

Town of Northfield, Vermont Development Review Board Minutes of January 28, 2021

ROLL CALL: Board members William Smith, Timothy Donahue III, Paul Brown, Colin Bright, and Steve Davis were present. Also present were DRB Clerk Mitch Osiecki along with applicant Kristy Korrow Kenyon. Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS: Members of the DRB introduced themselves. Clerk/ZA Osiecki did likewise, as did the members of the public who joined the meeting.

MINUTES: Motion by Bright to approve minutes of October __; seconded by Donahue. **Motion passed 4-0-1** (Brown absent).

(Chair Smith experienced technical difficulties. After an attempt to troubleshoot, vice-chair Donahue agreed to run the meeting. Smith phoned in and remained on the meeting.

APPLICATION: Homer "Scott" Smith has submitted an application for conditional use to operate a trash drop. ZA Osiecki explained that the trash drop has been operating for about five years. Town Manager Schulz had taken a phone call asking if the operation had received permit approval. ZA Osiecki requested that a zoning application be submitted for consideration by the DRB. Applicant Smith applied for approval to operate at two locations: Fernandez property behind the police station on Wednesday and Saturday; and at Convenience Plus gas station on VT 12 North, but wishes to amend application to reflect that he will only be operating at the Fernandez property.

Bright noted that there are other people operating trash drops in town and isn't certain that approval of the DRB is necessary. ZA Osiecki responded that he would be happy to review regulations and determine whether DRB approval is necessary. ZA Osiecki agreed that all parties operating businesses should be treated the same; if the determination is that a permit is required, all parties will need to seek approval.

Bright moved to table action on this permit until a determination is made as to the need for permit approval; Brown seconded. **Motion passed 5-0.**

APPLICATION: Korrow Real Estate LLC has submitted applications for conditional use approval and site plan review to construct a commercial building at Gillespie Fuels property at 69 Stony Brook Road.

Kristy Korrow Kenyon explained that approval for both permits had been granted in 2011, but the project was held up by Act 250 review. All necessary state permits have now been approved, but the original municipal permits have expired. ZA Osiecki determined that the permits should be re-approved so that abutting land owners have the opportunity to weigh in on the project.

DRB members have been provided copies of a site plan and elevations of the proposed structure in advance of this meeting.

Bright moved to approve both conditional use and site plan as presented; Brown seconded. **Motion passed 5-0.**

APPLICATION: Erik & Heidi Bennett have applied for a sign permit. Permit application requests permission for two signs: a permanent sign affixed to façade of building at 32 Depot Square and a portable, free-standing sign to be displayed

occasionally to promote special events (author book signings). Members of the DRB had questions about signage not answered by details provided with application. Applicant was not in attendance to answer questions.

Bright moved to table decision until next month pending availability of applicant to provide details. Brown seconded.

Motion passed 5-0.

OTHER BUSINESS:

ZA Osiecki about a number of ongoing or emerging projects or potential issues around town:

NU will be razing a structure at 429 Central Street – a single-family dwelling in disrepair that has been deemed too expensive to renovate. No municipal permit required for the project, but NU has secured necessary state permits. NU has been forthcoming about status of project with the aim of being fully transparent about the project.

NU is also undertaking some bank stabilization measures along rugby field on Water Street. Project previously approved, but temporarily delayed. No further permitting needed at his point, but the project could also involve renovations to, and possible expansion of, the rugby clubhouse. At that point, a permit might be required in order to seek a variance or waiver of setbacks from property boundary.

South Village Mobil received DRB approval in 2020 for replacement of underground fuel tanks and fuel islands. Project will proceed in coming months. At the previous hearing it was noted that applicant neglected to request sign approval, which appears to be required. Sign permit forthcoming; can expect it to be on the agenda in February.

Clarification: ZA was asked about permitting required to move offices to an empty property in Mixed Use district. Regulations do not appear to require conditional use approval for businesses moving into an empty building in Commercial or Mixed Use district. ZA seeks clarification that the practice of the DRB has been that no permit is required when a new business relocates to an empty structure/office building. Correct.

ZA also asked about a couple of larger commercial properties, specifically the Gray Building and the Nantana Mill, each of which house several tenants. ZA wishes to confirm that the DRB does not require a sign permit application for tenants moving into such locations and adding signage to an existing marquee. Correct.

NEXT MEETING: The next scheduled meeting of the DRB will be Thursday, February 25.

ADJOURNMENT: Bright moved to adjourn; Davis seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitch Osiecki

Mitch Osiecki, DRB Clerk

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Zoning Administrator's Office. These minutes are subject to approval at the next regular DRB meeting.