

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of October 4, 2023**

**6:30 pm at Brown Public Library Community Room
(also available remotely via Town GoToMeeting Account)**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chair Stephen Fitzhugh.

Roll Call: Present for the meeting were Planning Commission members Steve Davis, Royal DeLegge, Stephen Fitzhugh, and Julie Lappin. Blake Pierson was absent. Also present was Clerk Mitch Osiecki.

All participants attended in person at the Community Room.

Adjustments to Agenda: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of September 6:
Julie Lappin moved to approve. Steve Davis seconded.

Vote to approve: 4-0.

Zoning Regulations

There are a few discussion points that need to be resolved in the current draft of the zoning regulations document. Need to resolve the following:

On page 8, subsection G describes fences and walls that are exempt from permits. This description is inconsistent with language on Fences in Section 5.14 -- correct.

On page 8, Section 2.4.1(J) refers to accessory structures less than 64 SF being exempt – s/b 100 SF.

On page 11, Section 2.6.4 refers to Act 89. That’s incorrect. Will remove.

On page 12:
Section 2.11 describes a Site Plan Review; Section 2.12 describes a Conditional Use Review.
Section 2.12.2 is trying to say that if both SP and CU are required, the standards for both reviews must be satisfied.

On page 12, Section 2.12.3(C) -- will move definitions (“Neighborhood “and “Character of Neighborhood”) to the definitions in Section 8.2.

On page 23, Section 2.14.3 – Supplemental and Technical Review. Delete erroneous reference.

On page 29, Section 2.15.4(F) – Impositions of Conditions. There's an obsolete reference to Section 2.6.8(A) 1 through 11 – clean up language.

On page 30, are we OK with language describing “interested persons”? – OK

On page 30, change “section (b) of this subsection” to “Section 2.16.1(B)2.”

On page 34, Decisions on Appeal. Section 2.16.2(D)3 is identical to the following section, 2.16.2(E) – we will strike subsection (D)3 and leave (E).

On page 40, Table B, Table of Dimensional Standards needs to be cleaned p and formatted correctly.

On page 47, Section 4.5.3(E)3 references regulation of telecommunication facilities and wind turbines. Municipalities do not have regulatory authority per 30 VSA §2485 – correct.

On page 49, Section 4.7.2(B) – refers to the Agency of Natural Resources but should refer instead to the Agency of Agriculture.

On page 50, Section 4.7.3 – Protective Standards – subsection (D) refers to DRB authority under Section 4.6(D) – must correct.

On page 50, Section 4.7.4(A) – Activities Within Protected Areas – reference to Section 8.X of these regulations is incorrect.

On page 56, Section 5.6.1(D) – ADU allowed to be the greater of 30% of habitable area of principal dwelling or 900 square feet? – this is correct.

On page 56, Section 5.6.1(E) – states ADU can have a maximum of 2 BR. I'm not sure municipalities can regulate the number of BRs. (This statement is correct).

On page 58, language refers to Mobile Homes. The current standard is that “mobile homes” and “manufactured homes” are synonymous. May want to update the language -- have done so.

On page 61, Section 5.9.4 – Signs. The DRB no longer has regulatory authority for signs – change language to “Zoning Administrator.”

On page 64, Section 5.10.2 – reference to Section 5.9.X should be changed to Section 5.10.4.

On page 70, Section 5.11.2(B)2, Nonconforming Structures – there's an obsolete reference to Section X.X which needs to be corrected.

Table C, Table of Uses must be inserted and cleaned up.

On page 71, Table of Required Off-street Parking is now Table D, and has an extraneous column that will be removed.

On page 72, Section 5.12.6(B)3 refers to a “locking gate” – change to “latching gate.”

On page 75, Section 5.14.1 – Fences. Clarify that fences taller than 7 feet in height require Conditional Use approval from the DRB (as structures, meaning lot setbacks must be observed).

On page 75, Section 5.14.2 – Retaining Walls. Retaining walls greater than 6’ require Conditional Use approval from the DRB. Retaining Walls greater than 8’ will require certification by a licensed engineer that wall will perform as designed.

On page 80, Section 6.4.5(D) – Signs. Election campaign signs must be removed two weeks after an election.

On page 95, Section 7 (Floodplain) Definitions. Need to insert a small diagram into regulations.

On page 116, Section 8.2 – Definitions. Currently, only Mobile Homes are defined. Add Manufactured Homes and clarify that the terms are interchangeable.

On page 133 - -Section 9.1 – Need to insert Zoning Map.

Zoning Administrator Report

Mitch gave a summary of ongoing zoning activity. Mitch shares quarterly summaries of zoning activity with the Select Board and will begin doing likewise with the DRB and Planning Commission.

CVRPC Report

Royal DeLegge shared a summary of recent business of the CVRPC.

Other Business

Julie Lappin wished to discuss succession planning of the PC. Steve Fitzhugh had agreed to serve out the remaining year of an open term. He will be stepping down in March.

Julie wanted to be upfront that her workload is such that she will not be able to consider serving as Chair upon Steve’s departure.

After some discussion, Royal indicated that he would be open to serving as chair next year.

Next Meeting:

- November 1, 6:30 pm at Community Room

Adjournment: Steve Davis moved to adjourn; royal DeLegge seconded.

Motion carried, 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.