

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
October 22, 2018
MINUTES**

Present: Kent Finemore, Chairman, Keith Murray, Vice Chairman, David Curdie, Brian Brown, Kaitlin Lounsbury, Cathy Keyser, Alternate, Scott Haskins, Alternate & Selectman's Rep., Sue Slack, Representative of Lakes Region Planning Commission.

Public Present: Steven Partridge, Cori Partridge, Dwayne Harbor, Andy Buteau, Northfield Hwy Superintendent, Gloria Blais, Chris Hunt, Scott Tedford, Tim Joubert, Representative of the Tilton-Northfield Fire Department, Kevin LaChapelle, Representative of the City of Franklin and the Franklin Fire Department, Christina Beadle, Planning Board Member and Conservation Commission Vice-Chairperson, Kevin Fife, Conservation Commission Chairman.

Minutes:

Approval of the minutes from September 24, 2018:

Kent Finemore asked the Board if he could address Steven Partridge regarding the Deeded Right of Way to the property through the inactive wetlands at 53 Sargent Street. Steven Partridge stated that it was a Deeded Right of Way from the front property to the rear property. Kent asked if that was a separate Deeded Right of Way to the property and Steven Partridge stated that he would look into it. Kent Finemore stated that there was no frontage for the property that is on the other side of the railroad.

There are a lot of things that are complicated about this situation and that is one of them. Ken Partridge owns the property on Scribner and part on Sargent Street but there is not frontage for the parcel across from the railroad.

Kent Finemore also stated that there were a few things to highlight regarding the testimony from Chris Hunt, he stated that Chris Hunt sat in on the Planning Board proceedings and had some difficulty organizing the zoning changes, this testimony is on Page 2 of the September 24, 2018, Kent read the paragraph of the Zoning Board Minutes in its entirety, Kent stated that Chris Hunt was pointing out that addressing the Planning Board moves or gets it together to get zoning changes on the ballot to meet the desires of the community. Kent stated that right now a campground in the Commercial/Industrial District is not a permitted use of the Zoning Ordinance, it is allowed by special exception in the other districts. There are three ways to changing the Zoning Ordinance one is by the Planning Board proposing to change the ordinance, two the Selectman propose to make a change to the ordinance or three by petition of some registered voters to change the ordinance, that is how it would get on the ballot. The Zoning Board does not have a role in changing the ordinance. That is what Chris Hunt was referring to that you could change the district for this parcel or some area in it, you could do that and I would put it into a position that would make it an allowable use instead of the Commercial Industrial District, I think that is the point he was trying to make. My biggest concern here is not the idea of storing stuff there year round, but it gets into a gray area for the town. What we have from the attorney here regarding this property is based on the conversation Keith and I had with the attorney and he had the biggest question regarding hardship on the application he summarized what the conversation was and what was shared with everybody on the board. When I was highlighting the concerns, regardless how you feel about the concept we have to take into consideration what the town is up against, and making sure it doesn't grow into something that will make it difficult to deal with. The other thing I wanted to highlight on this is that we include conditions that they are very well thought out and forward thinking.

Further discussion from the board regarding the minutes of September 24, 2018

Keith Murray indicated that the clarification to the testimony from Chris Hunt should be added to the minutes of September 24, 2018. Kent Finemore agreed.

Keith Murray motioned to accept the minutes as written with the clarification of the testimony of Chris Hunt. Seconded by David Curdie. Brian Brown abstained. **Vote 3-0. Motion Passed.**

Minutes of October 8, 2018 Site Walk

Keith Murray motioned to accept the minutes of October 8, 2018, seconded by Kaitlin Lounsbury. **Vote 4-0 Motion Passed.**

Continuation of Application for Variance submitted by Steven Partridge for the property located at 53 Sargent Street, Map U02, Lot 1, requesting relief from Article 7, Section 7.1 of the Zoning Ordinance, for the purpose of building a 400 site campground between the Winnepesaukee River and the Winnepesaukee River Trail on 84 acres of land in the Commercial/Industrial Zone. We had a meeting on September 24, 2018, the application was accepted as complete. The members of the Zoning Board participated in a site walk on October 8, 2018, to view the area proposed for the campground and to speak to the town's attorney which Kent Finemore and Keith Murray did on October 16, 2018.

