

City of Northfield Planning Board
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Minutes: November 6, 2014

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, filed with the City Clerk, and posted on the City website, stating the date, time and place of the meeting and the agenda to the extent known.

The regular meeting of the Northfield Planning Board, held on Thursday, November 6, 2014 in Council Chambers, City Hall, Northfield, was opened by Chairman Richard Levitt at 6:57 p.m. and the following members were present or absent as noted:

Timothy Anderson-absent
Councilman Erland Chau-absent
Linda Dyrek-absent
Denise Kintish-absent
Dr. Richard Levitt
Mayor Jerry McGee
Lou Milone-absent
Sgt. Paul Newman
Henry Notaro
Ron Roegiers
Derek Rowe
Clem Scharff
Jim Shippen

Matthew Doran, Professional Engineer
Norman Zlotnick, Solicitor

There was one application on the agenda from James Maga of 2513 Herbert Drive, Block 27, Lot 36 in the R-1 Zone who is requesting a "C" Variance for a previously constructed carport. Dr. Levitt swore in Mr. Maga who represented himself.

Mr. Maga stated that he constructed the carport to get his boat off the street and relieve traffic problems that this structure caused. The carport conforms on one side where 15 ft. is required and 26.09 ft. exists, but on the neighbor's side, the requirement is 10 ft. and the carport is 6 ft. Mr. Maga was cited by the Zoning Officer for not obtaining the proper permit.

Mr. Maga did the proper noticing and obtained signatures from most of his neighbors, and he said that they were all in favor of the car port and the reasons for constructing it. He added that he had Engineer-certified metal documents with him. Mr. Maga brought a photo of the carport and showed it to the Board. He added that since it was

a certified structure, he thought could install it to cover hi boat and protect his investment and he wanted the carport to look aesthetically pleasing. He did not simply want to cover the boat with a tarp or put up a white tent that could blow into the neighbor's yard. Mr. Maga said that on the neighbor's side there exists a pad that leads to the back yard. Mr. Zlotnick asked if the car port was open and Mr. Maga said it is for now. He added that he has siding plants that keep it looking presentable. Dr. Levitt noted that esthetic qualities are considered testimony.

Mr. Doran stated that the property has curbs and sidewalks and there are trees on site and if he is successful tonight in obtaining a variance, he will need to go to the city Building Department and submit a permit. He added that since it is attached to the house it is considered a primary structure. Dr. Levitt suggested that cedar may look better. Mr. Maga said he did obtain specs on the anchors and he had them with him. He noted they are base rail anchors with 6-inch wedge anchors in concrete. Mr. Doran asked that Mr. Maga bring the specs copy to the Building Department. Dr. Levitt asked if the carport was built on an existing driveway. Mr. Maga stated that it was built on an existing pad which was poured a few years back and he did obtain a permit for that. Mayor McGee verified that he drilled the bolts into the concrete. Dr. Levitt asked if there was a door in front. Mr. Maga said not at this time, but he could add one and had no problem with doing that.

Dr. Levitt noted that there was no public in attendance this evening and closed the public session.

Mr. Roegiers asked about the sustained wind rating. Mr. Maga said the structure is certified to withstand 140 mph winds and is certified by New Jersey for snow loads. Mayor McGee asked if it was certified with or without the sides installed. Mr. Maga stated without and that the sides are not necessary. Dr. Levitt commented that the wind would pass right through it.

As there were no further questions, Dr. Levitt asked for a motion. Mr. Scharff made the motion for the "C" variance for the side yard variance for the carport. Mr. Shippen seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Anderson-absent, Mrs. Dyrek-absent, Mrs. Kintish- absent, Mayor McGee-yes, Sgt. Newman-yes, Mr. Milone-absent, Mr. Notaro-yes, Councilman Chau-absent, Mr. Roegiers-yes, Mr. Rowe-yes, Mr. Scharff-yes, Mr. Shippen-yes, Chairman Levitt-yes. The motion to approve the "C" variance carries. Mr. Maga added that he didn't realize that he needed a permit for the carport since the concrete pad had approval.

The remainder of the meeting was an update and discussion on the Gurwicz development. Dr. Levitt gave an overview of the committee meeting held Monday, November 3rd with members of the Planning Board, City Council, and Tiffany CuvIELLO. He said that Ms. CuvIELLO has inventoried vacant property in the city to get a feel for additional affordable housing availability should Mr. Gurwicz stick with the 15% figure. There are five group home properties which will allow for approximately 18 credits. It was suggested by the committee that the Arthur Henry Site chould possibly be suited for a senior-only affordable housing area. There are other smaller vacant areas in town

including the driving range site on Tilton Road. City Council has been given a deadline by the courts of January 15, 2015 to come up with an affordable housing plan. The COAH rounds were deadlocked again and the issue of how many affordable homes a city is responsible for providing is now being handled in Superior Court. Dr. Levitt said that the maximum obligation speculated at this time is 190 units and Ms. Cuvillo said that the city should plan with that number at this time.

Dr. Levitt said that Ms. Cuvillo reported that some of the vacant lots were not viable such as the Veteran's Park site on Oak Avenue. There are some areas on Dolphin, Burton, and Maple Avenues they may be suitable for a few duplexes and some of the areas such as those behind Wendy's and the golf course involve wetlands. The Country Club zone allows for 1 acre single-family homes and could allow up to 54 units and there may be a provision made that some of those be designated affordable if developed, but it is now just a numbers game. Mr. Gurwicz is looking to provide about 40 units and it looks like the city will need 20 to 70 more units depending on the rental unit credits.

Mr. Zlotnick reminded that the January 15th deadline is not a definite date. It currently stands that a motion was made and COAH didn't act and regulations have not been finalized at the legal level. Mr. Zlotnick warned though that the Fair Housing Council will not favor a delay from the City of Northfield. But he added that if the city had to ask for a delay that should not be a major problem. The city has waited 30 years and a few more weeks or months won't be an issue. Mr. Zlotnick believed the city would win a delay request. Dr. Levitt asked if the Gurwicz units could still qualify as COAH units if delayed. Mr. Zlotnick said yes and that zoning changes are being worked on to make it all happen. Dr. Levitt added that the city needs to show that we are not exclusionary as Mr. Laurel did. Dr. Levitt asked the Planning Board members to carefully read the Ordinance proposal for any potential problems. Mr. Zlotnick said that the Master Plan will need an amendment and Ms. Cuvillo is working on that as well. Dr. Levitt said the important thing is that the Zoning Ordinance and the Master Plan must be consistent. Mr. Zlotnick said the Planning Board will address the Zoning Ordinance as referred by City Council at the December 4th regular meeting and the objective will be that affordable housing will be written into the Master Plan.

Mr. Shippen commented that the Bootleggers Liquor sign is still having timing issues and there is too much movement and too many colors. He felt they need to be cited. Dr. Levitt said that the new Tilton Market sign is also on an 8-second cycle. Mr. Scharff commented that Bootleggers used their "advertising van" for political sign usage and the van itself was seen in Brigantine. Mr. Doran commented that the truck sign has been to municipal court and was approved because it was moveable. He added that in their Northfield Parking Lot the truck cannot be in the site triangle.

Mr. Shippen made the motion to close the meeting and Mr. Roegiers seconded. Dr. Levitt closed the meeting at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Atlas, Secretary to the Board