent agreed that this clarifies that the application is correct as submitted as it is a new use on this lot, even though it is really an expansion of the existing school. Polly Mills Fife asked about the potential for this building and lot to be sold at some point and used for another purpose. The general consensus was that the approval would be for an educational facility as proposed on the plan and any new use would have to come before the town.

The criteria for a Special Exception were reviewed. The use is appropriate as is it part of an existing campus, there is no use change and the utilities are adequate with a new septic system planned and the existing 4 wells for water. Keith Murray noted that there are concerns about

expansion with increased traffic and services but felt that these issues will be addressed by the Planning Board during the Site Plan review.

After further discussion, Polly Mills Fife moved, seconded by Dave Liberatore to approve the Special Exception (Article 7 Table 1 of the Northfield Zoning Ordinance) to allow construction of an educational facility at 130 Shedd Road (Tax Map R10 Lot 3) on 329.39 acres in the Conservation Zone as shown on C-1 of the Project Overview Plan dated November 18, 2010 and that the plan be reviewed by the Northfield Planning Board. Noting that both lots should be included because of the parking lots, Polly moved, seconded by Phil Cain, to amend the motion to include Tax Map R14 Lot 1 in the approval. Amendment passed. Motion as amended passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Eliza Conde, Secretary

Minutes approved December 27, 2010