

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD
PLANNING BOARD
May 6, 2013
Minutes**

Members present: Doug Read, Mike Murphy, Kim Robichaud, Jason Durgin, Glen Brown, Wayne Crowley and Kevin Waldron. Also present: Dari Sassan, LRPC.

Minutes: Glen Brown moved, seconded by Jason Durgin to accept the minutes of April 1, 2013 as read. Motion passed.

Wayne Crowley informed the Board that the Lavallee application which had been continued to this meeting was withdrawn by the applicant and therefore no action will be taken.

Kevin Sturgeon: Mr. Sturgeon asked for guidance in subdividing his 31.75 acre lot on Shaker Road as it does not meet the 4 to 1 ratio. He is considering breaking off 3 acres with the residence but would like the option of offering 13 acres to a buyer. Either way, he would be creating lots that do not meet the dimension requirements. He presented a plan that gives the smaller lot 240 feet frontage which would not allow any further subdivision. Wayne Crowley advised Mr. Sturgeon that he would have to ask for a waiver from the 4 to 1 ratio which may or may not be approved by the board. If there is no further subdivision possibility the Board would be more inclined to approve the waiver. Doug Read suggested that having topography and wetlands mapping would help in making the decision for the waiver.

Robert Kidder Revocable Trust: Application for a revised site plan to expand the Ciao Pasta Restaurant at 133 Park Street (Tax Map U8 Lot 143) in the Comm/Ind. Zone. Mike Handley, owner of Ciao Pasta, explained that he plans to expand the restaurant space into the former Attorney Chandler office to allow for an additional 32-4 seats. He noted that this would make the building have one use rather than 2. Wayne Crowley informed Mr. Hanley that a letter from Mr. Kidder is required indicating that Mr. Hanley is his representative. Mr. Crowley also noted that the Special Exception granted by the ZBA in 2008 was specifically for a 60 seat restaurant and therefore it is necessary to get ZBA approval to expand the business.

Dari Sassan asked about parking on site and whether there are enough spaces for Park and Go and the storage business on the lot. Mr. Hanley responded that there is sufficient parking for each business. Dari Sassan noted that a signature block for the Planning Board signature needs to be added to the site plan.

There will be no additional signage and the hours of operation are for dinner only. Mr. Hanley is considering a breakfast buffet on weekends, but has not finalized that decision. For licensing, the state only requires notification of the additional seating. Kevin Waldron moved, seconded by Mike Murphy to accept the application as complete pending items suggested by Dari Sassan. Motion passed. Public hearing was opened and closed with no comment. Glen Brown moved, seconded by Kim Robichaud to continue this application to the June 3, 2013 meeting. Motion passed.

Northfield Village District grant: Glenn Smith explained that the town has received a State grant with the goal of enhancement of village centers. Jerry Coogan, LRPC, noted that the 2003 Northfield Master Plan talks about a village zone to enhance and develop the village area. The Master Plan mentions preservation of the historic buildings as a goal, but Mr. Coogan suggested that the town might want to include economic factors as well. It is intended to include residents, property owners, Planning Board, other committee members, etc. at workshops to learn how people envision the village district. The study will help provide information needed to move forward with zoning changes that will help the district move forward. He used the example of Ciao Pasta which is located in the Comm/Ind. Zone in Northfield yet needs a Special Exception to operate. This study is an opportunity to look at the community's goals and then review the town's ordinances and regulations to have them reflect those goals.

Wayne Crowley asked what the advantage would be to create a village district. Mr. Coogan responded that it might make sense to streamline zoning applications or to make an ordinance specifically for the village district. Currently there are areas in town with more intense development along side residential development. Glenn Smith suggested that having a village zone could make it easier to commercially develop downtown rather than in the rural areas. Jerry Coogan added that the theory is to create and promote development where there is existing water and sewer. The study area includes about 528 acres and about 1500 residents. The study area is bounded by I93 to the east, Winnepesaukee River to the north and the rail road line to the west.

The study includes holding workshops for public input to look at alternatives. The Planning Board will determine what is desirable and then LRPC will prepare proposals for any zoning changes that would be necessary to meet the goals. Public meetings will be held in late May and June. The goal is to have the study done by December and make a presentation at the 2014 Town Meeting. Wayne Crowley stated that business owners need to be invited.

Economic Recovery Zone (ERZ): Glenn Smith introduced the concept of designated areas to encourage investment in expansion of businesses in towns. Three areas which are currently in the Comm/Ind. Zones in town have been suggested as potential ERZ s which, if approved, would allow companies to be eligible for tax credits for the NH BET and BPT taxes. There would be no tax impact to the town unless it attracts new business or encourages existing businesses to expand. In order to be eligible for the tax credit a company must meet certain requirements such as a percentage of expansion and an increased number of employees. The objective of the incentive is to create additional jobs in town. Gary Chabot of the NH Division of Economic Development stated that the purpose of creating an ERZ is to promote development in underutilized areas that towns want developed. Once a town designates an area as an ERZ the state economic development team will be aware of the availability and promote it to potential incoming businesses. When a company invests in property and jobs it can be eligible for tax credits of up to \$200,000 over a period of 5 years. Wayne Crowley asked why this wouldn't be available for all businesses. Gary Chabot explained that the purpose of this program is to promote development in specific areas that towns want developed. The state has staff recruiting for business in the state and they promote ERZs. The zones can be created by the Planning Board and Selectmen and the State will recognize them right away. The zones can be amended and/or expanded easily if desired by the town. After further discussion, Mike Murphy moved, seconded by Kim Robichaud to support the establishment of the 3 Economic Recovery Zones as depicted on maps presented by Glenn Smith. Motion passed 5-1.

Review Section 14.3 of Zoning Ordinance: This section of the Ordinance allows the Selectmen to approve building on a pre-existing non-conforming lot. When recently asked to make such a decision, the Selectmen preferred to have the Board of Adjustment handle the case. It was suggested that this section of the Ordinance should be removed. As there were questions about why this was included in the Zoning Ordinance, Dari Sassan will review and if appropriate suggest wording to either clarify or recommend removal of the section.

Freudenberg – Steve Smith: Mr. Smith presented preliminary plans for a 25,000 sq. ft expansion of the facility at 6 Axle Drive. He plans to make a formal application for the June meeting and asked if it is possible to get final approval in one meeting. Wayne Crowley responded that this is a major site plan which requires more than one meeting, however, if everything is in order it could be possible to complete in one meeting. The Board is willing to have an additional meeting if necessary as well.

Time limits for recording of an approved subdivision: Dari Sassan stated that the state does not set requirements for recording subdivisions and towns have very different requirements. Discussion followed about whether it is necessary to set a time limit or whether an approved subdivision can be left unrecorded indefinitely and still be valid. Tax consequences of recording the plan were also discussed. Dari Sassan suggested that a time limit could be included as a condition of approval rather than actually changing the Subdivision Regulations. Wayne Crowley asked members what they would be comfortable with for a time limit on recording approved plans. There was further discussion about whether it really is necessary and whether it is an issue. Glen Brown moved, seconded by Kim Robichaud to modify the subdivision regulations to indicate the final approved subdivision plans must be recorded within 2 years from the date of approval with a potential for a one time one year extension for good reason to be approved by the Planning Board. Kevin Waldron asked why it is necessary to have a deadline. Wayne Crowley replied that a plan needs to be recorded in order to be legal. Jason Durgin commented that it is never good to leave it open ended. Motion passed 5-2. A public hearing on this motion will be scheduled for the June 3, 2013 meeting with Dari Sassan providing appropriate wording.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Eliza Conde, Secretary

Minutes approved 06-03-2013