

**City of Northfield Planning Board**  
**1600 Shore Road**  
**Northfield, New Jersey 08225**  
**Telephone (609) 641-2832, ext. 127**  
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September 4, 2025

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 of Atlantic City on August 23, 2025, 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. Digital copies of the application documents, exhibits, and the Planning Board Engineer's report have been uploaded onto the city website as well if applicable.

The **REGULAR** meeting of the Northfield Planning Board was held on Thursday, September 4, 2025. ***In following with the decisions of Mayor Chau and City Council, the Planning Board will be eliminating the mandatory observation of Covid-19 related social distancing measures at their public meetings. In addition, the Planning Board will continue to air the regular meetings on Zoom video conferencing for convenience of those who do not wish to appear in public.***

City of Northfield Planning Board is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting

Topic: City of Northfield Planning Board Meeting

Time: Sep 4, 2025 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81001891298?pwd=98WE6RZraB0PAiZiJ1a84aOvmLOeax.1>

Meeting ID: 810 0189 1298

Passcode: 313690

One tap mobile

+16465588656,,81001891298# US (New York)

+16469313860,,81001891298# US

Join instructions

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/81001891298/invitations?signature=JpZ16AbDUaZKtJlKk-4VfWd3b-sbwGPgEzS3qFlu0Go>

The meeting was opened by Chairman Richard Levitt at 7:00 p.m. with the reading of the Sunshine Law and the roll call. The following were present or absent as noted.

Peter Brophy  
Matthew Carney  
Mayor Erland Chau  
Councilwoman Carolyn Bucci-absent  
Dr. Richard Levitt  
Henry Notaro

Dan Reardon  
Ron Roegiers  
Derek Rowe-absent  
Clem Scharff-absent  
Jim Shippen  
Paul Utts  
Joel M. Fleishman, Esq.-Planning Board Solicitor  
Matthew Doran, PE, PP-Planning Board Engineer-Deborah Wahl present for Mr. Doran

Mr. Brophy led the flag salute.

The Board approved the minutes from the August 7, 2025 meeting by voice vote.

There was one application on the agenda from Timothy & Michele Maguire and Kim Shapiro, Block 117 Lot 32, 200 Jackson Avenue in the R-3 zone for “c” variance and “d” variance relief and a site plan waiver. Jack Plackter, an attorney with Fox Rothchild of Atlantic City, represented the applicants. He said the location had been occupied by the Maguire Law Firm for many years and previously was occupied by Alfred ‘Bud’ Bennington. The Maguires winded up their law practice and are looking to sell the property. Kim Shapiro operates Lily Lotus on Tilton Road and is looking to expand her day spa business. Ms. Shapiro is the contract purchaser of the property. Mr. Plackter said this is a residential zone and they need a variance for commercial use. It would be a hardship to convert the property to single-family residential use. A day spa use would be the same or less impact as the law office. They want to have up to five treatment rooms and there would be five employees. The hours would be 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. by appointment only and the spa would be closed on Sunday and Monday. There are four parking spaces on site and there is ample parking available on the municipal parking lot across the street. Other than aesthetically improving the building, there are no other structural changes. The site requires fifteen parking spaces and a parking variance will be needed. Dr. Levitt swore in Ms. Shapiro and Lance Landgraf, a planner from Ventnor City.

Ms. Shapiro said she is a Northfield resident and operates the spa. Services include facials and skin care beauty treatments and massage therapy. She also helps teenagers with acne treatments. The hours of operation are the same as she works now. Mr. Plackter distributed photographs which were mock-ups and they were labeled Exhibit A-1. They will not be moving any windows or doors, but will make them aesthetically beautiful. Mayor Chau asked about the average number of clients. Ms. Shapiro said no more than five at a time. Mr. Carney asked how long the appointments last and Ms. Shapiro said that depends. Mayor Chau said that Mr. Maguire had an agreement with the city for parking and he has noticed that trucks are using the municipal lot on Fuae Avenue. Mr. Brophy asked if other businesses claim the parking spots. Mr. Plackter said the public uses the lot when they drive to the Bike Path. It is not a congested area and Mr. Plackter noted that some trucks do park there. Mayor Chau said there are individuals living next door to the law office and they also use the parking spaces. Mr. Plackter said there is enough parking available.

