

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD
PLANNING BOARD
December 7, 2015
MINUTES**

Members present: Jason Durgin, Doug Read, Laurie Hill, Kim Robichaud, Mike Murphy and Glen Brown.

Minutes: Mike Murphy moved, seconded by Glen Brown to accept the minutes of November 2, 2015 as read. Motion passed.

Public Hearing for the review of proposed zoning amendments: Chairman Durgin opened the public hearing for the following proposed amendments:

Wetlands setbacks - to amend Article 17.5 of the Northfield Zoning Ordinance to require that a Septic Leach Field be *50' from poorly drained soils and 75' from very poorly drained soils* (Current zoning requires septic leach fields be 75' from any wetlands) - there were no questions and no discussion.

Park Street: to amend Article 6 of the Northfield Zoning Ordinance to change the designation of Location 1 of the Multi-Family Residential District: "R2" to *Areas easterly of the railroad from Winnepesaukee River to Sargent Street, then easterly of Park Street and Westerly of Summer Street and Granite Street to the Winnepesaukee River* and the designation of Location 1 of the Commercial/Industrial District: "C/I" to *Areas Westerly of the railroad., Northerly of Sargent St., Northerly of Scribner Rd. and Easterly of Cross Mill Rd.*- Greg Hill pointed out that removing the west side of Park Street from the C/I defeats the purpose of locating commercial and industrial businesses in the proximity of municipal services and will push industry away from the center of town. Mike Murphy responded that R2 allows businesses within the residential area and that the purpose of the change is to limit heavy industry within the residential area. Laurie Hill added that this will make both sides of Park Street zoned the same. Jason Durgin explained that this does not discourage business on Park Street and Mike Murphy added that it actually makes it easier for small business in this location. Mike Murphy cited NH RSA 675:7 which requires that landowners within a district be notified of a public hearing relative to changing that zoning district. It was agreed to hold an additional public hearing for the Park Street re-districting and notify all affected landowners on the west side of Park Street of the meeting.

Article 7 Table 1 Uses by District: To amend Article 7 Table 1 to change “*Light Manufacturing*” and “*Research and Development*” from N (not permitted) to E (allowed by special exception) in the R2 District. No comment.

To amend Article 7 Table 1 to change “*Bed & Breakfast*” from N (not permitted) to P (permitted) in the Conservation District. Greg Hill asked if the Board proposes changing the definition of B&B. Not at this time, but this may be considered next year.

Signage: To amend the Northfield Zoning Ordinance by removing Article 12 (Signage) in its entirety and placing the Article in Section 8.19 of the Northfield Site Plan Regulations. Kent Finemore asked about the town’s ability to regulate changes to existing signs or situations where there is no site plan needed if the Signage is removed from the Zoning Ordinance. Jason Durgin responded that the dimensions will not be changing and a variance would be needed for a non conforming sign. He added that putting signage in the Site Plan Regulations will give the Planning Board more flexibility to work with applicants on the appropriate size of signs. Kent pointed out that if signage is in the Site Plan Regulations, then the Planning Board would have the ability to increase the size of signs without voter approval. Doug Read commented that the Board reviewed neighboring town sign ordinances which are quite extensive.

Chris Hunt stated that the current sign ordinance is specific and simple and agreed that abutting town ordinances are quite extensive and detailed with different type and size signs allowed for different type of businesses within each district. All of the abutting town’s ordinances address lighting and moving signage as well. He added that if the regulations are removed from the Zoning Ordinance it will only apply to a new business applying for a site plan and not to residential signs. If removed from the Zoning Ordinance signs of any size and height could be installed with no recourse. Jason Durgin agreed that this is a good point and perhaps something needs to remain in the Zoning Ordinance relative to signs in order to have regulations apply to all signage. Chris Hunt commented that he thinks removing signage from the Zoning Ordinance will lead to the town having no control over signs and he recommended the Board work within the Zoning Ordinance and perhaps have different sized signs for different districts and/or uses. Tim Bernier agreed that if signage is removed from the Ordinance there will be no control over signage in town. Kent Finemore agreed with that statement because not all signs would require a site plan.

Jason Durgin stated that he appreciated the comments suggesting that the Board needs to look at this more carefully and wait until next year to make any changes.

Public hearing closed.

Public Hearing: Revision of the Annual Excavation Report to conform to NH DES reporting schedule. Chairman Durgin opened the public hearing explaining that the purpose of this change is to allow annual reporting to be submitted to the town at the same time DES requires reports. Public hearing closed with no comment.

William E Coulter & Steve A Morrissette: Application for a 2 lot subdivision of 5.104 acres on Reservoir Road (Tax Map R16 Lot 6) in the R1 zone. Tim Bernier, representing the applicant presented the 2 lot subdivision of Tax Map R16 Lot 6. The lots will be 2.036 acres and 3.069 acres (2.5 of which is buildable). The smaller lot has septic approval and the subdivision has been approved by DES. A dug well will be abandoned and an existing drilled well will be used for the smaller lot. The two driveways will share the entrance to Reservoir Road in order to stay approximately 300 feet from the three way intersection of Reservoir and Turnpike Roads. After review of the application, Mike Murphy moved, seconded by Laurie Hill to accept the application as complete. Motion passed.

Public hearing was opened and closed with no comment. Mike Murphy suggested that a written approval for the driveway from the Highway Department should be required. Mike Murphy moved, seconded by Glen Brown to grant the application for a 2 lot subdivision of 5.104 acres on Reservoir Road (Tax Map R16 Lot 6) in the R1 zone with the condition that a written permit for the shared driveway be submitted with the final plans. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Eliza Conde, Secretary

Minutes approved 01-04-2016