

City of Northfield

Planning & Zoning Board

1600 Shore Road

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Minutes: September 15, 2005

Notice of this meeting had been given in accordance with Chapter 231 Public Law 1975, otherwise known as the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting has been given to The Press, posted on the bulletin board in City Hall, and filed with the City Clerk, stating the date, time and place of the meeting and the agenda to the extent known.

The regular meeting of the Northfield Planning & Zoning Board, held on Thursday, September 15, 2005 in Council Chambers, City Hall, Northfield, was called to order by Chairman of the Board Richard Levitt at 7:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Mayor Frank Perri
Mr. Mike Turon, Councilman
Mr. Jeffrey Bruckler, City Administrator
Ms. Alice Chambers-absent
Mr. Art Barrera
Mr. Lou Milone
Mr. Nick Droboniku-absent
Mr. Ronald Roegiers-absent
Mr. David Notaro
Mr. Clem Scharff
Chairman Richard Levitt

Solicitor-Tom Subranni, Esq.
Engineer-Matt Doran, P.E.

The first application of the evening is Michael & Karen Pollock for a minor subdivision with no variances requested. The Pollocks are unable to attend this meeting but are represented by Erika Cook of Cooper Levenson and William P. McManus, a planner with Duffy, Dolcy, McManus & Roesch. The applicants request a relocation of the division line between their two lots at Block 34, Lots 21.15 & 21.16 located in the R-1A Zone at One and Three Meredith Court. They own both of the lots. Each lot contains a single family dwelling and conforms to all requirements. The reason for the re-alignment is to accommodate a new garage. Both lots have curbs and sidewalks. The Board is concerned that there are no shade trees but will waive the requirement due to established landscaping. Mr. Doran commented that since this is a minor sub-division, the applicants need to agree to conform to an R-1 zone which is more restrictive than the R-1A. They agreed to do so. Chairman Levitt noted that the shed will be removed when the garage is constructed. Mr. Turon had questions about the parking. The old driveway will be removed, the sidewalk repaired and continued and a handicapped ramp will exist where the present ramp is. The garage will be located on the opposite side of the house. Seeing no one from the public who wished to speak, the Chairman asked for a motion to vote. Clem Scharf made the motion and Lou Milone seconded. All members were in favor unanimously.

The second application is for a “C” variance for a side yard setback. Teresa Layton and Ismael Rodriquez were sworn in and described their project. The address is 320 Mt. Vernon Avenue, Block 112, Lot 31 and located in the R-3 zone. They want to construct 2 additional bedrooms for their growing twin sons and to also expand the existing living room. They also want to add a sunroom. They plan to remove the existing garage and install a small shed instead. The construction will be the addition of 900 sq. feet.

The applicants presented the positive benefits of the project. Their sons would have their own bedrooms and bath. They would not affect the neighborhood in a negative way since they own a big, deep lot and they will not be removing any trees or landscaping. The home will remain a one-story dwelling.

The Board reviewed the plans and Clem Scharf gave a summary of the variances. Dr. Levitt said that he had no objection to the 3.3 ft. setback since the Fire Dept. raised no objections. Two on-site parking spaces will remain and a permit will be needed for the shed. There are no public objections.

Mr. Scharf made the motion and Mr. Milone seconded. All Board members voted in favor of approval.

The third and final application of this evening is from Eugene and Elizabeth Previti of 112 Mt. Vernon Avenue, Block 119, Lot 14. They are applying for a “C” variance. The architect is Terry J. Cummings, AIA. The property is in the R-2 zone. The Previti’s and their architect were sworn in and Mrs. Previti began by stating that they have lived in Northfield for 35 years and recently have had their child and grandchild move in with them. They need to enlarge their home to accommodate them and to fix the entry to the house which they feel has long been a safety issue.

Ms. Cummings explained the design of the addition which is the construction of a partial second floor over an existing 1 and ½ story building. The variances needed which were taken directly from Matt Doran’s engineer’s report are for lot frontage, lot area, and a side yard setback. The addition involves a new covered porch and the foundation will not change. They want to add 3 bedrooms, 1 bath and a laundry area. The footprint of the house will not change since they are building upward.

Dr. Levitt commented that the new design would fit in well with some of the homes in the neighborhood and that the design resembles some of the newer homes on Mt. Vernon. The applicants agree to add one shade tree.

The Previti’s gave testimony as to why they should be granted the hardship variances. They would not be intruding on the neighbors by building up, the safety issue concerning the current porch needs to be addressed and improved, the home will have more curb appeal, and will not be too large or obtrusive. Mr. Turon commented that he would prefer a porch without a roof. Ms. Cummings commented that they do not intend to enclose at anytime in the future but the Previti’s want the safety of a platform and cover. Currently they must step backward on the entry steps in order to open their front door.

There was no one from the public who wished to speak. Mr. Scharf made the motion to vote and Mayor Perri seconded. The vote was unanimous for approval.

The Board next memorialized the Resolution for Robert Green from the last meeting. Mr. Turon, Mr. Barrera, Mr. Schaarf, and Mr. Bruckler abstained since they were not present at the last meeting.

The Board then held a discussion on various issues concerning mandatory education, affordable housing issues and their effect on the master plan goal, and ordinance issues regarding variance and site plan expirations and the need for an appeal fee on the Planning Board fee schedule. The Board and Mr. Doran will be researching these issues and addressing and perhaps revising ordinances at a future date.

The Mayor made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Dr. Levitt seconded. The meeting closed at 9:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin M. Atlas-Clinton,
Planning Board Secretary