

City of Northfield Planning & Zoning Board
1600 Shore Road
Northfield, New Jersey 08225
Telephone (609) 641-2832, ext. 127
Fax (609) 646-7175

Minutes: July 17, 2008

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 had 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, July 17, 2008 in Council Chambers, City Hall, Northfield, was opened by Chairman Richard Levitt at 7:27p.m. and the following members were present:

Dr. Richard Levitt-Chairman
Clem Scharff-Vice Chairman
Mayor Vincent Mazzeo
Jason O'Grady, Councilman
Chief Robert James
Lou Milone
John Clifford
Ron Roegiers
Henry Notaro
Jim Shippen-absent
Linda Dyrek

Norman Zlotnick, Solicitor-absent/Jacqueline Stiles, Esq. in attendance for Mr. Zlotnick
Matt Doran, PE-Engineer

The first application this evening was for 2605 Shore Road, LLC, Block 78, Lot 14, at 2605 Shore Road. Mr. Nick Menas of Cooper Levenson in Atlantic City was present to postpone the hearing. The applicants will need to obtain a new 200 ft. list, re-notice and re-advertise. The new hearing date is September 18, 2008.

Dr. Levitt discussed the Richard Simon, Trustee resolution which has been previously amended. Keith Davis, Esq. is disputing some of the wording and would like the resolution amended a second time to include specifics about the logo allowed on the sign. Dr. Levitt asked if the matter could be handled administratively and the Board agreed. Dr. Levitt will call Mr. Zlotnick to discuss the matter.

The next item on the agenda is for Frank and Diana Lynn Perri of 7 Haddon Avenue, Block 147, Lot 8. They are seeking a "C" Variance for a rear yard setback for a family room and deck addition. Mr. Perri addressed the Board and said the property received subdivision approval 25 years ago and noted the rear property line is not a true straight line and is on a slight angle. The property has been in the family for 59 years and his family has resided there for 25 years. They would like to construct an addition 25.6 ft. x 12 ft. and a deck 4 ft. x 12 ft. The addition will be one story with no basement. There was an old deck which has been removed. The property is adjacent to a non-conforming business, which he owns and occupies, and there is another

business across the street at the corner. There are neighbors to the rear and there are no structures at the rear of the property. Mr. Perri's neighbor in the back did not want to sell any of his land and preferred that he try to obtain a variance.

Dr. Levitt noted that a sketch of the addition was not added to the survey submitted. Mr. Perri clarified where the addition would be located on the survey. The addition will be even with the side setbacks of the house and these setbacks will remain the same. There is a 10 ft. laundry room in the back which connects to the garage. The main part of the house is 26 ft. wide and he wants to line up with the rear of the building. The addition will be 12 ft. out from the existing structure. Dr. Levitt noted that the width is the same as the existing house and Mr. Perri added that this does not include the laundry room and garage. Dr. Levitt said the home is in the R-2 zone and the new non-conformity would be the 5.2 ft. at the northwest corner. They are proposing 19.8 ft. for the rear setback where 25 ft. is required.

Mr. Doran addressed his Engineer's letter and noted there are two existing non-conformities for lot area and lot width. The proposed "C" variance is for a rear yard setback where 25 ft. is required and 19.8 ft. is proposed at the shortest point. Mr. Doran stated the Board always likes to know if any trees would be taken down. Mr. Perri said none would be impacted by the addition. Mr. Doran asked Mr. Perri to give positive and negative criteria. Mr. Perri said they already have curbs and sidewalks. He added that open space, air, light, and wind would not be affected as would not fire protection safety. He feels this project would be a minor deviation from the Land Use Ordinance and would have no negative impact.

Dr. Levitt asked if anyone from the public wished to speak. Seeing no one, he closed the public session. The Board had no additional questions.

Mr. Scharff made the motion for the "C" variance for a rear yard setback of 19.8 ft. where 25 ft. is required for the one-story addition and deck. Mr. O'Grady seconded. A roll call vote was unanimous for approval by the members present. Mr. Clifford, as second alternate, did not vote since nine voting members were present.

