

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD  
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT  
SEPTEMBER 24, 2018  
MINUTES**

Present: Kent Finemore, Keith Murray, David Curdie, Kaitlin Lounsbury; Scott Haskins

Public Attendees: Cathy Keyser, Steven Partridge, Cori Partridge, Chris Hunt

Meeting called to order at 7:09 pm.

Kent Finemore - Brian Brown is not present for this meeting, Scott Haskins will be a voting member of the Zoning Board tonight.

**Meeting Minutes of August 27, 2018 –**

Keith Murray Moved/Seconded by Kaitlin Lounsbury to Approve the Minutes of August 27, 2018.

**Changes to the minutes are as follows:**

Page 1 – Meeting Minutes of June 26, 2017 – remove Unanimous Vote, Minutes Approved. It should read Vote 4-0. Motion Passed. Minutes Approved.

Meeting Minutes of July 23, 2018 – remove Unanimous Vote, Minutes Approved. It should read Vote 4-0. Motion Passed. Minutes Approved.

Page 5 – Motion for Application for Variance – Remove All In Favor; Unanimously Approved, the minutes should read Vote 4-0. Motion Passed.

Last Page – Where it states Keith Murray made a motion to grant the variance/seconded by Kaitlin Lounsbury, remove all in favor; unanimously passed. The minutes should read Vote 4-0. Motion Passed.

Where it states Motion to Adjourn, remove all in favor and instead it should read Vote 4-0. Motion Passed.

**Vote on the Minutes of August 27, 2018, with the changes noted. Vote 4-0. Motion Passed.**

**Steven Partridge – Application for Variance – 53 Sargent Street (Map U02, Lot 1)**

Requesting a variance 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.

Discussion regarding the completeness of the application, it is definitely in the Commercial/Industrial Zone and also in the Groundwater Overlay District

Keith Murray Moved/Seconded by David Curdie to accept the application as complete. **Vote 4-0. Motion Passed.**

**Steven Partridge** – presentation of the project – proposing to build a 400 site campground on land that is zoned Commercial/Industrial that is just not suited for Commercial/Industrial use. We feel that a campground is much more suited to keep it in the aesthetics of the land instead of building an eyesore factory that I don't think the roads can handle the traffic of a factory. I just feel that a campground is more suited for that area. I am just asking for a variance or a change in the zoning to allow something that will be better suited for that piece of land.

Kent Finemore – Questions to the Applicant from the Board:

The Board asked questions to Steven Partridge regarding the access to the property, Steven stated that he had a deeded Right of Way over the inactive wetlands and the sketch showing campsites in the Wetlands Area. The Board also asked questions regarding the storage of campers for the year round sites. It was noted that the year round sites are just for storage of the campers and not to be utilized during the off season. The Board asked about the possibility of contamination of the Ground Water Protection District, Steven Partridge stated that the majority of the campers that would be stored year round would be tow behind campers.

Further Questions to the Applicant from the Board:

The Board inquired if the campground would incorporate the rail trail. Steven Partridge stated that it would not and that he was actually planning on building a stone wall instead of a fence to keep the aesthetic beauty of the area. The Board also asked questions regarding the sewer station and Steven Partridge stated that the Sewer District would be doing an annual set rate for the campground.

The Board asked Steven Partridge in regard to the Ground Water Protection District if he would comply Steven stated that he would comply. The campground is going to have a minimal impact as there will be minimal cutting. The Board also inquired about a leach field and/or lagoon. Steven stated that the sewage will be pumped out to the main line. The Board asked Steven Partridge how the property is currently being used, Steven stated that the property is currently being used for the construction company, storage of equipment and also the horses that are on the property.

Further Questions from the Board, None Noted.

### **Open Public Hearing**

Chris Hunt –I would just make comment that sitting on the Planning Board meetings, it had some difficulty in organizing the Zoning change processes. It was their recommendation that in order to address this inequity of zoning use at district, they suggested that the applicant utilize a variance to address the zoning inequity. That's why the variance is being sought. The novel way to address zoning inequities, when the Planning Board gets it together to get zoning changes on the ballot meet the desires of the community, this would be a shorter way to get to the process.

Cathy Keyser – Made a comment about her desire for camping and she would use the campground, the comradery and new friendships you make at the campgrounds. Cathy also indicated that the motor homes usually are not left at the campground during the winter months, they are removed and stored elsewhere.