Questions from the Board to the Applicant

Discussion from the Board to Steven Partridge – Steven stated that he was aware of the requirements and conditions set forth on Page 26, Section 10.4 **Recreating Camping Park Standards**. The campground will only be open seasonally from May to October or beginning of November. During the off season if someone wants access to their camper, they will have to call and make an appointment. The road that leads to the campground will be gated, the utilities will be shut off at the end of the camping season. During the winter, we will have people who will plow the roads in the campground as well as checking snow loads.

Steven stated that he would have approximately 200 seasonal sites with the rest weekend campers and tenters. The Board addressed the matter of the campsites being leased and the problem with the acquisition of the land to which is being leased. Steven stated that the sites would only be rented, there will be a camping rental agreement, no transfer of property will be done.

The Board asked Steven Partridge if he was aware of the Camping Park Standards and lot size requirement. Steven stated that he did look it up online. The Board stated that if they applied the standards to the acreage of property, you will not wind up with 400 sites.

Further questions from the board.

Steven stated that he may have fewer sites because he wants to keep as many trees as possible. The Board stated that from the sketch that was provided with the application, we walked around and could see how it was represented. I think that Board has to consider the number of units is dictated by the town's requirements by the Zoning Ordinance, Section 10.4.

Further questions from the Board, not seeing any I am going to open the Public Hearing.

Representative for Gloria Blais. Realtor for the Blais property. The statement read is as follows:

Even if it can't be seen from the Blais Property, this campground will mean a lot more foot and bicycle traffic on the WRT and in the river. This will inevitably result in noise and litter issues. Since the property is located downstream, we can reasonably expect significant traffic on the river as well. Our concerns are that the current state of the property is one of tranquility will turn into one of constant aggravation. The quality of life and the attributes that make the Blais property special will in fact be diminished. It is a bit of a mischaracterization (as documented in the Town minutes regarding the campground) to state that the campground would have less of an impact on the local environment than some other type of business. Other business would have a limited number of vehicles, would not be recreating as the primary purpose and thereby would not be utilizing the WRT and the river to the degree and scope to be expected by campers. The sheer volume of people utilizing the WRT and river will in fact have an environmental and nuisance impact and make the campground a proposition of significant concern to us as potential buyers. With respect to the number of campsites, my personal opinion is that 100 campers is concerning, 400 campers I disconcerting and alarming as the number of vehicles would range between 100 and 400 and the number of people would range from 100 to 1600 (with obvious assumptions). We offer the following for consideration that would be of interest to Gloria Blais and the Town of Northfield. We would ask the Town to require the following:

1. A brochure for all campers outlining the rules of the campground, the ecologically fragile nature of the WRT and the river.
2. A map of the area that outlines the trail and clearly marks properties close by as private property with no trespassing from the trail or the river.

3. The importance of keeping the campground, the WRT and the river free of litter.
4. A requirement for the campground to do litter clean-up along the trail and river on a frequent basis.

We are not opposed to properly run and respectful business endeavor. This one is of particular concern due to the ecologically sensitive area that all of the campers will have access to. We would be the party impacted by the noise, litter and traffic generated by the campground over and above those that already use the trail. We believe that it is imperative for the Town to put some strong requirements in place to protect the environment and the affected proximity land owners. We understand that revenue-generating business is an important tax base consideration for the Town. There are other considerations that we hope will be factored into the final decision relative to the size and scope of the proposed campground so as to give proper consideration and respect to local land owners as well.

Scott Tedford – I ride this trail all the time, what are you going to do to contribute to the maintenance and upkeep of the trail? With that many people using the trail, you are going to destroy that trail.

Christina Beadle, Conservation Committee – This is something that we have been watching for a little bit now, one of the big problems in town right now is camping in places like Knowles Pond. We are seeing people pitch tents and party. There is really no affordable place to tent and this will also help ease what is going on in other parts of town and give them a place to follow the rules. There are garbage cans at Knowles Pond but it is supposed to be a carry in, carry out area. There may be an environmental impact on the river but they (the campground owners) will be cleaning up a lot of other stuff too.

John Cilley, Open Space Committee – One of the biggest things I see in this town is that we have limited draw for people. We see Franklin bringing in kayakers, the Mountain Bike Park bringing in more bicyclers, this offers an opportunity for other recreational activities to come in and support those. We could actually build up opportunities for more kayaking or more bike trails using the WRT more often as it was intended for. There are some definite positives for this and the fact is there is not a lot of camping in this area. Yes they can go over to Belmont, they can go into other parts of the area, but if we are trying to draw people in, this is what we need to draw them in.

