

Enfield New Hampshire

Zoning Board of Adjustment

DRAFT Minutes of May 10th, 2016 Meeting

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Enfield Zoning Board of Adjustment was held on May 10th, 2016 at The Enfield Public Works Building at 74 Lockehaven Road, Enfield NH. It began at 7:02 P.M. and was presided over by Chair Mike Diehn.

Roll Call

Board, Alternates and Staff

Attending: Mike Diehn, Chair; Tim Lenihan, Vice-Chair; Kurt Gotthard, Clerk; Cecilia Aufiero; Ed McLaughlin; Tom Blodgett, Alternate; Phil Neily, acting Zoning Administrator

Excused: John Pellerin, Alternate

Guests

Jim Taylor, Director of Public Works, Enfield - representing the Town of Enfield; Steve Schneider, Town Manager, Enfield.

Chris Rollins of Rollins Land Survey - representing the French Family; Paul French, Concord, MA; Robert French, Windsor, VT;

Barry Schuster, Lebanon - representing the Foleys; Cassidy Neal, Lebanon; W. Robert Foley, Enfield; Maureen Foley, Enfield;

Steve Touchette, Enfield; Liz Bankert, Enfield; Jane Carrier, Enfield; David and Susan Hazelton, Enfield; Steve Kovacs, Enfield;

Unfinished Business

Chair Diehn asked the board to consider hearing an item of unfinished business at the start of the meeting as it relates to the making of audio recordings. Ed. McLaughlin so moved, Kurt Gotthardt seconded. No discussion. Motion passed 5/0.

Chair Diehn invited Steve Schneider to preset the opinion of Bart Mayer, Town Councilor, on the matter of board members' making audio recordings for the purpose of drafting and reviewing minutes and the proper disposition of those recordings. Mr. Schneider gave the board to understand that in a phone conversation, Mr Mayer said it is his opinion that it's fine for the board members to make such recordings and that the tape can be recycled after the minutes are approved. He believes once the tape is recycled the recordings are no longer subject to disclosure under RSA 91-A but to be most diligent, we should adopt policy stating our intention to destroy those recordings. Mr. Schneider said he does not have the opinion in writing as this was a phone conversation. The board members felt it isn't necessary to get it in writing.

After very brief discussion to ensure all understood and accepted the opinion, the board decided to put off until the normal time for unfinished business any further discussion on the matter and the drafting of a motion to adopt the policy Mr. Mayer recommend.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: A motion to defer until the next meeting the approval the minutes of the April 26th, 2016 procedural meeting was made by Tim Lenihan, seconded by Cecilia Aufiero. No discussion. Motion carried with five in favor, none opposed (5/0).

Motion: A motion to *approve the minutes of the April 12th, 2016 meeting* was made by Tim Lenihan, seconded by Ed Mclaughlin. No discussion. Motion carried with five in favor, none opposed (5/0).

Public Hearings

Town of Enfield Lovejoy Brook Road Special Exception

Applicant

Town of Enfield is requesting a Special Exception as noted in Article IV, Subsection 406.1 D of the Town of Enfield Zoning Ordinance to allow work in a wetland to place a temporary bridge on Lovejoy Brook Road.

Voting Board Members

Mike Diehn, Tim Lenihan, Cecilia Aufiero, Kurt Gotthardt, Ed McLaughlin

Presentation of Case

Jim Taylor, Director of Public Works for the Town of Enfield, presented the case for the town. The town is requesting this special exception to allow them to construct a temporary roadway and bridge across Lovejoy Brook while the current bridge on Lovejoy Brook Road is being replaced. The bridge replacement is a federally funded FEMA Hazard Mitigation project and will have to meet the highest standards of permitting and design requirements. The temporary roadway and bridge are necessary to allow access to residences, businesses, and town wells up the road from the bridge site.

Mr. Taylor took us through their application letter, the site plan, and letters of agreement from the LaCroix family for the work to be done on or near their property. Mr Taylor's application letter (on file) explains in detail how their plan meets each of the four special exception criteria in the ordinance.

Support and Opposition

Speaking in favor:

The Enfield Conservation Commission have submitted a letter over the signature of Chair Alan Strickland in support of the town's proposal to replace the bridge over Lovejoy Brook with the assumption that the replacement will be done in accordance with the NHDOT guidelines for erosion and sediment control. This letter is also on file with the application in the town zoning office.