### **Close Public Hearing**

One of the greatest responsibilities of the Board in these situations, regardless of how you feel about the concept of what is going on, the reference in the application is something that suggests any level of permanence is of concern to me. It is less about, the idea of storing stuff out there all year round, and next thing you know there is a proposal to condominiumize. It's a different situation and there are so many different directions this could go in if the Board is not diligent

about studying the concept and then attaching the appropriate conditions whoever the board decides to address the application. It's a pretty big when you are talking about 400 sites and if some portion of it has the potential of ownership leaning toward condominiumship. The Board discussed seeking assistance in formulating conditions if the variance were to be granted.

The Board questioned Steve Partridge if he had done a study by the police and fire department regarding the services they will be providing.

Steve Partridge stated that he has spoken with the Police Department as well as the Fire Department and the campground access road will give both departments better access to the property.

Scott Haskins – I am on the Open Space Committee, I know Mark from the Highlands quite well and he is dying for a campground. The folks of the Kayak Club want this campground as well. We don't know if this is going to be 400 sites, this is just a schematic right?

Steve Partridge – Yes it's just a schematic, I don't want to do all 400 sites at once, find out it fails and lose all the money I have.

Scott Haskins – Campers usually once they arrive at the campground, they stay put, they want to enjoy the campground and the activities the campground has to offer.

Steve Partridge – I have talked to so many business in the Northfield, Tilton and Franklin area. They are all in favor of the campground, the campground will benefit all the local businesses.

Scott Haskins – The only concern would be the traffic at the intersection of Park Street and Sargent Street.

Keith Murray – Whether we like it or not, it probably does not fit the definition for the variance by the book.

Kaitlin Lounsbury – I read what Sue Slack wrote, there is a part about the uniqueness of the property, I am actually hearing that it is quite a bit different than other commercial industrial properties in there in terms with the overlay of the ground water, the remoteness and it is not really well suited for commercial industrial purposes necessarily, so there actually does seem that there are unique elements to the property.

Keith Murray – A lot of our commercial industrial areas in town have secondary aquifers sitting under them, they have residential uses. I live on Forrest Road and I live in a Commercial/Industrial Zone. I have Freudenberg across the street, AmeriGas down the road and then you have houses, by the strict letter of the law, Susan is right, this does not qualify for the variance, it does not show financial hardship that can be proven. There can be other uses for the property in the Commercial Industrial setting, however, we have to take everything into consideration as well as an economic standpoint it was mentioned that it will be low impact and it will not be adding to our average daily membership to our school district, which is of concern, and will be bringing a lot of revenue to the town which is good. I am a little bit concerned of the services that would be required to maintain this, I can just see a thousand people on a Saturday night in July up on the property. We have to make sure that emergency vehicles will have access to the area so they can get in and out. Does this mean if we allow this to happen suddenly will

we need to add a police officer, will we need to add to the fire department. But to Kent's point, if we are inclined to approve this we need to spend some time talking with the attorney.

Kent Finemore – We should do this together as a board, it is a really neat site. Northfield doesn't have a lot of generators of tax base, we have Knowles Pond and Highland Mountain Bike Park and this property, you have to see this property. We have to take our time individually to compile what are our concerns. We can definitely consider it, I see the upsides of the property, but we all have to take a moment to see what would be the down side.

The Board presented questions to Steve Partridge regarding access to the campground, emergency vehicle access and security. Steven stated that the access will be via two lane road past the residence to an office where people will check in. The access will be fire truck accessible. The campground will have its own security on staff 24 hours a day during the camping season. Steven stated that he would start the campground with one hundred camping sites and see how successful it is before establishing additional sites.

Kent Finemore - Back to the Board

Keith Murray – I think we should schedule a site walk and continue this application until the next meeting which is scheduled for October 22, 2018.

Site walk is scheduled for October 8, 2018 at 5:30 pm. Members of the Board can park in the driveway of the Partridge Residence.

Keith Murray Moves/Seconded by David Curdie to continue the Application for Variance to October 22, 2018. **Vote 4-0. Motion Passed.**

Other Business:  
None Noted.

Kaitlin Lounsbury makes a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by David Curdie. **Vote 4-0. Motion Passed.**

Meeting Adjourned at 8:09 pm

*Minutes approved October 22, 2018*