Mark Hayes – Owner of Highland Mountain Bike Park – I agree with John on a lot of the statements, we as a town are trying to look at the natural resources, biking and kayaking are two of them. I would love to give Steven all my camping. It would be a lot nicer for them to have an overnight comfort station. I think the WRT is perfect for biking, I don't know if there is an impact on it. I think if you had thousands and thousands of people riding the trail, maybe it's an opportunity to build more trails and expand and utilize the natural resources and connect a lot of the existing trails because there is a lot of fractures trails. To get a lot more people, healthy minded, physically healthy, mentally healthy, socially healthy in this area, that is what biking and kayaking does, and they love to camp, they love to be outside, they love that environment. I am a strong supporter of what Steve is trying to do.

Tim Joubert – Tilton/Northfield Fire Department – I was asked by Steven to do a walk-through of the proposed site to see what kind of impact it would essentially have on the fire department, what I mean by that is incidents and responses. I am going to go by past experience that I have had working for fire departments that have had campgrounds in their community up to 300 site, the impacts it had on the fire department were minimal, I think on the busiest year we had 22 incidents. As far as the campground itself, according to incidents in the campground, I don't think it would have a significant impact as far as the fire department is concerned.

Kevin LaChapelle – Franklin Fire Department & Representative of the City of Franklin – I spoke with the City Manager and she was fine with me speaking on the city's behalf. In reference to the recreation trails, whether it be hiking, kayaking, or the homeless population, thank you for saying that by the way. The concerns we have with the kayakers is that we have none of them. The example we spoke about last week, we had 400 kayakers come into Franklin and camp at Odell Park, when they left, the park was cleaner than it was before then when they found it. Historically, that is how they treat our areas. Since I started with the Fire Department, not once have we responded to a rescue of a recreational kayaker, drunk kayaker, yes we have pulled them from the river. The homeless population and the folks that are using that trail, in our experience, there is some activity on that trail and in the river area that is undesirable at least. This year we had an arsonist, who is now service jail time, who was along the river trail, he was starting fires because there was not activity on the trail. What the young lady said about the increase use of the trail, I think we all know that increased use will flush the undesirables as well as the homeless population of the trails. The biggest homeless population I have seen

so far has been on that trail. There would be nothing better than to see more use and flush them along, the people who are using tents along the trail could use the campground. As far as the city is concerned, this would help our cause for the kayak community and the folks that are looking for camping. I think our camping event at Odell Park with 400 plus campers just proves that they are begging for somewhere to stay.

Andy Buteau – Northfield Highway Department – Steven asked what would be the impact on the roads from the campground. I don't feel that the campground would cause a big impact as the campers will not be traveling the roads during the winter time.

Close the Public Hearing – Go Back to the Board For Discussion

Kent Finemore – I would like to make a couple of statements, we did have some guidelines and statues to some extent, we have Section 10.4 of the Zoning Ordinance, which describes what you can reasonably expect for the number of units that is applied to a piece of property. There would have to be some locations of the wetlands, the buffers that go along with them, the buffers from the property lines that are described in the Section 10.4 and elsewhere in the ordinance, the Groundwater Protection Act, the limits of the wetland out there has not been identified along with the setbacks so that all of that with the dimensional requirements will ultimately dictate how many units they can reasonably get in there. Beyond that, we definitely have to address the issue with developing a parcel that does not have frontage on a class V road that is very much as is a problem with multiple residences and that is the basis for zoning. We had that conversation with Bart briefly and not having frontage is an issue and that is something to request relief from in addition to the use. In addition to that any conditions that you want to place, we had testimony from the Blais' that outlined a few desirable requirements for a campground if it was going to happen, they are translatable into conditions they are worthy of discussion about how the board might handle something like that. These types of things are potentially conditions and if you are going to use conditions and expect them to be enforceable, and for the town to be able to use them and there are expectations for the town to follow and for what the intent of the board is, they have to be well thought out and reasonably considered, you have to make sure that it is reasonable for the property owner and the person operating the campground that they can abide by it. Steven has given us a schedule, and that is the first time I have heard that, from the testimony from earlier, I believe Steven identified a season from Memorial Day to October 31st. That is helpful, it puts limits on the extent of the season, which is important, and it would be a condition because I don't see it in the statue or our town ordinance, there would be a lot of things to consider to make sure that we protect ourselves and Steven stated that he has no interest in leases, that does not sound like an unreasonable condition for the board, especially if that is how he feels about it to make sure that what goes with leases, the assumption of ownership of property and access to the property, I think that would be a very important condition for the Board thing to consider.

