

City of Northfield Planning & Zoning Board
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Minutes: May 7, 2009

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, May 7, 2009 in Council Chambers, City Hall, Northfield, was opened by Chairman Richard Levitt at 7:31 p.m. and the following members were present:

Dr. Richard Levitt-Chairman

Clem Scharff-Vice Chairman

Mayor Vincent Mazzeo-absent-Councilman Martinez noted for the record that Mayor Mazzeo could not be in attendance tonight since he is at the Northfield Community School for the budget meeting.

Jimmy Martinez, Councilman

Chief Robert James-absent

Lou Milone

John Clifford

Ron Roegiers

Henry Notaro-absent

Jim Shippen

Linda Dyrek

Norman Zlotnick, Solicitor

Matt Doran, PE-Engineer

There was one application on the agenda this evening from James P. Maga who resides at 2513 Herbert Drive, Block 27, Lot 36 in the R-1 Zone. He is requesting a "C" variance to enlarge a covered front porch.

Mr. Maga was sworn in by Chairman Levitt. The applicant explained his project and submitted photos of the front of the house and drawings of the house (as it appears now and proposed) to the Board. He wants to extend the porch the whole length of the front of the house which he believes will enhance not only his home, but the neighborhood as well. The porch is not enclosed, but is covered. He said his family likes to sit out on the porch with their neighbors and enjoy the neighborhood and they would like more room.

Dr. Levitt asked about the setback. Mr. Maga was unsure of exactly where to measure from and was told by Dr. Levitt that the measurement is from the property line. Mr. Doran said the setback is 22.8 inches. Mr. Roegiers asked if he was adding columns to the front porch and Mr. Maga stated he is replacing old, lacy wrought iron with the columns and extending the current porch toward the street two feet.

Chairman Levitt asked Mr. Maga to comment on advantages over detriments. Mr. Maga said there are about 20 other structures in his neighborhood that infringe more on the setback than

his proposed project and he said he measured some of his neighbor's properties. He said he does not intend to enclose the porch which now is 7 to 8 ft. by 17 ft. long and is proposed to have a width of 10 ft. and a length of 33 ft. He also wants to add a swing at the end of the porch to dress it up.

Mr. Doran read his Engineer's report which is on file with the Secretary. He said the project is a visual aesthetic improvement and in regard to positive and negative criteria, the applicant has stated the setback won't be any worse than others in the neighborhood. The applicant has curbs, sidewalks and two parking spaces as required. Dr. Levitt asked about trees and Mr. Maga said they have one big tree that is not in the best spot, but they do not want to remove any trees. They have also planted a cherry tree and plan to plant a willow tree in the future.

Chairman Levitt opened the public session and seeing no one present who wished to speak, he closed the public session.

Mr. Maga closed by saying that he hand delivered his notice letters for signatures and received positive responses from his neighbors.

Mr. Clifford made the motion for a front yard setback variance at 2.67 ft. where the setback requirement is 25 ft. Mr. Milone seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Mr. Clifford-yes, Mrs. Dyrek-yes, Councilman Martinez-yes, Mr. Milone-yes, Mr. Roegiers-yes, Mr. Shippen-yes, Chairman Levitt-yes. The motion for the "C" variance carries. Mr. Scharff did not vote since he was not present for all of the testimony. Councilman Martinez noted for the record that Mayor Mazzeo could not be in attendance tonight since he is at the Northfield Community School for the budget meeting.

Mr. Doran reported that he has spoken with Lance Landgraf about the Ordinance committee and the next step is to schedule a meeting. The sub-committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 4th at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall courtroom. If it is necessary to have the regularly scheduled Planning/Zoning Board meeting on that date, the sub-committee meeting will be held the following Thursday, June 11th at the same time and place. Committee members will be informed by the Secretary.

Chairman Levitt asked for an update on the Hansen situation. Mr. Zlotnick said he has answered the complaint and the conference with Sal Perillo that was to be held in late May has been postponed until early June since Mr. Perillo is on vacation. It is a possibility that the problems Mr. Hansen was having with his neighbors may have been resolved, but he will not know until June.

There was one resolution to memorialize for Kensington Square, LLC, Block 16.01, Lots 61, 62 & 63.02, 200 Tilton Road. They were approved for a "C" variance for additional signage, Amended preliminary and final site plan and Conditional use for Formica's Express Café. Chairman Levitt called for a voice vote and all were in favor. Mr. Clifford and Mr. Scharff abstained.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. and there is one item on the agenda for TSMA LLC for a Multi-Use variance and a parking variance.

Chairman Levitt closed the meeting at 7:50 p.m. with a motion from Mr. Roegiers and a second from Mr. Shippen.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Atlas, Secretary to the Board

