

City of Northfield Planning Board
1600 Shore Road
Northfield, New Jersey 08225
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January 4, 2024

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 December 23, 2024 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 **Re-Organization** meeting of the Northfield Planning Board was held on Thursday, January 4, 2024. ***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.***

Formal action may be taken at this meeting.

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

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84371651207?pwd=akREYVBPOHBvTmptEQ2xicHI2STZJdz09>

Meeting ID: 843 7165 1207

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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

Councilwoman Carolyn Bucci

Matthew Carney

Mayor Erland Chau

Councilman Eric Leeds

Dr. Richard Levitt

Henry Notaro-absent

Dan Reardon

Ron Roegiers-absent

Derek Rowe

Clem Scharff

Jim Shippen-absent

Paul Utts

Joel M. Fleishman, Esq.-Planning Board Solicitor

Matthew Doran, PE, PP-Planning Board Engineer

Mayor Chau was detained at a meeting at the regional school and the Oaths of Office were read to the Planning Board Members and Alternates whose terms expired or changed in 2024 by Robin Atlas as a Notary Public. The Oaths were taken by:

Councilwoman Carolyn Bucci, Planning Board Member-City Council Liaison-1 year appointment

Clem Scharff, Planning Board Member-4-year term

Peter Brophy, Planning Board Member-4-year term

Paul Utts-Alternate #1-2-year term

Mathew Carney-Alternate #2-2-year term

Ronald Roegiers, Alternate #3-2-year term

The next order of Re-organization business was the yearly appointments. They were as follows:

Planning Board Solicitor-Mr. Utts nominated Joel Fleishman, Esq. and Mr. Brophy seconded. There were no other nominations. The voice vote was all in favor.

Planning Board Engineer-Mr. Brophy nominated Matt Doran, PE, PP and Mr. Carney seconded. There were no other nominations. The voice vote was all in favor.

Planning Board Secretary-Mr. Scharff nominated Robin Atlas and Mr. Brophy seconded. There were no other nominations. The voice vote was all in favor.

Chairman of the Planning Board-Mr. Brophy nominated Dr. Richard Levitt and Mr. Scharff seconded. There were no other nominations. The voice vote was all in favor.

Vice Chairman of the Planning Board-Mr. Reardon nominated Clem Scharff and Mr. Utts seconded. There were no other nominations. The voice vote was all in favor.

Mr. Brophy asked everyone to stand and led the flag salute.

The last order of Re-Organization was to approve the meetings schedule for 2024. The list was reviewed and the July 4th meeting, which falls on the first Thursday of July, was moved to the following Thursday, July 11, 2024.

The minutes for December 7, 2023 were approved unanimously by voice vote.

There were two resolutions to memorialize from the December meeting. The first was for Plastic Spoon, LLC, Block 82 Lot 8.01 at 2318 New Road for an elimination of a prior condition of approval. Abstentions were Councilwomen Bucci, Mr. Carney, Mr. Notaro, and Mr. Reardon. The voice vote was all in favor.

The second was for Stephanie Ann Swift, Block 146, Lot 24 at 32 Haddon Avenue for "c" Variances for an addition. Abstentions were Councilwoman Bucci, Mr. Carney, Mr. Notaro, and Mr. Reardon. The voice vote was all in favor. Mr. Fleishman commented that Mrs. Swift hired an attorney to prepare the Deed Restriction. Dr. Levitt explained that he spoke with Mary Canesi and the Building Department about concerns that this property could possibly be a duplex in the future. It is zoned single-family and that doesn't mean you can't have a separate living section, but it must be a single-family household. It can't

ne rented or advertised as such. If a relative or care taker or someone else is living with you, that is allowed. A deed restriction is a protection against a rentable duplex. The issue arose due to the separate entrance. Mr. Brophy questioned whether it had to come before the Board. Mr. Fleishman said the deed will flow from the resolution and her attorney is on board with this and has prepared the deed and will see that it is filed.

Mayor Chau arrived at the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

There was one application on the agenda from Alisa Elkis for Block 175 Lot 37.01, 9 Argo Lane for a "c" variance for an existing rear yard setback. Christopher M. Baylinson, Esq. of Linwood represented Ms. Elkis and both Ms. Elkis and Peter Weiss, a licensed architect in NJ from Northfield who drew the plans were sworn in.