Open for Discussion Amongst The Board

Cathy Keyser – We have a seasonal camper and in the seasonal agreement to leave it there, we don't have access to it. We are told that before leaving for the season, make sure you take out everything that you need. You cannot stay in the camper during the winter, it is just too cold. In the agreement, it states that we do not have access to our camper unless there is danger to your camper. The campground has someone that goes around and checks the campers. Unless you are going to get six feet of snow on the camper, there is not someone who is going to take the snow off. Campers are left year round at campgrounds all the time as well as campers that are stored outside at dealerships all the time and they do not clean off all the roofs of the campers. There is no heat in the campers so there will not be any melting. If it is stated in the rental agreement that they will not have access to their campers during the winter season then it would be Steve's responsibility and the owners need to know that. Keith Murray asked Cathy if she carried insurance on her camper. Cathy stated that yes she does have insurance on her camper. Kent Finemore asked if that was just a rental agreement and Cathy confirmed that it was just a rental agreement. Cathy stated that they go up in April and leave in October, Cathy stated that it would be \$250 to \$300 less a month if we were to go up there every weekend. It is worth it if you like to go up to a place like that. Cathy stated again that you have no rights to the property. Cathy stated that they are only allowed the vehicle towing the camper and one other vehicle. She stated that they also have a golf cart at the campground to which they carry insurance on and can only be driven by someone with a driver's license.

Scott Haskins confirmed the statements of Cathy Keyser, stating that they are only allowed one additional vehicle besides the one towing the camper. There are special parking spaces for visitors, it is called the overflow parking.

Cathy stated that visitors have to leave at a certain time and if you have visitors that would like to stay overnight there is a limit to the number of people allowed to stay per campsite.

Brian Brown stated that there is an incurred cost individuals coming to visit the people staying at the campground, they have to pay to visit. If those individuals visiting for the day wish to stay the night, they will have to pay an additional fee to stay overnight.

Scott Haskins stated that he sees the majority of the people staying at the campground staying put. They will either go kayaking or go up to Mark's place (Highland Mountain Bike Park). The feedback I have been getting from different communities and committees that I am on that this is a dire need. It is a special campground, because the other campgrounds that you and I have been to there is not an attraction, we have an attraction here. I think people will be coming here for the attraction and not just coming here for the White Mountains. We have a destination here in our community.

Cathy Keyser stated that when they go to the campground we stay put, we drive in we stay, we meet friends and there are enough things to do at the campground.

Brian Brown stated that there is a more important aspect to that too and that is there is actually a quiet time, so some of the concerns about partying until one or two o'clock in the morning is not going to happen. Usually 9 o'clock, depending on the campground, what I have seen, it's been from 9 o'clock to maybe even uproots of 10 o'clock, after 10 o'clock it's quiet time, that means generators off, no music, whatever is going on usually the latest I have seen is 10 o'clock is quiet time. So residents, noises echoing through the wood line whatever it is a 10 o'clock thing.

Cathy Keyser – Can we make a noise ordinance even though the town doesn't have a noise ordinance?

Kent Finemore – I just want to jump in a second, the testimony we just heard, especially Cathy's is very important that we get that in the minutes. The reason why I say that is because talking about other campgrounds and how they operate, you are raising a very good point about what we could put as conditions and how Steve runs his campground. That is what I was talking about, it might be a little more of a gray area than having a season open/close thing. Conditions are very important to consider maybe some of that is worthy of trying to dictate into a condition. Some of that is how he is going to run his park.

Cathy Keyser – you can go online and look at all their regulations and some of them are pretty stern. The rules of other campgrounds state that if a child is by the pool they must be accompanied by an adult. These rules are standard for most campgrounds. The campground where we stay if the children are down by the river, there must be an adult with them. If a child is by the pool, they must have an adult with them. Those are rules that basically any campground has or basically anywhere has. You are not going to have a child who is 10 years old go out in a kayak or pool by themselves, those are pretty standard campground rules.

