

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of March 22, 2024

10:30 am at Northfield Municipal Building

The meeting was called to order at 10:33 am by Chair Steve Fitzhugh.

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

All participants attended in person at the Municipal Building Conference Room.

Motion: Julie Lappin moved to approve edits to the draft Zoning Regulations proposed at the March 6 meeting of the Planning Commission meeting; Royal DeLegge seconded.

Discussion:

Royal noted that an error noted at the Select Board's discussion of the Zoning Regulations in February is not actually an error. Discussion ensued about the usage of "principal" vs. "principle." The regulations referred to the principal use of a property. In this context, "principal" is the correct word, not "principle." Will change back to the original word, "principal" on pages 56 and 59.

Julie noted that the draft regulations make a reference on page 49 to a "Roadway and Culvert Permit." Northfield issues a Driveway Access Permit for the purpose described. We will change "Roadway and Culvert Permit" to reflect the correct name of the permit issued in Northfield.

A Select Board member had questioned a reference to an "all-weather walkway" on page 65. The Planning Commission had previously discussed changing the reference from "walkway" to "pedestrian way." The proposed language change doesn't improve the clarity of this section. Have opted instead to add a definition of a "walkway."

Finally, added a provision to the section on Retaining Walls to clarify that there are lesser requirements for a retaining wall in the Low Density Residential district compared to other zoning districts.

Motion: Julie offered an amendment to her earlier motion and moved to approve the final draft of the Proposed Zoning Regulations, including the references to "principal use," "Driveway Access Permit," the definition of a "walkway," and the regulation of retaining walls. Royal seconded.

Vote to Approve: 3-1-0. (Steve Davis voted against approval).

Other Business

Mitch noted that the PC's Public Hearing on the Zoning Regulations has been warned to occur in conjunction with the next regular PC Meeting on April 3.

Because this PC meeting is the first one occurring after terms have expired, it is normal practice to hold an "organizational meeting" as a prelude to any other business. Mitch has confirmed that it is proper procedure to open the PC Meeting on that date and begin with an organizational meeting, at which time officers will be elected.

The PC can then transition into the Public Hearing portion without adjourning the PC meeting.

After the Public Hearing is closed, the PC can then resume the PC meeting and discuss and vote on any proposed changes to the Zoning Regulations based on feedback received during the public hearing.

The final order of business related to the Zoning Regulations is to approve the draft regulations once again, with or without any changes that may be offered.

The PC will also have a few sets of meeting minutes in need of approval.

Royal noted that the CRVPC held a meeting Thursday evening, the topic of which is ACT 250. The purpose of this meeting was to explain the workings of ACT 250 (as currently implemented). A video of this talk will soon be available. Mitch will share that when it's been added to the CVRPC website.

Adjournment: Royal moved to adjourn; Julie seconded.

Vote to approve: 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 10:56 am.