

**NORTHFIELD PLANNING BOARD
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2023
REGULAR MEETING
REMOTE MEETING VIA ZOOM
MEETING MINUTES**

Members Present: Chair Stephen Seredynski (SS), Joe Graveline (JG), Meg Riordan (MR), Homer Stavely (HS), Tammy Pelletier (TP)

Members Absent: none

Members of the Press: none

Others in Attendance: Wendy M. Levy (Board Clerk), Melissa Gamache, Pamela Eldridge, Tom Shearer

Please note, because of Zoom's participation structure, attendance may be incomplete.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair SS called the meeting to order at 4:02pm.

MR shared a document showing the Planning Board's agenda for this meeting.

II. ESTABLISH A QUORUM

SS announced a quorum has been met.

III. OPEN PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED FLOODPLAIN OVERLAY DISTRICT BYLAW

SS explained why the Planning Board is holding this public hearing. Highlights included:

- There is a proposed change to the bylaws, and to the town's floodplain overlay district, so a hearing is required.
- This change is a result of new guidance from the federal government, indicating Northfield's current floodplain bylaws are obsolete.
- Without this change, the property owners in the overlay district cannot apply for flood insurance.
- Peggy Sloan from the FRCOG assisted the Planning Board with drafting the new, proposed bylaws.
- These new bylaws are specific to Northfield's conditions.
- The federal guidelines require each town to have a Flood Plain Administrator, and it must be someone employed by the town. Northfield's Flood Plain Administrator will be Town Administrator Andrea Llamas.
- The proposed floodplain bylaws have six stated purposes for establishing the Floodplain Overlay District. They are:
 - Ensure public safety through reducing flood threats to life and personal injury;
 - Eliminate new hazards to emergency response officials;
 - Prevent the contamination and pollution of water resources resulting from flooding, so as to protect public safety and avoid damage to wildlife habitat;
 - Avoid the loss of utility services which if damaged by flooding would disrupt or

shut down the utility network and impact regions of the community beyond the site of flooding;

- Eliminate costs associated with the response and cleanup of flooding conditions;
- and
- Reduce damage to public and private property resulting from flood waters.
- After this hearing, the electorate will vote on this proposed bylaw at Annual Town Meeting.

JG joined the meeting at approximately 4:06pm.

Melissa Gamache of 73 Riverview Drive asked for a copy of the current floodplain map. SS responded: The Town Clerk has the current floodplain maps. They are detailed, but dated; the most recent maps FEMA has issued are from 1980. The Planning Board expects new, updated FEMA floodplain maps, but it is unclear when they will arrive.

SS noted the bylaw indicates the existing maps will be used until the new maps arrive.

Ms. Gamache asked if the whole town is being rezoned.

SS responded: No. This bylaw only refers to changes to the floodplain overlay district, and the Planning Board will address any changes resulting from the new floodplain maps when they arrive.

Ms. Gamache asked when the new maps will arrive.

SS responded: He does not know.

MR asked how many properties are affected by this bylaw.

SS responded: Thirteen properties are affected, with a total property valuation of \$1million.

Tom Shearer of 101 Cross Road asked why the Planning Board is drafting these new bylaws.

SS responded by providing the information he mentioned earlier in the meeting regarding federal regulations and property owners' need to apply for flood insurance.

Mr. Shearer asked why the Planning Board does not wait to update the bylaws until after the new FEMA maps arrive.

SS responded: Because the affected property owners cannot apply for floodplain insurance until the town changes its floodplain overlay district bylaws.

SS noted the proposed floodplain overlay district bylaws are available on the town's website and in the Town Clerk's office.

IV. CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

MR shared a link to the town's website where the proposed bylaws can be viewed.

SS closed the public hearing.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 1/26/23 AND SITE PLAN REVIEW 3/22/2023

MOTION BY TP TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 1/26/23. MR SECONDED.

There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

MR YEA
TP YEA
HS YEA
JG ABSTAIN
SS YEA

MOTION CARRIED 4-1, WITH JG ABSTAINING.

MOTION BY JG TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE 3/22/23 SITE PLAN HEARING. HS SECONDED.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

MR YEA
HS YEA
TP YEA
SS YEA
JG YEA

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. ANY BUSINESS NOT ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR 48 HOURS PRIOR

There was none.

VII. ADJOURN

MOTION BY HS TO ADJOURN. JG SECONDED.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

MR YEA
TP YEA
HS YEA
JG YEA
SS YEA

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:19pm.

Documents presented at this meeting:

- The meeting agenda.
- A link to the town's website where the proposed bylaws can be viewed.

Respectfully submitted by Wendy M. Levy from minutes taken by Wendy M. Levy.

Approved. 