Brian Brown – I don't know what Steve's intentions are as far as that goes, it usually, he may end up having more than one, there is usually I don't know what you want to consider it, a ranger, that usually drives around and makes sure that people are adhering to the rules during quiet time or when you are having a camp fire and make sure it is not out of control, usually someone who works, in this case, say Steve, is constantly on a golf care constantly riding around the campground making sure everybody stays within those rules.

Scott Haskins – This is Blais Property, thank you again for donating that property, it gets used a lot. With your property abutting against Steve's property, is it possible we can dictate, I know that sometimes the tenters are the hell raisers, that the weekenders who come in, I hate to say it, but they come in and get a little crazier than the ones who are seasonal campers. Where her property abuts up against Steve's campsite, would it be feasible to have seasonal campers abut up next to her property so if she happens to look outside, I don't know how far the distance is, she is not going to see the fire from the tenters and she will not hear the craziness of the tenters versus someone who wants to stay there all year round.

Brian Brown – Steve, don't get me wrong, I think when we did the site walk I think the tenters were going to be more along the river because obviously the size that it would be and the permanent will be on the backside along the wetlands that would go closer to her property.

Steve Partridge – There is a large buffer between properties and it's going to be 400-500 yards of thick brush swamp between my property and her property.

Brian Brown – So correct me if I'm wrong Steve, where that is is going to where your intention were to have more of the permanent campers on the back side of the property.

Kent Finemore – Further discussion among the Board

Keith Murray – from the State's standpoint they define the campground as a recreational campground or camping park meaning a parcel of land on which two or more campsites are occupied or are intended for temporary occupancy of recreational dwelling purposes only, not for permanent year round residence, excluding recreational campers defined in RSA 45a-23. This kind of gives us an indication if we are going to talk about a campground, the state has further defined it a little bit further than the town has defined it as. So to Kent's point before about having any land ownership in the future, it's probably anything we have to worry about then.

We have to decide as a board whether or not this meets the criteria for a variance. This is expressly prohibited in the Commercial/Industrial Zone. Chris brought up a good point that the Planning Board is kind of kicking the can down the road at us to try to relieve the inequity on this particular piece of property without going through the process rezoning it, putting it on the ballot, getting it before the voters, going to town meeting, they are trying to expedite this by coming through us, that is what he was saying at the last meeting. One of the things that Bart brought up and writes to us is that the ordinance, The Spirit of the Ordinance, talks about preserving valuable and scarce land for Industrial and Commercial Uses in order to ensure a broad tax base. So by doing this, he is saying that if we approve this use for a campground, it is taking away a large parcel of land within in the town for Commercial/Industrial use, so that is what he is saying in that paragraph. So we have to be careful in this, we don't want to be kicking away areas that would be attracting other possibly high revenue generating Commercial Industrial.

Cathy Keyser – Steve had mentioned last week that he wanted to keep the trees because he wanted to preserve the natural surroundings and you put a business down there like Freudenberg, yes it will make better revenue but what will it look like, what is that going to do to the kayakers, the natural surroundings?

Keith Murray – I am just telling you what Bart said, Bart doesn't know our town, he is looking at it from an independent, this is what your zoning ordinance says, this is the "Spirit of the Ordinance." He has blinders on when it comes to this, he said that himself, because he is not from our town, the other thing he did say that is worth mentioning is that it is Steve's burden to show that the property is unique and distinguishable from other properties within the zone and that it is causing a hardship by not being able to do this. So what is the uniqueness of the property, what makes it distinguishable from the other properties in the Commercial/Industrial Zone that makes it so much of a hardship for him not to do this, another thing this letter brings up and says quite clearly is that they believe their properties will diminish by this. That is one of the other criteria that we have to look at, is what he is doing going to do diminish the value of the property owners. We have testimony now that they believe that it possibly could. Can we put in restrictions within an approval to mitigate that, we probably could. I just say that for consideration.

Further Discussion

Kent Finemore – I didn't mention this before, but when I brought up the part about the lot doesn't have frontage on it, I don't know if it distinguishes from other properties in the Commercial/Industrial Zone or not, but it certainly represents one of the challenges that the establishment of the Commercial/Industrial Zone for this property created because it was a lot of record even then, but it doesn't have any frontage which creates a challenge for this property.

