

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of Regular Meeting
August 21, 2019**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roman at 7:09 P.M. at 8350 Main Street.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

**3. ROLL CALL
AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

Roll call:

Janet Chick	Present
Brad Cousino	Present
Eamonn Dwyer	Present
Sam Iaquinto	Present
Cecilia Infante	Present
Larry Roman	Present
John Zarzecki	Present

Also present:

Building/Planning/Zoning Coordinator Mary Bird
Planning Consultant Paul Lippens, McKenna Associates
Township Engineer Marcus McNamara, OHM
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the Community

4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Iaquinto seconded, that the agenda be adopted as amended.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No comments.

6. CLARIFICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

None.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 8A. Case #JPC190006; NF Real Estate Holdings LLC/ The DogHouse LLC; 2420 E. North Territorial Road; Request for expansion of Conditional Use Permit under Section 36-840(b) to use an existing pole barn for canine boarding and support care; Parcel 02-27-200-002; zoned AR.**

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Iaquinto seconded, to open the public hearing.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

Nancy Ferrantino of The DogHouse said they have been using the existing pole barn for dog training classes because they were unaware that was not part of their Conditional Use Permit. Planning consultant Paul Lippens said no site modifications are needed for this request, so no additional site plan submittal was required. He added that minutes of the original approval indicate the pole barn was not included in the training site. He recommended approval of the request.

Roman called for public comments. There were none.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Roman seconded, to close the public hearing.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

- 8B. Case #JPC190007; Whitmore Lake Climate Storage LLC; 6684 Whitmore Lake Road; request for Conditional Use Permit to allow mini-warehousing storage facilities under Section 36-691 Land Uses and under Section 36-389 Design Standards; Parcel 02-20-300-018; Zoned LI in the Whitmore Lake/North Territorial Overlay District.**

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Iaquinto seconded, to open the public hearing.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

Jeff Evans appeared for the applicant. Lippens recalled the prior issues, including providing enough parking and sufficient masonry in the building, have been addressed through two variances granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals. He said minor remaining issues could be handled administratively or the Planning Commission could table the request for submittal of a revised site plan. He recommended approval of the Conditional Use subject to approval of the site plan.

Roman called for public comments. There were none.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Roman seconded, to close the public hearing.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

9. REPORTS

9A. Board of Trustees

Chick reported that the Board held a special meeting on August 12th to certify language for a referendum to prohibit marijuana businesses in the Township. She added that at their August 13th meeting they approved work by Tetra Tech as part of planning for a sewer system retention basin.

9B. ZBA

No meeting has been held since the last Planning Commission meeting.

9C. Staff Report
Nothing to report.

9D. Planning Consultant
Lippens reported he has made progress in preparing an analysis of the short term rental issue, and it will be on a Township Board agenda as scheduling allows.

9E. Parks and Recreation
Iaquinto urged everyone to follow Bark Park rules, noted boxes are still available for fall planting at the Community Garden, and reported the Committee will meet with two candidates for their open position at their next meeting.

9F. Downtown Planning Group
Infante reported the DDA will meet next Monday and has not met since the last Planning Commission meeting.

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Chick seconded, that New Business be heard prior to Unfinished Business.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

11. NEW BUSINESS

11A. Case #JPC190006; NF Real Estate Holdings LLC/ The DogHouse LLC; 2420 E. North Territorial Road; Request for expansion of Conditional Use Permit under Section 36-840(b) to use an existing pole barn for canine boarding and support care; Parcel 02-27-200-002; zoned AR.

In answer to questions, Ferrantino said the barn will be used only for training, perhaps as late as 7:00 P.M., but it will not be used for boarding.

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Chick seconded, that the Planning Commission approve the expansion of the conditional use permit.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

11B. Case #JPC190007; Whitmore Lake Climate Storage LLC; 6684 Whitmore Lake Road; request for Conditional Use Permit to allow mini-warehousing storage facilities under Section 36-691 Land Uses and under Section 36-389 Design Standards; Parcel 02-20-300-018; Zoned LI in the Whitmore Lake/North Territorial Overlay District.

Lippens reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) approved variances regarding parking and partial use of masonry in the buildings.

Lippens referred to his letter of August 14th and said the only remaining issues are the parking calculation and clarification regarding masonry materials proposed for the building facades. He noted updated plans addressed additional landscaping information, dumpster pad concrete thickness, natural features, and driveway clarifications. In answer to a question, Evans referred to the additional information regarding elevations for the covered parking.

Marcus McNamara, Township Engineer, said the following should be clarified on the plan:

- The south entrance drive appears not to be wide enough for all vehicles.
- It appears the applicant intends to provide access via a fire lane to the dry hydrant, but this should be clarified on the plan.