Speaking in opposition:

None

Facts Found

a list of facts found by the board in this hearing

- The existing bridge is badly in need of replacement
- There are two residences, one business and two town wells beyond the bridge to which the town must continue to provide access during the bridge replacement work.
- Proposed site for temporary roadway and bridge will have the least impact on the wetland
- Proposed roadway and bridge are to be temporary
- The old roadways that provided access in the past are no longer serviceable and to make them safe for public use would cause much more disruption that this temporary road and bridge will.
- The wetlands on other side of the existing bridge are far too wide to span with the temporary bridge and to use that location would require much more disruption to the area.

Public Hearing Closed

The Chair declared the public hearing on this case closed at 7:25 PM

Deliberation of Special Exception Criteria

The board reviewed the four special exemption criteria listed here and after discussion concluded that the facts found above and the explanations in the applicant's letter of application support their assertion that these criteria are met.

- 1. The proposed site is found to be an appropriate location for such use.
- 2. The proposed use will not adversely affect property values or improvements in the adjacent areas
- 3. Appropriate and adequate facilities will be provided for the operation of the proposed use.
- 4. The proposed use will comply with the applicable regulations of the District in which it is to be located

Decision

Motion: Moved by Ed McLaughlin and seconded by Tim Lenihan that the Town of Enfield's request for a Special Exception as noted in Article IV, Subsection 406.1 D of the Town of Enfield Zoning Ordinance to allow work in a wetland to place a temporary bridge on Lovejoy Brook Road be granted on the condition that they obtain any State permits required. The motion carried with five votes in favor and none against.

Granted

Application of Town of Enfield for a Special Exemption has been granted as moved above.

French Family Lot Frontage Special Exception

Applicant

The French Family, by their agent Rollins Land Survey, is requesting a Special Exception from Article IV, Section 401.3 subsection P of the Town of Enfield Zoning Ordinance. They are requesting a road frontage of less than the required 250 feet on the public right of way in the R5 Zoning District at Map 17 Lot 24 on Lockehaven Road.

Voting Board Members

Mike Diehn, Tim Lenihan, Cecilia Aufiero, Kurt Gotthardt, Ed McLaughlin

Presentation of Case

Request for Special Exception (Road Frontage Distance) was presented by Chris Rollins of Rollins Land Survey.

The French Family has owned Lot 26 (Map 17) for seventy-two years. The ownership of the parcel is now divided among several family members, some of whom are not interested in keeping their portion of the ownership of the real estate. The Family wish to sub-divide the property to allow those wishing to divest themselves of their interest so to do. The proposed division of the lot would create two lots along the current road frontage, each with less than the required 250 feet. In support of the request:

- 1. The existing public road frontage (276.7') has remained unchanged since the purchase of the property 72 years ago.
- 2. There will be no additional curb-cuts on the public highway to service the two lots. The existing private road, French Road, will service the additional 6-acre lot
- 3. The deed conveying the new 6-acre lot will have a restriction allowing only one single-family dwelling and associated out-buildings on the lot
- 4. The deed conveying the new 6-acre lot will have a restriction requiring that any structures be placed within the designated building envelope as shown on the accompanying plan (filed with application).

Support and Opposition

Speaking in favor:

None

Speaking in opposition:

None

Discussion

Ms. Liz Bankert, an abutter, asked clarifying questions about the building envelope. Mr. Rollins explained that the purple area on the plan is 50 feet back from the lot lines and is a beautiful building site and is large enough to contain.

Facts Found

a list of facts found by the board in this hearing

- New lot would be six acres and couldn't be subdivided further without ZBA approval
- Rollins proposes a building envelope with 50' setback to be added to the deed
- The still need planning board approval
- There will be no diminution of value to the surrounding properties
- No adverse effect to anyone that currently has the right of way
- No stress to the environment
- There will be no effective change to the road frontage and no more curb cuts and so the public perception of the road will not change.

Public Hearing Closed

The Chair declared the public hearing on this case closed at 7:45.

Board Discussion

Kurt Gotthard suggested including a condition in the motion that there be no additional curb cuts made. Ed pointed out that they've agreed to that already and Kurt reminded us that unless we put it in the motion as

a condition of the approval, it wouldn't be binding. Ed and Tim suggested adding the four "in support of" points from the applicant's letter to the motion by reference.

Motions

Motion: Moved by Mike Diehn and seconded by Cecilia Aufiero that the ZBA approve the French's application for a Special Exception from Enfield Zoning Ordinance 401.3,P with the conditions specified in their letter of application entitled "In support of request" items 1, 2 3, and 4; further that the Special Exception be granted only if the Planning Board approves their plans.

