

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL MEETING  
AUGUST 14, 2007**

This regular meeting of Council began, with all members present, following the work session.

**READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Councilman Carew, second by Councilman Martinez, to dispense with the reading of the minutes of July 17, 2007. They have been posted, distributed to Council and are on file in the Municipal Clerk's Office. All present in favor, motion carries.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Councilman Turon requested Council's consent to issue a stop-work order for the Commerce Insurance property due to the fact that several trees were removed during construction. Engineer Stinson confirmed that the trees were designated to remain in place on the approved site plans. Solicitor Bonchi will follow up with the construction official on the matter. Turon expressed discontent over the fact that several advertisement-type lawn signs are being put up all over the City. Solicitor Bonchi stated that it is a matter of code enforcement. Administrator Bruckler reported that the Zoning Officer has spoken directly with the owner of one of the companies responsible for the signs; the owner has been advised of the ordinance and was told to remove the signs. Councilman Carew stated that it may be time to revise the sign ordinance and he has asked the Zoning Officer to draft some changes.

Councilman Vain congratulated the organizers of the Flora Dickinson Fishing Tournament and of National Night Out. He attended both events with his children and said that everyone had a great time. He has provided Council with copies of a letter he sent to County Executive Levinson requesting the County pay for the redesign of the Cedarbridge, Zion and Burroughs intersection. He will provide more information as it becomes available. He reminded the public that school will reopen in the near future and asked everyone to please watch their speed, specifically on Zion Road where no sidewalks exist and the children have limited room to walk on their way to school. Vain has requested the areas of restricted parking along Cedarbridge Road be increased and that current restrictions are better enforced, stating that many parents park along Cedarbridge to drop off and pick up their children from school and the area is too congested. Police Chief James will evaluate the situation once school starts. Chief James and Council discussed the traffic patterns at the Route 9 and Tilton Road intersection and the concerns of area business owners. James explained that the State has jurisdiction over the intersection. Councilman Vain reported that children from the Northfield Community School's DARE program are actively seeking grant monies to pay for improvements at the City Police Department such as new paint and office furniture. He informed Council that all grant applications will be submitted through the school. Council and Engineer Stinson discussed the status of the Open Space Grant application for the property on Oak Avenue. Stinson described a time-line for Council which includes a thirty-day advance notice for a public hearing. Stinson estimated the County was still at least three months away from making a decision.

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Regarding the Rescue Squad, Councilman Martinez reported that he has attended several meetings on the matter and there are many options to consider. He asked the City Administrator to follow through in providing more detailed information regarding the associated costs of each option, at startup and into the future. He reported that the proposed tree ordinance was approved by the Planning/Zoning Board and asked that it be put on the agenda for introduction at the next Council meeting. Councilmen Martinez and Vain will be meeting in the near future to discuss the feasibility of a City skate board park.

Councilman Carew questioned whether or not the property on Oak Avenue could be used for a skate board park if the City was approved the grant for Open Space. Councilman Mazzeo responded in the negative. Engineer Stinson explained the difference between active versus passive use of property in the grant application process. Carew thanked the Friends of Birch Grove Park for their work in organizing the annual Flora Dickinson Fishing Tournament. He attended the event with his children and said it was a huge success. Regarding the ban on collection of construction debris, Carew stated that Council needs to reconsider the ordinance and he will be meeting with the Department of Public Works to discuss the matter.

Councilman Notaro asked Administrator Bruckler to follow up on a Resolution that was passed in April asking the County to install street lighting along a certain section of Dolphin Avenue. Regarding Gypsy Moths, Notaro informed the public that the Department of Agriculture has been contacted and that the City will be added to the mass inspection list for 2008.

Councilman Mazzeo thanked everyone involved in organizing National Night Out and said it was a great success. He reported that there will be an increase of public pension funding imposed at the local level in 2008, which will make it a very difficult budget year.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Perri recognized the Police Department for doing a great job organizing National Night Out. He asked Public Works to replace street signs at Zion Road and Golfview Drive. He reported that the City pays approximately \$243,000.00 in County Open Space Taxes and he commended Councilman Mazzeo for trying to bring some of that money back into the community. The Mayor reported that Egg Harbor Township has been mandated to perform a revaluation and he believes Northfield is close to that point.

Police Chief James reported on the statistics for the month July as well as the results of a traffic checkpoint that was conducted in coordination with the Division of Highway Traffic Safety's Mobile Inspection Unit. The County Office of Highway Safety wrote a grant application for the City which resulted in the award of a trailer valued at \$15,000.00 which is fully equipped to handle traffic emergencies. Chief James commended Captain Clark and Lt. Faden for their work in organizing National Night Out and he thanked various departments for their assistance and attendance at the event. He reported that the

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department was awarded \$5000.00 in grant monies for DWI enforcement; the money will be used to stage DWI checkpoints between August 17<sup>th</sup> and September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Councilman Carew commended Chief James for his leadership and the department as a whole for their astounding work in traffic enforcement. Mayor Perri noted that, as a condition of the DWI enforcement grant, the department is required to put the public on notice about the checkpoints.