Evans presented samples of the cement fiberboard proposed for the wainscoting on the buildings. He said it will be attached to the siding of the prefab metal buildings and will not be structural. Roman read from the Zoning Administrator's to the ZBA which concluded that the proposed partial use of masonry would be reasonable, but he said it is not clear whether the ZBA variance approved the use of the proposed fiberboard material. Cousino, the Planning Commission representative to the ZBA, said in his recollection of the ZBA action the variance was to allow only partial use of masonry, but not specifically to approve the use of the proposed fiberboard. Lippens said this is a matter for the Planning Commission to decide.

Dwyer said the proposed fiberboard is not masonry, has no definition apparent from a short distance away, and will not be distinguishable from a metal building. Zarzecki said the proposed material is not masonry under the international building code, rather it is a siding material by definition. He said he is a member of The Masonry Society (TMS), which writes masonry code, and he could not approve this material as being a masonry product.

In answer to a question from Evans, Roman said Lippens can provide a definition of masonry after the meeting. Evans said all of the other buildings on site are metal and the purpose is storage. He questioned the need for masonry given the high cost of the materials. Roman said the Commission is going by the ordinance. Evans said he understands that, but in 2006 they were allowed to put up metal buildings, the site is zoned Limited Industrial, the community needs these buildings, and he is running out of space in the buildings and time on this project. He said he understands the desire to improve the community, but he has spent a \$30,000 on plans and reviews, and the cost of masonry would be substantial.

Lippens said if the majority of Commissioners do not want to approve the use of the fiberboard for the masonry requirement the Commission can delay action to allow a revised proposal to be submitted. Infante said she understands the applicant's economic concerns, but the Township wants durable buildings. Evans said he may consider asking for a complete waiver of the masonry requirement.

Regarding parking, Lippens said he does not understand what the decision of the ZBA was about the parking, although he knows the Zoning Administrator worked on a calculation with Evans. Cousino said the ZBA determined the ordinance parking requirements were outdated and unnecessarily high. Evans said parking was calculated using a combination of warehouse space

(25 parking spaces for 207 storage units) and the office (8 parking spaces). Lippens said that is sufficient parking, he will verify that with the zoning administrator, and it should be a note on the plan. Commissioners agreed the parking provided is sufficient.

In answer to questions, Evans said the landscaping will be done with Phase I, and traffic can enter and exit at both entrances. There was discussion about the south entrance being inadequate for RVs and trailers; McNamara suggested limiting those types of vehicles to the north entrance.

Regarding the dry hydrant, Evans said it is his understanding the dry hydrant must be in full working condition per the Fire Marshal's memo. McNamara said that should be noted on the plan.

Lippens said it is to the applicant's credit that this site will be cleaned up from its current condition. In answer to a question from Roman, Evans said the weeds around the cyclone fence will be cleaned up. Roman asked Lippens to address the top rail on the cyclone fence if it does not meet zoning ordinance requirements.

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Zarzecki seconded, to table action on Case #JPC190006 pending the applicant working with the Township Engineer and Township Planner to formalize the site plan.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

10A. Northfield Township 2019 Master Plan.

Lippens thanked Commissioners for their assistance with the revisions since the last meeting, including changing some of the photographs.

Roman said he still has an issue with wording on the first two pages, though he understands he may be in the minority regarding that.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chick moved, Infante seconded, to approve the Northfield Township Master Plan dated August 15, 2019, and to pass it on to the Township Board for approval. **Motion carried 6—1 on a roll call vote, Roman opposed.**

12. MINUTES

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Chick seconded, that the minutes of the August 7, 2019, regular meeting be approved as presented, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

13. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None present.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Comments included:

- Cousino noted the ZBA left the decision on the masonry issue up to the Planning Commission. There was discussion about what constitutes masonry and would be acceptable for meeting the ordinance requirement for mini-warehouses. Roman added that the types of building materials are partially dictated by the use of the buildings, so there is a reason to carefully consider these issues.
- Chick thanked Lippens and Commissioners for the hard work put into the Master Plan.

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

September 4, 2019, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building was announced as the next regular Commission meeting time and location.

16. ADJOURNMENT

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Chick seconded, that the meeting be adjourned.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 P.M.

Prepared by Lisa Lemble. Corrections to the originally issued minutes are indicated as follows:
Wording removed is ~~stricken through~~; wording added is underlined.

Adopted on _____, 2019.

Larry Roman, Chair

John Zarzecki, Secretary

Official minutes of all meetings are available on the Township's website at
<http://www.twp-northfield.org/government/>