

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

Minutes of July 16, 2026

The meeting was held in the Community Room of the Brown Public Library and was also streamed via the Town Zoom account for the benefit of those unable to attend in person.

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Joel DeLary at 7:06 pm.

Roll Call: DRB members Joel DeLary, Keving Pecor, and Elroy Hill were present (Bill Smith arrived at 5:15). Brian Massey was absent. Clerk Mitch Osiecki was also present. Also present were Brian Bresland of DuBois & King (applicant), Hugh McLaughlin (applicant), Tom Davis (Economic Development Director), and Martha Mahan (abutting property owner).

Brian Bresland and Hugh McLaughlin participated remotely via Zoom; all others were physically present in the Community Room.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of minutes of May 28 and June 25 tabled until later in the meeting.

Permit #2026-49 – Conditional Use permit for Town of Northfield.

Brian Bresland of DuBois & King (project manager) presented the project proposal.

The project proposes installation of a gravel path leading to the Dog River Park and a sidewalk from the park along Water Street extending to Wall Street, which will bear eastward and continue along the southern side of Wall Street. A crosswalk will be installed opposite the Senior Center, and the sidewalk will continue eastward along the northern side of Wall Street to the railroad tracks. The sidewalk will terminate at the Village Common on Depot Square, most likely near the old train station (now Folino's Pizza). There may be some minor adjustments to the project at one or both ends.

Because parts of this project lie within the SPFA (Special Flood Hazard Area) or FEH (Fluvial Erosion Hazard) zones, the floodplain regulations of the Northfield Zoning regulations require the DRB to perform a Conditional Use review for the project. The ANR is also expected to review the project and provide comments. ANR comments are appended to these minutes, including a suggestion that conditions of approval include a requirement that any signage installed in conjunction with this project be securely anchored and be made of flood-resistant material.

The written comments of the ANR will be appended to these minutes.

There were no further questions from the DBR or members of the public.

Motion: Kevin Pecor moved to approve the permit. Elroy Hill seconded.

Discussion: a friendly amendment was suggested to require that signage be securely anchored and made of flood-resistant material.

Vote to approve: 4-0.

Permit #2026-46 – Conditional Use review for 57 Freight Yard Northfield LLC.

Permit #2026-47 – Site Plan review for same.

Hugh McLaughlin presented the application.

The project proposes to renovate the property at 57 Freight Yard Way as rental housing with six two-bedroom dwelling units.

A parking plan has been submitted showing 12 parking spaces. Hugh believes that the property can likely accommodate at least 15 spaces. The property will use both town water and sewer.

Two of the six units will be ADA-compliant.

Martha Mahan spoke in support of additional housing but has some concerns she hopes can be addressed. She believes electrical upgrades may be needed to support the proposed housing units and believes it would be preferable if electric lines to the property are buried rather than being run from a pole to the building. She stated that there is a junction box on the ground near the old engine house that is intended to serve the engine house, AT&T building, and 57 Freight Yard Way.

Bill Smith responded that he does not believe that the DRB has the authority to require that electrical lines be buried. Hugh responded that they would be happy to consider using the junction box, so long as doing so does not prove to be cost prohibitive.

Martha also expressed concern about the six dwelling units taxing the local water supply.

Tom Davis commented that public works personnel have indicated that the capacity of the water system is adequate to supply the proposed development.

Bill Smith noted that additional future development could require additional capacity from the municipality, but the DRB can only consider whether the town has the capacity to serve the proposed development.

Mitch offered that the municipality routinely provides a letter stating that the municipality has adequate water and sewer capacity for any projects that are reviewed by the DRB.

Tom offered to talk to the town manager about supplying such a letter for this project.

There were no further questions from the DRB or members of the public.

Motion: Joel moved to approve the Conditional Use and Site Plan permits. Kevin seconded.

Discussion: A friendly amendment was offered to require a letter from the town affirming adequate water and sewer capacity.

Vote to approve: 4-0.

Minutes

Motion: Kevin moved to approve the minutes of May 28. Elroy seconded.

Vote to approve: 3-0-1 (Joel abstained).

Motion: Joel moved to approve the minutes of June 25. Elroy seconded.

Vote to approve: 3-0-1 (Kevin abstained).

Other Business

Mitch reported that the controlled burn/fire training exercise that was approved on Bailey Road last year is still expected to happen this fall. Fire Chief Pete Demasi will keep Mitch apprised of the schedule and Mitch will relay this information to area residents.

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 27 at 7:00.

Adjournment

Motion: Joel moved to adjourn. Kevin seconded.

Vote to approve: 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.