

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of February 1, 2023**

**7:00 pm at Brown Public Library Community Room**  
**(also available remotely via Town Zoom Account)**

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Chair Laura Hill-Eubanks.

**Roll Call:** Present for the meeting were Planning Commission members Laura Hill-Eubanks, Nancy Peck, Ruth Ruttenberg, and Aaron Rhoads. Chandra Blackmer was absent. Also present was Clerk Mitch Osiecki. Northfield resident Julie Lappin joined the meeting in progress at around 7:05.

Laura Hill-Eubanks, Nancy Peck, and Mitch Osiecki were present at the Community Room; all others attended remotely.

**Adjustment to Agenda:** Ruth Ruttenberg requested that a report from the Conservation Commission be added. The Town Forest Stewardship Committee, a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission, plans to submit a letter to the Select Board asking to designate a special zoning district for the Town Forest, which is currently designated Low Density Residential.

**Zoning Regulations**

Picked up work on Zoning Regulations beginning at Section 4.4 – Frontage and Access.

Section 4.4.2 specifies a driveway setback of 5 feet. Is this common?

Discussion ensued about the applicability of height restrictions.

Section 4.6.1 Nonconforming small lots. Discussion ensued, but no consensus for any revision to current language.

Discussion ensued about ADU's. State statute requires that the owner of a property must reside in either the principal dwelling or the ADU. Concern that it might be impractical to regulate residency requirement.

Should make sure ADU definitions are current and consistent with state statute.

Section 5.7.1 part B. Is there a minimum road width required for a "privately owned access road"?

It may be advisable to update language concerning “mobile homes.” The phrase “mobile home” is somewhat out-of-date. Note: by HUD definition, a mobile home refers to a factory-built home constructed prior to June 15, 1976; factory-built homes constructed after this date are called manufactured homes. Should research whether “mobile home” language in regulations should be updated.

Discussion that modern manufactured homes are often larger (longer and wider) than they once were. Are existing minimum lot sizes sufficient to accommodate current standard manufactured homes?

D. Does it make sense to maintain requirement of two off-street parking spaces per dwelling unit? Many municipalities are doing away with this standard. Easing of this requirement is also currently being debated in the VT legislature.

F. Could specification of a non-porous pad be modified to allow for a porous or semi-porous pad?

#### Section 5.8 Home Occupations

Are off-street parking requirements necessary? No decision.

#### Section 5.9 Sand & Gravel

Discussion of requirements for the posting of a Performance Bond. Consensus that it’s worth ensuring that a Performance Bond is required when appropriate.

**Next Meeting:** Date to be determined.

**Minutes:** Nancy Peck moved to table approval of the minutes of Dec 14, and asked Mitch to revise draft minutes to emphasize that recommendations put forth by Juli Beth Hinds are explicitly recommendations, and do not reflect decisions of the PC. Ruth Ruttenberg seconded.

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

Minutes of Jan 23. Mitch has revised the draft minutes to correctly reflect votes on a couple of motions. Nancy Peck moved to approve minutes of revised minutes of Jan 23. Ruth Ruttenberg seconded.

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

**Adjournment:** Aaron Rhodes moved to adjourn; Nancy Peck seconded.

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.