Keith Murray – He would probably have to come back and apply for another variance?

Kent Finemore – Yes, I guess the point I was trying to make is other properties in Northfield in the Commercial/Industrial District, most of them have frontage, makes this a whole lot different than those.

Keith Murray – Would you say that it makes it unique and distinguishable?

Kent Finemore – I don't know.

Further Discussion among the Board

Kaitlin Lounsbury – It seems like its unique in that because the property he has here is used by the owners of this property and if they want to do something with that, selling that piece of property to someone else, that is not going to be a desirable location if there is no frontage, so it does seem that that is a significant difference between that and the other ones. Now that wasn't mentioned in the application.

Kent Finemore – He probably didn't understand the application.

Further discussion among the Board

Scott Haskins – What would be the outcome, a lot of folks here tonight, they keep saying kayaks, kayaks, kayaks, and we know what is going on in Franklin. On Steve's property, when we walked it, his idea was to have some tents by the river, my concern, not really concern, but if you have kayaks, I am not a kayaker, would they just run down the embankment or would there be a designated area to put the kayaks in, versus having a campsite on the embankment further on down where his fire was, just drag my kayak up.

David Curdie – You can do that, you can restrict that?

Keith Murray – If you wanted, I guess. If you are going to have all the campsites along the river bank, and I am a camper and I am a tenter, I am just going to slide down the embankment.

Scott Haskins – I just wanted to know the impact that it was going to have on the embankment.

Kent Finemore – First there are two things, the wetlands regulations and the shoreline protection act. I don't know but I could ask how they handle a permanent things like that. You are not supposed to anything within a buffer area of the shore so they would somehow limit that. That would be Steve's responsibility, you would think that would be a part of the Permit that goes with the wetlands and shoreline protection act. I just don't know how to handle that, whether they centralize that or, my suspicion is that they don't want every inch of the shoreline to be an access point, you want to leave it alone as much as possible, it is erosion control and habitat, two of your biggest things that you want to protect. Erosion is a big deal along any river but that one goes up and down depending on how much water they let out of Lake Winnepesaukee, it is staggered time, but that is what happens there when they let a lot of water out of the lake, you get a lot of water in the river which is very erosive.

Open Public Hearing – Accept further testimony from those present if you want to offer it at this time.

Christina Beadle – I am speaking on behalf of the Planning Board, we are looking into rezoning the area from Hodgdon Rd down to Cross Mill, we just trying to figure out why it is C/I there. It is not going to happen on this next ballot but we are working on it.

Scott Tedford – I would like to go back to the trail, the WRT Committee has just spent a large amount of money on the Franklin side where it was eroded really bad and came out of the funds that they get by "Taste of the "Trail Dinner" and contributions and that is how that trail is maintained. You are going to put 100 people on that trail, what are they going to do, how is the WRT going to maintain it, how is the WRT committee going to maintain it with all that traffic on there. They scrimp and save, they just took money from the bridge project to do the maintenance work on the trail and now you are going to flood it with people. There is no way you are going to maintain that trail. It's just that we don't have the money. Unless they are contributing money to help maintain the trail which is a private trail basically, I know it's the town, but it's maintained by a private committee, how are we going to keep up with that, there is no way, the trail will just turn to crap, that's what's going to happen, unless the town wants to fork over some money to maintain the trail, which they do not do at the time, it is privately maintained, there is just no way we can keep up with it.

Further Testimony

Mark Hayes – Highland Mountain Bike Park – we had approximately 30,000 visitors this year, and there is maintenance that goes on into downhill the trails for sure, sliding into berms really fast, breaking fast. I see the WRT as a very mellow trail and I also see that, this is just coming from my world, I see a lot of people that are using or will potentially use this campsite as my customer, probably are not necessarily interested in riding as much on the WRT as they are on the trails that exist in the area, the single track mountain bike trails, the trails that currently exist on, I don't know, or they are kayakers. I don't see hundreds of people in that campground using that trail. I might be wrong but this is how I see it from what I see the campsites used in this area, it would be mountain bikers from Highland, people searching for new type single track mountain bike trails, not necessarily a fire road, rail trail system. So and again, you bring in more people in, these people are healthy, physically, and mentally socially healthy minded people. This town has an amazing opportunity

to grow and attract these people and when you bring more people in there could quite possibly be more funds to help build projects and maintain WRT or build new trails that take advantage of this awesome resource in this town.

