

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT

MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of January 6, 2026

6:30 pm at Northfield Municipal Building Conference Room

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chair Royal DeLegge.

Roll Call: Present for the meeting were Planning Commission members Royal DeLegge, Lucas Herring, Elroy Hill, and Doug Shiok. Zoning Administrator & PC Clerk Mitch Osiecki was also present. PC member Brian Masset was absent.

Geoff Farrell of Farrell Associates joined the meeting remotely via GoToMeeting. All other participants were physically present in the Conference Room.

Adjustments to Agenda: Tom Davis is not available, so his discussion of changes to zoning regulations needed to support a Neighbor Development Area will be tabled until February. No other adjustments proposed.

Motion: Lucas moved to approve the agenda. Elroy seconded.

Vote to approve: 4-0.

Public Participation

Geoff Farrell, in attendance to discuss Form-Based Code zoning regulations.

Minutes

Motion: Elroy moved to approve the minutes of the PC meeting on December 2. Doug seconded.

Motion carried: 4-0.

Old Business

Form-Based Code zoning regulations

Geoff presented a brief overview of proposed Form-Based Code zoning regulations that are being proposed for portions of Northfield (primarily area around the two village centers, downtown and Northfield Falls).

Geoff noted that the FBC changes align well with goals identified by the Northfield Futures project of 2022. FBC changes also reinforce original design and development of the historic downtown.

Discussion of FBC Section 8: Administration, Application Process & Appeals. Geoff noted that FBC tries to skew toward simplicity.

Question: Lucas asked the area covered by FBC overlay. Draft changes include a map showing the area subject to FBC. Mitch will share a copy of the map with members.

Lucas also asked about building setbacks in the FBC district. Geoff commented that there is typically a “build to” line that serves as a setback regulation. This may need to be explicitly addressed in the proposed code.

Lucas also asked about the definition of “blockface.” Geoff responded that there is a standard that can be included in Northfield regulations.

Geoff noted that the first public draft of the FBC regulations was released just before Christmas. The expectation is that two additional public drafts are likely before the Select Board acts on a final draft.

Royal asked about the timeline for additional public drafts. Current plans point to a second draft in early February and a final draft in early or middle of March.

The grant funding this project has a deadline expiring at the end of July. Expect to complete work well before that date.

There is likely an electronic copy of the FBC document posted on the town website. Mitch will check to make sure that is the case. Mitch will email PC members a copy of the full draft, including a map of the area subject to FBC. Mitch will also print some copies for those preferring a print copy.

Town Forest

Royal has prepared a proposal to define a “Forest Reserve Overlay District,” which will be attached to these minutes. Royal would like any PC feedback at the February meeting, at which time the PC may forward the proposal to the Select Board for possible action.

Neighborhood Development Area (NDA)

Discussion tabled as Tom is unavailable tonight.

New Business

Brian Massey has submitted a letter indicating his desire to resign as Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission. Brian intends to remain on the PC.

Motion: Lucas moved accept Brian’s resignation as Vice-Chair. Doug seconded.

Motion carried, 4-0.

Planning Commission will elect a new Vice-Chair at February meeting.

CVRPC Updates

Royal reported that the CVRPC is currently working to develop a code of ethics and rules governing public participation at Board of Commissioners and Committee meetings.

Zoning Updates

Mitch provided an update on some zoning issues around town. One holdover from last month: A MH was recently removed from a property at 35 Pleasant Street. The owner of the property did receive a zoning permit to raze that structure. The existing MH was in poor condition and was partially in the floodplain. The structure was removed to facilitate the sale of the property.

The property may be redeveloped to include a dwelling, but structures will likely need to be sited outside the floodplain.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 3 at 6:30 pm.

Note: March meeting will fall on March 3, which is Town Meeting Day. Northfield holds its Town Meeting on Monday, March 2. Will discuss at February meeting whether we wish to hold our meeting as scheduled or move to an alternate date.

Adjournment: Elroy moved to adjourn; Doug seconded.

Motion carried, 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.