Council President Kern announced that Family Fest is scheduled for October 6<sup>th</sup> at Birch Grove Park. She asked the City Administrator to follow up on some trash cans that were purchased years ago to be placed in front of the Northfield Post Office and never were. She and Councilman Notaro met with Mrs. Margulis as follow up to an incident where a tree was cut down on her property by the City. In addition to wanting a replacement tree, Mrs. Margulis is asking that the City clean up some dead branches that hang over into her yard from City property. Solicitor Bonchi suggested that Mrs. Margulis submit an estimate for the cost of a replacement tree as settlement to potential litigation. Councilman Vain reminded all City employees that they are a reflection of City government when they speak to residents. Councilman Turon expressed discontent that the bill for the tree removal service was charged to the Buildings & Grounds account without his prior knowledge or consent. He stated that he must be consulted in advance of any charges hitting that account.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Administrator Bruckler reported on the following: The Sewer inter-local agreement has been signed by Linwood and Northfield; the Electrical Sub-Code Inspector has taken a leave of absence and Michael Tallant has been the temporary replacement; he is in the process of hiring a Fire Sub-Code Inspector and is seeking temporary assistance as well; Council Chambers has received a fresh coat of paint and the Police Department is next; he is soliciting quotes for HVAC for certain areas of City Hall; He is soliciting and quotes for several of the new court security features; Pete Foster of the DPW began terminal leave as of July 31<sup>st</sup> and is scheduled to retire on December 28, 2007; the former ambulance is being reconfigured as a Sewer Department vehicle; the installation of a server for the Police Department is going out for bid because quotes are over the threshold and do not meet pay-to-play qualifications; he is in the process of formulating a Municipal Facilities and Fields Use Policy and welcomes feedback form Council; he advised Council that the Patrick Center for Environmental Research is asking for permission to collect fish specimens from Birch Grove Park for chemical analysis – Council said no.

Bruckler announced the following meetings and events: he attended a waste water information session hosted by ACUA on August 8<sup>th</sup> where he learned that Northfield's waste water flows were predicted to come in approximately 20% lower than the projected flow rate; he met with the owner of Rita's Water Ice on Tilton Road to discuss his concerns about the new traffic patterns at the Tilton and Route 9 intersection; He will be attending a meeting with the Atlantic County Solid Waste Advisory Council (SWAC) on

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August 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss the deletion of the Northfield Compost Facility for Vegetative Waste.

**ENGINEER'S REPORT**

The City Engineer's report was provided to Mayor and Council and is on file in the City Clerk's office. Council and Engineer Stinson discussed the Safe Routes to Schools Grant. Mayor Perri reported that he has not received any further information from the State regarding the Route 9 sidewalk project nor the landscaping at the Tilton Road intersection. Councilman Carew questioned the replacement of the boardwalk and bulkhead at Birch Grove Park. Stinson will follow up.

**RESOLUTIONS/CONSENT AGENDA**

On motions properly made and seconded, Council agreed to a consent agenda. Councilman Turon abstained on Resolution number 131-2007.

- 126-2007** Resolution Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation NJS 40A:4-87 / Click It or Ticket Grant
  
- 127-2007** Resolution Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation NJS 40A:4-87 / Clean Communities Grant
  
- 128-2007** Release of Escrow Monies from the Planning/Zoning Board
  
- 129-2007** Authorizing Doran Engineering to Proceed with Certain 2007 Projects
  
- 130-2007** Refund of Overpayment of Dog Licenses
  
- 131-2007** To Ratify the Hiring of Michael Tallant for the Position of Temporary Electrical Subcode Inspection. (*Councilman Turon abstained*)
  
- 132-2007** A Resolution of the City of Northfield Supporting the Continued Funding of the PARIS Grants Program in Accordance with P.L. 2003, Chapter 117, Sections 38 and 39
  
- 133-2007** A Resolution to Authorize the Cancellation of Sewer Charges on Block 82, Lot 7
  
- 134-2007** A Resolution to Authorize the Cancellation of Taxes on Block 1.02, Lot 33
  
- 135-2007** Reconstruction of Banning Avenue, City of Northfield, Change Order No. 1

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- 136-2007** A Resolution of the City of Northfield Urging the State of New Jersey to Take Financial Responsibility for the Cost of a State Wide Gypsy Moth Control Program
- 137-2007** Refund of Hazardous Material Handling Fees
- 138-2007** A Resolution Providing for an Executive Session Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, Regarding Possible Litigation
- 139-2007** In support of Remedial Legislation to Authorize a Library Levy Cap Exception

Roll Call: Carew - yes, Martinez – yes, Mazzeo- yes, Notaro – yes, Turon – yes (abstain on 131-2007), Vain – yes, Kern – yes, Motion carries.