Scott Tedford – Can I say one more thing, I am not against this park, I am one hundred percent for it, I am just worried about the trail. I will stop my comment there.

Kevin LaChapelle – Can I speak as a community member? I see this as an amazing opportunity and there are so many examples that we have and the Highland Mountain Bike Park is probably the biggest one that we have. If you look at the land values, the properties values in that area, what it has done for the property values in that area, we had a ski area debunked, they were burning shacks, they lodge was ready to collapse, I told Mark that he was crazy the first time that I met him, I told him this isn't going to work, 30,000 visitors and you look what it has done for Park N Go and what it has done for the restaurants, drive around here on a weekend and see what's thriving, it's the people who are using it. Now in reference to the trail, I utilize the trail frequently, now I was listening to everyone speak tonight, I think the opportunity there is partnerships. I know that the city maintains that side with a mower, they do some grading and they partner at that end and there is more community members that once they utilize it, they assist. That is what I see happening here is the more people that get involved in good will and good spirit, I would rather see folks whether they are using the trail or maintaining the trail instead of burning the property adjacent to the trail, pitching tents in places they shouldn't and living there for the summer, that homeless population that I spoke of earlier. The partnership you see here is what will make it thrive the other piece that I have, I guess I have an open question, I don't know property values, but the way I see it, if you were to use the Blais Property as an example if the campground and other businesses were to go down there to start to thrive, in my mind it would increase the value of the Blais property and folks would want to buy a piece of property like that because it is adjacent to a thriving business. We have already seen it next to Mark's bike park, things are going to start to flourish, we have the proof right in front of us as a community, not just as Northfield but the area. I have taken a bunch of different notes and I see it on the positive side and I hear this gentleman's concern with the trail, that's a valid concern, but the partnership piece could be maybe the trail committee and the Partridge family, no pun intended, step up to the plate and they partner together to have good trail maintenance. I could go on and on about the good things that could come out of this but I think you have been hearing them all night.

Further Testimony

Steven Partridge – I agree with Kevin and that we need to make a friendly bond with the walking trail because we plan on utilizing the walking trail as an attraction for the families to go walk the dogs and kids in a safe environment, not being out in traffic. A lot of people that camp like to get up in the morning and take their morning walk, we were hoping to use that walking trail as an attraction for a nice easy walk, safe walk with beautiful scenery and we don't want that trail to diminish any way either, so we certainly wouldn't mind helping maintain it and clean it and I know you don't know us at all but we actually donate a lot to the town through Little League, the police department and the fire department, we are not a selfish family, we do a lot for the community to and that walking trail is very important to us too.

Close the Public Hearing - Back to the Board

Further Discussion from the Board

Brian Brown – One thing I would like to point out, I am not trying to sell it by no means of correction one way or the other, about what Kevin was talking about the accessibility to the trails, I know you go up north with your snowmobiles and trailers and such, with their camp up there or their homes one of the big selling things is to have a camp or home that has direct access to the snowmobile trails, I will use that as an example. My opinion is, the Blais Property, should it sell, I think would increase the probability of attraction because someone is going to want to have immediate access to the walking trail or kayak, or such.

Kent Finemore – the Board has to decide how to proceed here, we have received a lot of testimony here and a lot of it is very favorable, pointing out a lot of good things, pointing out a lot things that the board might want to consider for conditions, etc. The town's attorney, how do I put this, is not usually willing, especially with something as complicated as this, to propose a bunch of conditions. They are much more effective at the viewing conditions that board is itself grants, provides, feedback on that kind of thing, and their desire to string anything out, for my own sake, at the same time, I haven't seen an application come to the board that warrants so much consideration on the part of the board in a while, we are going as far back as the proposed use, the Partridge property further up Scribner, proposal to do assisted living. It just

didn't seem feasible. I am wondering if the board would consider a work session between now and the next meeting to try to draft what considerations need to be taken by the board, pro, con, and if in fact there are conditions the board wants to propose, we can compile those at the work session and share them with the attorney and get a response or further opinion from him, if that makes sense. Voting it as an idea as a board, I don't think to create any more meetings, or anything else, I don't see how the board can reasonably, whatever the will of the board is, if the board wants to deny this, then we can do this tonight, but if the board wants to consider this further and consider granting an approval, there is a lot of work to be done in my mind.