Mr. Landgraf addressed the Board and said he has been a planner in New Jersey since 1991. The Board accepted his qualifications. Mr. Landgraf said he prepared the plan and has been to the site. He

described existing conditions. The site is 4300 sf and the building is 2100 sf. It is a one-story building on the corner of Jackson Avenue and Fuae Avenue. The property has been a commercial use for 35 years and prior. There are four parking spaces on site-two on Fuae and two on Jackson-which have been adequate for a law practice and there are two access driveways at each of the roads. The ten municipal spaces are for everyone to use. There are three existing non-conformities for Lot area, and two front yard setbacks for the corner lot, Building coverage and Total coverage. They are not proposing any structural changes to the building or lot so they are seeking a site plan waiver. They will only do some exterior renovations and signage. They will comply with Mr. Doran's report. The day spa is not permitted in the zone. A use variance was granted in 1990 for the existing office and a D-1 variance will be needed for the day spa use. The law office parking requirement was 12 parking spaces and street parking is also available. Mr. Plackter corrected this testimony and said the 1990 approval was for expansion and not for use. Mr. Bennington wanted to add a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and doubled the square footage at the time. Dr. Levitt added that the approval was from the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Mr. Landgraf continued by stating the criteria for approval. The site is well-suited for this use and the size is adequate. The site is easily accessed from the roadways in the area. He discussed the purposes of zoning positively impacted by the use. Purpose (a) is advanced by promoting public health and general welfare. Purpose (g) is advanced by providing sufficient space in a commercially suitable location. Purpose (i) is promoted by establishing a desirable visual environment by making the site aesthetically appropriate. Purpose (m) supports the re-use of an existing building without the cost of developing it into another use. Mr. Brophy asked what the building was initially built for. Mayor Chau said it was a playhouse theater, a church, and an accounting office. Mr. Doran noted the building has two gas meters and he asked if it would remain a single-use. Mr. Plackter assured him that it would. Mr. Landgraf said the location is an appropriate use of the site and no expansion is needed. Mr. Landgraf said there are no negative aspects. There is no traffic impact, the hours are appropriate, it is on a wide street and the commercial use would remain. This promotes the economic goals of the Master Plan and it will keep a business operating in town and promotes general welfare of the community. There is also ample parking. Mr. Plackter added that they would comply with all of Mr. Doran's recommendations. Mr. Landgraf said they also are seeking a site plan waiver since the building is not being changed on site and there no access or curb changes.

Ms. Wahl asked about signage. Mr. Plackter said the signage will comply. They intend to utilize the same signs that are there. They will simply change them. Ms. Shapiro will need an architect for that. Dr. Levitt said the applicant is limited by the doors and windows and suggested this be handled administratively. He said the applicant will enhance the signage within the confines of the existing space. Mr. Carney said the site must be ADA compliant. Mr. Plackter said that issue will be handled through the Building Department. Mr. Roegiers asked about exterior lighting. Dr. Levitt said there is to be no LED lighting. Mr. Landgraf said there will only be uplighting. Mr. Fleishman labeled the exhibits. The large plan will be Exhibit A-2 and the four photos submitted this evening are Exhibit A-1.

Dr. Levitt opened the public session. Harry Cohen of 113 Jackson Avenue spoke first. He had concerns with parking. He said the municipal lot has ten spaces and tonight the lot was full. People who use the bike path use the lot to park their cars before walking the bike path. If the store is rented and opened

for business, it will present a challenge. He said cars will be parking on Jackson Avenue and they could potentially park in front of his house. He had concerns with people falling in front of his house. Mr. Plackter assured him that if people fell on a public street, he would not be responsible. Dr. Levitt looked at the reality of the situation and the closed store is a white elephant. It is a dis-used building that is falling into disrepair. It would be good for the neighborhood to have an attractive building that is being used and it would be a hardship to turn it into a residential house. Parking is an issue here, but this is the best of a difficult situation. Mayor Chau added that there are no parking restrictions on Fuae or Jackson and street parking is available.

Mr. Nael Zumot, who owns 909 Fuae Avenue next door, said there are no parking issues and the Bike Path is not a problem. There is a lot of parking on Fuae Avenue and street parking is available.

Jessica Giles of 22 Mt. Vernon Avenue spoke about Lily Lotus. She is in support of the day spa and said it is more than a spa. They provide top notch aesthetic services. They give back to the community by donating products and services and they support causes. Their services are exceptional and they provide unique specialties. They are the only spa providing “head spas” in the area. This service helps with scalp and head issues. The spa provides for teens with an acne boot camp. This helps teens with acne problems as well as feeling better mentally and helping to provide for a better quality of life for them. She felt the spa is a sanctuary and you leave there feeling peaceful. This is good for the community who will reap the benefits.