**ORDINANCES**

On a motion made by Councilman Vain, seconded by Turon, all in favor of reading Ordinance 8-2007 by title only.

- 8-2007** Amending Ordinance 11-2003 of the Code of the City of Northfield Establishing Fees for Plenary Retail Consumption Liquor Licenses  
*Final Reading/ Open to the public/ Advertise in the Press 8/18/07*  
Seeing no one from the public wishing to speak, Council President Kern called for a vote.  
Roll Call: Carew - yes, Martinez – yes, Mazzeo- yes, Notaro – yes, Turon – yes, Vain – yes, Kern – yes. Motion carries.

On a motion made by Councilman Carew, seconded by Notaro, all in favor of reading Ordinance 9-2007 by title only.

- 9-2007** Amending Chapter 111 of the Code of the City of Northfield Approving Two-Way Traffic on Davis Avenue  
*Final Reading/ Open to the public/ Advertise in the Press 8/18/07*  
Seeing no one from the public wishing to speak, Council President Kern called for a vote.  
Roll Call: Carew - yes, Martinez – yes, Mazzeo- yes, Notaro – yes, Turon – yes, Vain – yes, Kern – yes. Motion carries.

On a motion made by Councilman Martinez, seconded by Turon, all in favor of reading Ordinance 10-2007 by title only.

- 10-2007** Amending Chapter 76 of the Code of the City of Northfield

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*Final Reading/ Open to the public/ Advertise in the Press 8/18/07*

Seeing no one from the public wishing to speak, Council President Kern called for a vote.

Roll Call: Carew - yes, Martinez – yes, Mazzeo- yes, Notaro – yes, Turon – yes, Vain – yes, Kern – yes. Motion carries.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Councilman Mazzeo motioned, Councilman Carew seconded, for payment of bills in the amount of \$4,066,849.51.

Council President Kern, Councilman Turon and Councilman Vain announced their abstention from certain line items on the bill list. Copies will be kept on file with the City Clerk.

Roll Call: Carew - yes, Martinez – yes, Mazzeo- yes, Notaro – yes, Turon – yes, Vain – yes, Kern – yes, motion carries.

**PUBLIC SESSION/FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER**

Wendy Tantaros and Nancy Ceullars, both residents of Oakcrest Avenue, came forward and expressed concerns over recent burglaries in their neighborhood. They felt the Police Department should have informed the neighborhood residents about the criminal activity.

Additionally, one of the police officers was not very responsive when they approached him with their concerns. Police Chief James replied that the department can only give limited information on open investigations and that he would be happy to speak with them following the meeting.

Robert Webb of 218 West Revere Avenue came forward and commented on a recent press article in which Mayoral Candidate Harold Kauffman expressed his objection to the City's attempt to purchase a property on Oak Avenue as Open Space. Webb stated that Kauffman was in favor of the City's purchase of a property on Wabash Avenue several years ago. Council President Kern reminded Mr. Webb that Kauffman's letter was one of a resident writing to the editor and that Council would most likely not comment on the matter.

Jim O'Neil of 7 Cara Court came forward and asked Council to reconsider the purchase of the property on Oak Avenue, stating that he believes there are many other properties available within the City for a much lower price. Councilman Notaro replied that the price of the property has not yet been agreed upon with the seller. Councilman Mazzeo expressed his concern that Open Space should not be a matter of politics. He stated that Council agreed on the Oak Avenue property. Notaro asked if the grant funds could be redirected to a different property at this stage of the process. Engineer Stinson replied in the negative, stating that the application is specific to the property. The City's next opportunity to pursue Open Space funding for a different location would be next year.

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Seeing no one from the public wishing to speak, Council President Kern closed the public session.

Councilman Notaro announced the next meeting of Council will be held on September 4, 2007, at 7:00 pm.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION 138-2007**

Motions were properly made and seconded, to go into an Executive Session not open to the public. After the discussion this Executive Session was adjourned and Solicitor Bonchi announced a summary for the public as follows: An Executive Session was held during which City Council discussed potential litigation with the developer of Burton Estates and how Council wishes to address the issues.

Councilman Carew motioned and Councilman Notaro seconded to authorize Doran Engineering to conduct an initial investigation and furthermore, to authorize Vargos Associates to conduct a topographic survey of Burton Estates. All present were in favor; motion carries.

On motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Raph, RMC/CMC  
Municipal Clerk