Motion carried with five in favor, none opposed (5/0)

Chair Diehn thanked Chris Rollins for an excellent presentation.

Granted

Application of French Family for a Special Exception to section 401.3,P of the Enfield Zoning Ordinance to allow them to subdivide Map 17 Lot 24 into two smaller lots each with less than the required 250 feet of public road frontage has been **granted**, subject to the conditions listed below, by the vote of at least three members of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Conditions of approval

- 1. The four items offered in support of request in the applicant's letter are included here as conditions of the approval
- 2. The applicant must secure approval from the town Planning Board for the plans as well.

Robert W. Foley Trust Variance Hearing

Applicant

Robert W. Foley trust

Voting Board Members

Mike Diehn, Tim Lenihan, Cecilia Aufiero, Kurt Gotthardt, Ed McLaughlin

Zoning Administrator's report

Robert W. Foley Trust, by their agent Innovative Environmental Solutions, LLC is requesting a Variance from Article IV, Section 401.2, sub-section L. of the Town of Enfield Zoning Ordinance. They are requesting to locate a portion of a new home to be constructed with the required setback. This property is location on Rollins Point Road, Map 44 Lot 36 in the Residential 3 (R3) zoning district. This is a new hearing of the request.

All abutters and the public have been noticed in accordance with all applicable requirements.

Presentation of Case

Support Statement for Application for Variance was presented by Barry Schuster, Esq., counsel for the Foleys.

The opening paragraph of the report summarizes the application and is reproduced here:

Robert Foley acquired his property on Rollins Point Road in 1985. A cottage has existed on the property since the early 1950's. Due to its age and condition, the cottage is now in

need of substantial renovation or replacement. Mr. Foley would like to construct a replacement home on the property and move from his home on Warren Road to make it his permanent residence so that he can live there with his daughter as caregiver. The property is located in the R3 zoning district which permits single family residences. The ZOning Ordinance also requires in the R3 zone that "no structure be located nearer than thirty (30) feet from any edge of the lot line contiguous to the street or twenty (20) feet from any other lot boundary." The proposed home will encroach into that roadway setback but for the following reasons, the proposal satisfies the conditions for a variance.

Following that opening were detailed arguments based in case law addressing the five criteria for a variance. Here are excerpts or paraphrases of the most relevant sections:

- 1. Not contrary to the public interest: Since the R3 zone is designed for one-family homes and there are already a number of structures with the right-of-way setback, the variance [...] would not alter the essential character of the locality.
- 2. Not contrary to the spirit of the ordinance: [t]he construction of a one-family house in a zone specifically for that purpose [...] will not alter the character of the locality, does not threaten health, safety or welfare. The requested setback impact is no greater than already exists from neighbors structures. New septic system to replace aging one fosters goals of the ordinance and is an improvement for the lake area.
- 3. No diminution of surrounding properties values. The existing cottage is run down and does not reflect well on the surrounding properties. A new home will increase the assessed value of the Foley property and improve property values in the vicinity.
- 4. *Granting the variance would do substantial justice*: what is the loss to Mr. Foley and what would be gained by the public is the variance were denied? Mr. Foley would lose his ability to enjoy, upgrade and use his property is the same manner as his neighbors. On the other hand, no gain exists to the public by denying the variance.
- 5. Denial of permit would result in unnecessary hardship for the applicant: the application meets the Simplex tests because it's unique shape and very small buildable area make it unique in the area; the general purposes of the setback provisions of the ordinance aren't served by denying this request; the use is reasonable.

Mr. Shuster's support statement and exhibits are incorporated herewith.

Support and Opposition

Speaking in favor:

John Sachleben, abutter, by his letter to Scott Osgood, Zoning Administrator, dated Friday, May 06, 2016, stands in favor of granting the Foley's request for a variance. Mr. Sachleben has owned his property since 1965 and says he is very familiar with the road and area. Mr Sachleben points out that the new two-car garage will provide off road parking for the Foleys and will help relieve a bottleneck in the road leading to the Sachleben's driveway at 17 Rollins Point Road. Sachleben also asserts that the proposed house will improve the property and will not change the character of the neighborhood. The Sachleben letter is incorporated herewith.

Speaking in opposition:

Susan Hazelton and David Hazelton presented a letter.

Applicant speaking in rebuttal:

Mr. Schuster expressed the opinion that the proposed home would not alter the character of the neighborhood and pointed out the measures to be taken that should reduce the impact on the environment. He asserted that improving the property could only enhance the Rollins Point neighborhood.