There was no one else who wished to speak and Dr. Levitt closed the public session. Mr. Brophy asked Mr. Landgraf if the parking onsite could be made deeper to provide for stacked parking. Mr. Maguire said there is a curb there and also HVAC equipment. He said the curb defines the parking area. There is also a concrete pad beyond the fence which used to house a shed. Dr. Levitt asked if this was a purchase or a lease. Mr. Maguire said he will sell the property. Mr. Landgraf noted that if this was removed, impervious coverage would be increased. Mr. Fleishman suggested a condition to “look into this area for parking” with no mandate in the resolution. Mr. Maguire thought that was workable. Dr. Levitt said the Board is amenable to revision of the side lot to provide stacked parking. Mr. Landgraf asked if stone would be accepted. Dr. Levitt and the Board said yes. Mr. Landgraf added that the parking space on Jackson Avenue has the HVAC and that will be difficult to change. Dr. Levitt said any changes can be made administratively through Mr. Doran. Mr. Brophy asked if there was a Mainland Regional High School bus stop in the area. Mayor Chau said it fluctuates every year depending on students.

Mr. Fleishman reminded that this is a use variance and is a Zoning Board matter. Only 7 votes can be on record and elected officials cannot vote. The first vote was for the “d” variance. Mr. Shippen made the motion and Mr. Carney seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Brophy-yes

Mr. Carney-yes

Mr. Notaro-yes

Mr. Roegiers-yes

Mr. Shippen-yes

Mr. Utts-yes

Dr. Levitt-yes

The motion carries.

The second vote was for the “c” variance for parking and the site plan waiver. Mr. Roegiers made the motion and Mr. Shippen seconded the motion. Mr. Fleishman discussed the conditions. The signage will comply with City Ordinances and won’t exceed the current space used for signage. The owner will look into stacked parking administratively and it can be surfaced with stones. They will comply with everything in Mr. Doran’s report. Any change in the use of the property would require a return to the Board to testify to the future use. This would be any change from a day spa use. Mr. Fleishman added that the use is not limited to women only.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Brophy-yes

Mr. Carney-yes

Mr. Notaro-yes

Mr. Roegiers-yes

Mr. Shippen-yes

Mr. Utts-yes

Dr. Levitt-yes

The motion carries.

There was one item of New Business to discuss. Ordinance No. 14-2025, amending the City’s Land Use and Development ordinance (Chapter 215), specifically sections 215-9, 215-92, and 215-95 was referred to the Board from City Council. The amendments (215-9 and 215-92) were made at the suggestion of the City’s Code Enforcement Officer to better enable him to enforce regulations related to fences. The amendment to 215-92 is being made at the suggestion of the City’s Zoning Officer as he believes 215-92J(1), as it exists prior to amendment, conflicts with R.S.I.S in that the municipality should not regulate the width of a driveway based on the size of the garage. The Board discussed the sections noted and there were comments that this is normal language in providing for side by side two-car parking, that these changes will help with consistency with vacant properties and properties being improved, and that these changes will require permits for minor changes to fences such as changing hinges or latches. The Board had some concerns about the definition of alterations. The Board voted unanimously in favor of referring this Ordinance back to City Council for final adoption October 7, 2025.

There was one resolution to memorialize for Richard and Ave Guerrieri, 114 Steelman Avenue, Block 166 Lot 20 for “c” variance relief to construct an addition. Abstentions were Mayor Chau, Councilwoman Bucci, and Mr. Notaro. The voice vote was all in favor.

Dr. Levitt reminded that the October Planning Board meeting will be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month on October 9, 2025 due to Yom Kippur.

Mayor Chau gave a status update on Old Business matters. He said the Diocese application for senior housing is waiting on a state historical investigation. Once this is approved, they can move forward to

negotiate with the county on the 82-unit project. The owners of Gables on Wabash did not obtain financing. They have found a new buyer and will move forward.

Dr. Levitt asked Mr. Fleishman for any information on advertising regulation changes. Mr. Fleishman said for now, applicants will continue to provide notices by obtaining a 200 ft. property owners list. Municipalities and Planning Boards will also post notices on the city website. This stays in place until March when the state will create a HUB Hyperlink. Newspaper advertising in The Press of Atlantic City will not be mandatory. Notices will be archived for one year and on the website for one week starting next July. For the Planning Board it stays the same until February 2026. There is more information to come.

Mr. Shippen made the motion to close the meeting and Mr. Carney seconded the motion. Dr. Levitt closed the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

***Robin Atlas***

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