The final application of the evening was for Jinc Associates, LLC, Block 51, Lots 15-21 at 411 New Road. Jinc Associates is owned by Dr. Naim Nazha. Ms. Stiles swore in Dr. Nazha and Georgia Shipper, an Architect with Stephen Fenwick of Linwood. Mr. Charles Gemmel of Gemmel Todd & Merenich of Linwood was the Attorney for Mr. Nahza.

Mr. Gemmel gave an overview of the application. His client is seeking a "C" variance for a revised freestanding sign at the 411 New Road Cancer Center located in the OP-B Zone. Freestanding signs are not allowed in this zone. The existing sign was approved in 1999 for a freestanding sign 11.8 ft. with a sign face of 13 sf. Dr. Nazha, who received approvals for his site at 801 New Road along with an approval for a freestanding sign with a height of 15 ft. and a sign face of 32 sf, likes his new sign so much that he would like to duplicate the sign at his 411 New Road site. Mr. Gemmel said that the existing sign at 411 New Road looks like an afterthought and the sign does not compliment the existing building. Having identical signs will also create a common identity for the two buildings since patients receive treatments at both facilities.

Ms. Shipper displayed an exhibit of photos (architectural drawings of which were submitted with the application) of the proposed and existing signs. The new sign will have a masonry base with metal columns and will be more professional looking. There will be base lighting at the bottom of the sign shining upward. The sign will not be a back lit sign. On the back of the photo exhibit, Ms. Shipper showed the architecturally scaled drawings. The sign will start at one end where existing and will extend further out onto the island. The new sign will be more observable to travelers on Route 9. The location of the property is clearly in a commercial zone. The new sign will be more in design with the existing building and have more mass and presence and be more professional. The location of the sign will not negatively impact any other signs.

Mr. Gemmel added that the building currently has less building mounted signage than allowed. Mr. Doran added that the Board has discussed allowing free-standing signs in the OP-B zone and this may change in the near future and be allowed. Mr. Roegiers asked for clarification about the height of the new and old signs. The old sign is 11 plus ft. and the new one will be 15 ft. It will be taller and wider. Ms. Shippen added that the sign would be permitted in the OP Zone and the building occupies the entire block. Dr. Levitt noted that no one from the public wished to speak.

Mr. Scharff made the motion for a Site Plan waiver and "C" variance for a free standing sign with a height of 15 ft. and a sign face of 32 sf. Mr. Dyrek seconded. A roll call was unanimous for approval with the same members voting as the previous application.

Dr. Levitt said special requirements may be necessary in dealing with the Country Club zone due to recent court decisions which may affect what is currently being looked for in that zone. The Planner is looking into this and the committee may need to look at the zone differently in terms of possible Planned Unit Development (PUD) vs. simple zoning requirements. Dr. Levitt hopes that the committee can hopefully get to the same ends with different means that will not be challenged. He asked ordinance committee members to stay after the meeting to come up with a date for the next meeting.

Mr. O'Grady brought up an issue from Councilman David Notaro concerning Northfield Avenue and a proposal to possibly re-zone the area. He read a letter from Mr. Notaro proposing changing the zone from R-1 to OP-B or CB. If re-zoned, the area could include homes on one side (existing homes grandfathered in) and business on the other side, similar to a Northfield "Walk" area. Dr. Levitt said that he thought the area contained mostly homes. Mayor Mazzeo added that there are 4 or 5 homes in that area. Dr. Levitt discussed lot depth and buffering and said it would be important to walk the lots to view them. Mr. O'Grady said the area is wrapped by OP-B zoning. Mr. O'Grady concluded by saying he presented this to the Board as requested by Mr. David Notaro. Mr. Doran added that he will bring a map to the Ordinance committee meeting and the committee will look at the area. Mr. O'Grady said this is something to be considered for the future for Northfield.

Dr. Levitt closed the meeting with a motion from Mr. Milone and a second from Mr. Scharff.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Atlas, Secretary to the Board