Discussion Amongst the Board

Discussion regarding the work session.

Keith Murray – The questions is, are we inclined to approve this with conditions or are we inclined to deny it? Because if we are inclined to deny it, we could do that tonight.

David Curdie – I am inclined to approve it with conditions.

Cathy Keyser – I feel the same.

Brian Brown – I am inclined to approve it with conditions, however, I think time frame wise, with all the consideration and discussion, like Kent said, I think it's going to take a lot more time than probably what we have, unless you want to get a pot of coffee going and pull a late nighter.

Keith Murray – What other conditions, we've heard.

Cathy Keyser – If we were to approve it with conditions so he could further with the permits and architect and all that, with conditions we could approve it, we can come up with conditions, is that something you could do?

Keith Murray – yes, what Kent is suggesting is that we come up with some proposed conditions that we can get to Bart so he can give us some guidance as to what whether or not they are legal, enforceable and whether they are a good idea or not. We can come back to the next meeting prepared to approve with those conditions or other conditions.

Kaitlin Lounsbury – Your questions is can we approve and do conditions later and I don't think we can do that.

Keith Murray – No we cannot

Kent Finemore – One of the things I would love to have here is the benefit of the draft minutes from this meeting, we have heard a lot but I would love to have in front of me as a way of pulling out what I would propose as conditions, then I would like to give you assignments, saying the board could take that and then come into the work session, which is an open meeting, go into the work session with something to work from and wind up with thinkers, most important to me is an individual member and then the benefit of those who have been at campgrounds.

Cathy Keyser – I have a whole folder from campgrounds that we have been to that have all the rules and regulations, big maps and stuff like that that we can draw from, which from all of those are good, I can't imagine that there would be there would be a problem with what Steve is proposing.

Work Session Scheduled for October 29, 2018 at 7 pm

David Curdie – What about the frontage, are we all set with that or do we need something else for that?

Kent Finemore – I don't know, that is a reasonable question. We have that sort of discussion with him.

David Curdie - Yes, they own both parcels right now but if someday it gets spun off the campground to somebody else.

Keith Murray – that could be part of the work session.

Cathy Keyser – Well it would be a deeded Right of Way

Steven Partridge – All our property is in the same family trust so it is owned by the same people. The only thing separating it is the walking trails and railroad tracks.

Kent Finemore – One of the things that the work session might help us somehow address that, I wouldn't mind bouncing it off Bart. We understand what the intent of the application was, if we come out of that understand that was part of it maybe we can handle it at the same time. The Board has to discuss it maybe share it with the attorney. It's just one of the many issues the that board really has to consider, it is a challenge with that property just straight up, it doesn't matter what zone it's in, it's a challenge that exists for that property. I think, personally, it does help distinguish it from other further property in town that is in the Commercial/Industrial Zone. I think that benefits the applicant without looking into it any further. Something to consider, not trivial.

Brian Brown – So what is implication, hypothetically, if we were to approve it, and then the Planning Board or by other means, the zoning gets changed?

Kent Finemore – Well whatever action we take the board takes to approve the variance or something goes with the property so it wouldn't matter what the change in zoning was, but it would be, that would be more situational, if the town

were to adopt a district change that would be more in line with what would makes sense along that strip along the river. It is in the Master Plan, there is reference to it, and it shows a recreation area as a potential desire of the town that is on that side of the railroad. You have to establish the title of the district that is not what defines a district, you can call it whatever you want. It is the allowable uses are what defines the district, calling it that means nothing, it is a lot of work to do to change the zoning, that would have to include changes to the table and everything that goes with it in that particular district, so it's not, I doubt there is enough time between now and March to get that well thought out and done. To his questions, whatever action that the board took, whether it was a variance, it would go with the property, no matter what the zoning is.

Kent Finemore – so is the board thinking 7 pm on the 29th of October for the work session?

Keith Murray – Motion to Continue the Application/Seconded by David Curdie

Kent Finemore – Moved and Seconded. Motion to Continue the Application to the November 26th meeting and Schedule a Work Session for the board on October 29, 2018 at 7 pm.

Discussion on the Motion. None Noted Vote 4-0 Motion Passed

Motion to Adjourn made by Davie Curdie/Seconded by Keith Murray. Vote 4-0 Motion Passed.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:45 pm

Minutes approved November 26, 2018