Mr. Baylinson said Alisa Elkis is a 30-year Northfield resident who currently resides at 15 Northfield Plaza and plans to retire and move to the smaller house at 9 Argo Lane. Mr. Baylinson said the purchase was a by-right. Ms. Elkis had problems with the renovations due to multiple renovations in the past that were not built to code. She will have to take off the roof and raise the walls and may have to demolish the building all together and rebuild. The house complies with the Ordinance except for an existing rear setback of 8 ft. where 25 ft. is required. If the building is demolished, she will replicate the existing footprint. The deck is not changing.

Mr. Weiss said an alternative to this application would be to lop off the back bedroom and bring the bathroom and kitchen into compliance and it would then be a one-bedroom house. Ms. Elkis doesn't want a second floor and that would be more of an impact to her neighbors. She wants to recreate what is there presently. Mr. Baylinson said the plan will give her a larger bedroom and a great room. He added that this will create a new house on the property that will be aesthetically enhancing and there is no detriment to the public good. The Country Club is a good distance away and it is closer to the Targan house. Mr. Fleishman labeled the aerial display Exhibit A-1. Mr. Weiss said the aerial is from Google Maps and it shows that the lot is large and there are no houses behind it and it is all wooded and well buffered in the area where they are seeking the variance. Mr. Weiss verified that there is a basement. Dr. Levitt questioned the garage and asked if it was living space. Ms. Elkins said there is a garage and a room upstairs that she uses for storage. It does have a bathroom, air conditioning and heat. There is no kitchen. Dr. Levitt asked that the resolution state that it won't be occupied as living space and that it will remain a garage for storage. Ms. Elkins agreed.

Mr. Doran referred to his report and said a variance will be needed for the deck. Mr. Baylinson said it is existing. Mr. Doran said that once the primary structure is removed entirely, the deck would need a variance as an accessory structure. It would no longer be grandfathered. The variances were discussed and it was determined that there are actually four "c" variances needed. The first is the rear setback where 25 ft. is required and 8 ft. is proposed. The second is for the size of the rear deck where 100 sf is permitted and 700 sf is proposed. The third is the setback of the rear deck where 15 ft. is required and 1 ft. is proposed. The fourth is the height of the garage if it should exceed 15 ft.

Dr. Levitt opened the public session. There was no one who wished to speak on Zoom. Mary Brewster of 1707 Shore Road was sworn in. She and her husband are new to town and have been in Northfield for two years. She spoke highly of Ms. Elkins and said no one is a better neighbor in the neighborhood. She helps her neighbors out with getting mail and dog walking and her property is impeccable and she is a total asset to Northfield and she will miss her when she moves from Northfield Plaza. There was no one else who wished to speak and Dr. Levitt closed the public session.

Ms. Elkins said she currently lives at 15 Northfield Plaza and she wants to live in a smaller home. Dr. Levitt noted that there are four significant trees in front of the property. Councilwoman Buccci asked how far the property was from Shore Road and could a Fire Truck get to the property if necessary. The Fire Department approved of the application and it was noted that the property is behind the home that was owned by Mr. Evinski on Shore Road.

The waivers were discussed. It was decided that curbs and sidewalks should be waived since they don't exist on Argo Lane and also a waiver for street trees. Mr. Doran noted that the plan shows an existing fence which encroaches over the rear and side property lines. Mr. Baylinson said the fence is timber and vinyl. They will approach the neighbors and work it out with them.

Mr. Scharff made the motion for the variances and waivers. Mr. Carney seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Brophy-yes

Councilwoman Buccci-yes

Mr. Carney-yes

Mayor Chau-abstain

Mr. Reardon-yes

Mr. Rowe-yes

Mr. Scharff-yes

Mr. Utts-yes

Chairman Levitt-yes

The motion carries.

There was no new business. The Master Plan was discussed under old business. A draft has been completed and the committee is working on it. Mr. Doran commented on Homes for All (The Gables on Wabash) and he said the CAFRA permit process is complete and they have submitted compliance plans to him. Mayor Chau commented that the VA hospital project is no longer going to happen as they could not obtain state permits. Mr. Carney asked about the Jewish Federation project on Oak Avenue. Mayor Chau said nothing has been submitted and the city planner has concerns about the size of the project and the number of units. Mayor Chau and Councilwoman Buccci discussed the Camden Diocese project on Dolphin Avenue and they said with their affordable numbers, the city won't need the Jewish Federation project to fulfill the affordable numbers. The Camden Diocese project is currently coordinating with Atlantic County.

Mr. Brophy made the motion to close the meeting and Mr. Carney seconded. Chairman Levitt closed the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Atlas

Robin Atlas, Secretary to the Board