

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Minutes of Regular Meeting
May 16, 2016**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Amy Steffens at 7:00 P.M. at 8350 Main Street.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Marlene Chockley	Present
Doug Del Favero	Present
Greg Kolecki	Present
Jacqueline Otto	Present
Amy Steffens	Present
Gary Wellings, Alternate	Absent
(presence not required)	

Also present:
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Township Manager Howard Fink
Assessing & Building Assistant Mary Bird
Planning Consultant Vidya Krishnan,
McKenna Associates

4. ADOPT AGENDA

- ▶ **Motion:** Del Favero moved, Otto supported, that the agenda be adopted as presented.
Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Steffens noted the only correspondence concerned the case on this agenda.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 6A. Case #JZBA160004; Casey and Vicki Veigelahn**
Location: 561 E. Northfield Church Road;
Request for a 16.5 foot front yard setback
variance from Article VI, Section 36-15(4).
Parcel 02-28-300-004; zoned AR—Agriculture.

- ▶ **Motion:** Otto moved, Del Favero supported, that the public hearing be opened.
Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.

Joseph Schuck, builder, appeared for the applicants and said their objective is to keep this 1930s home intact while they renovate and enlarge it with a great room and attached garage. He noted the garage is set back ten feet behind the front line of the existing house. In response to the McKenna Associates report he noted:

- A well head is located 12 feet north of the proposed location of the garage, so the garage cannot be moved further back.
- A drainage swale is also in that area.
- A septic field on east side of the proposed building site prevents construction in that area.
- It is safer to be able to enter the home directly from the garage.
- There are other structures along Northfield Church that are located right along the road. (Casey Veigelahn showed photos of these).
- The house predates Township zoning.
- The house is elevated about five feet above the surrounding area to avoid drainage issues.
- The house will be in harmony with the neighborhood, and all of the neighbors have signed statements indicating they do not object to the proposal.
- Granting this variance will not set a precedent because each case is considered individually.
- Given that most of this property is farmland, and because of the drainage and other limitations noted, there is very little buildable area.

He noted his clients purchased this home with the intention of retaining it, rather than razing it, and they have been cleaning up and improving the property.

Del Favero said he agrees with the need for safety. He also questioned what the actual road right-of-way width is—33', 66', or some other measurement from the center of the road. He said it seems like the house is set back far enough from the road.

Planning Consultant Vidya Krishnan said the facts presented by Schuck make a difference in her review. She read her report of April 29th, revising her recommendation to note that it would not be reasonable to expect the garage to be shifted further north given the location of the well. She added that the fact that the house is built on a higher point than the rest of the property and the location of the septic field and drainage swale are not of the applicant's making, and granting of the variance will not result in a special privilege being given to the applicant.

Based on the information provided by the applicant's representative at this meeting, and noting that it appears that the ZBA agrees with the safety issue, she recommended approval of the request.

Chockley said she does not know whether this is a "well first" area, but much of the Township is, so the ZBA would not want to require someone to move an active well. Regarding the attached garage, she said she agrees with the safety issue and noted this also

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supports aging in place. She said there are many older homes along this road and she is happy someone wants to improve this home rather than seeing it remain vacant and deteriorate. She said that is a positive thing for the neighborhood.

In answer to a question from Steffens, Fink said this area is designated as agricultural in the Master Plan.

Otto said it is a positive thing when anyone who comes to the ZBA wants to improve their property.

Steffens noted that neighbors Norma Kirchoff at 590 E. Northfield Church Road and Joseph Carlson, 444 E. Northfield Church Road, had signed letters indicating they are not opposed to the proposal.

- ▶ **Motion:** Del Favero moved, Chockley supported, that the public hearing be closed.
Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.

7. OLD BUSINESS

None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- 8A. Case #JZBA160004; Casey and Vicki Veigelahn
Location: 561 E. Northfield Church Road;
Request for a 16.5 foot front yard setback
variance from Article VI, Section 36-15(4).
Parcel 02-28-300-004; zoned AR—Agriculture.

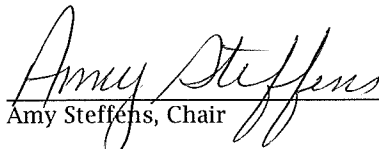
Motion: Otto moved, Del Favero supported, that the request in #JZBA160004 by Casey and Vicki Veigelahn at 561 E. Northfield Church Road for a 16.5 foot front yard setback variance from Article VI, Section 36-15(4), Regulations and Standards, which requires a 50 foot setback from the road right-of-way, Parcel 02-28-300-004; zoned AR—Agriculture, be approved, based on a finding of compliance with the Standards for Determination and based on the findings of fact presented by the planning consultant.

In answer to a question from Steffens, Krishnan confirmed that the new construction will have a 33.5 foot setback.

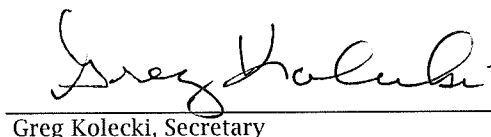
Motion carried 5—0 on a roll call vote.

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 July 18, 2016.



Amy Steffens, Chair



Greg Kolecki, Secretary

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

9. MINUTES

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto supported, that the minutes of the March 21, 2016, regular meeting be approved as presented.
Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.

10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None present.

11. ZBA MEMBER COMMENTS

Otto thanked Krishnan for her review and comments.

Chockley asked whether there was a reason for establishing a 50 feet setback in the AR district compared to 30 feet in other districts. She said shorter setbacks result in less paving, which has the benefit of reducing groundwater runoff. Krishnan said she would have to research that.

Del Favero thanked Steffens for agreeing to take on the chairmanship of the meeting and others for their parts in running ZBA meetings.

12. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

June 20, 2016, at 7:00 PM at the Public Safety Building was announced as the date and time of the next regular meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

13. ADJOURNMENT

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Kolecki supported, that the meeting be adjourned.
Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 P.M.