Regarding the tree, Mr. Schuster produced a letter from Fox Tree service giving expert opinion that the tree's health is already compromised to the degree that it won't be more dangerous after construction than it already is. The Fox letter is incorporated herewith.

Conlin's and Currier's Letters

The Hazeltons asked to have the letters from the Conlins and Curriers submitted at previous meetings. The board didn't have a letter from the Conlons or the Curriers in this hearing file. Discussion followed in which it was said that (1) the Conlon letter had been presented in the first hearing; (2) that this is a new hearing and anyone wanting to submit testimony could have done but that (3) that it had been unclear to Mr. Osgood that the board ordered a *new* hearing and not a *re-*hearing and so advised people said the people wouldn't need to re-submit their letters. Mrs. Hazelton asserted that the neighbors should have a right to be heard. The board has taken this matter under advisement and is proceeding.

Continuance Question

Cecilia Aufiero pointed out that we have received a large quantity of information at this meeting and wants to put off a decision until she's has time to study the material and consider it. The Chair asked if someone would like to move for a continuance.

Motion: Cecilia Aufiero moved and Kurt Osgood seconded that the hearing be continued to the next regualar meeting of the board in order to allow board members time to study and digest the material presented by the applicant at this meeting. Discussion followed:

Ed McLaughlin supported a continuance but would like be allowed to continue to question the applicants and abutters during the remainder of this meeting.

Kurt agrees with Celie and Ed that a lot of info has been presented and wants more time to study the matter. He wants a chance to study the applications citations and the Hazelton's letters and the other letters that supposedly were going to be presented but didn't appear in our packets. He's concerned that people got a verbal commitment from the administrator about those letters but then we didn't get the letters in our packets.

Tim Lenihan stands in strong opposition to any continuance of the hearing to another meeting because the Foleys have waited months to have this issue resolved and we are in the prime season for construction and further delay is going to do nothing be serve as an injustice. On a separate point, the concept of our receiving material at the hearing, there is no rule saying we have to receive material ahead of time. In further opposition to delay, Tim says we have been given the clearest explanation of the relevant case law and the standards for a variance tonight that he's ever heard having been on this board for years. Any probative value of further delay or continuance is outweighed by the injustice it would do to the applicant.

Cecelia

Ed pointed out that the applicant has COPD and is prevented from enjoying his property without the improvements he's attempting to make. Further delay has a real impact on the applicants enjoyment of his

property. We need to be consistent with previous ZBA rulings that allowed the large houses in the neighborhood.

Kurt pointed out regarding Tim's comments that the Foley's have been here multiple times and the matter has dragged on and on, that this is all new to Kurt, Tom, and Ed since they only recently were elected to the board. This is a new hearing and there is a lot of information that he needs to review. And so he supports continuing with the meeting tonight and putting off the decision until the next meeting of the board.

The Chair called the question and restated the motion to continue the hearing to the next meeting date. All agreed we can stop the discussion and vote on the motion.

Motion failed with two in favor (Celie and Kurt) and three opposed (Tim, Mike and Ed)

Hazelton Letter

Susan Hazelton and David Hazelton submitted a letter and Kurt Gotthardt asked that it be read into the record. Initially Chair Diehn declined to do that due to it's length and repetition of earlier material. After being reminded that this is a new hearing, that the material is actually a little different, Chair Diehn read out portions of the letter.

Chair Diehn read the introduction and selected excerpts from the letter. The full letter and accompanying photographs are incorporated herewith and any interested part can read it full if they wish.

In brief summary, the Hazeltons believe that allowing this variance will allow the Foleys to alter the essential character of Rollins Point, which they contend is a unique land feature in the area and has substantial historical and cultural value beyond the immediately apparent. They believe the risk of reducing that value is against the public interest and worth denying the Foley's application. The Hazeltons are also concerned about the future of a large pine tree along the private right of way and believe that the construction work will kill that tree leaving a hazard to their and other property for the future. Mr. Hazelton touched on a number of other points among which is that a quote from a 2004 NH Supreme Court (Bacon v. Town of Enfield) ruling upholding the town's right to deny a variance for a very small addition for a new furnace on an existing house. The ZBA found that the variance violated the spirit of the ordinance and the court recognized that the slow growth by improvements was crowing the natural resources of the town.

Chair Diehn thanked the Hazeltons for their persistence.

Mr. Schuster pointed out that another similar case to the Bacon case for a variance just down the road from the Foley property was granted and that shows that the decision on the variance requests really does depend on the site.

Cecilia asked the size of the house. Mr. Schuster answered with square footage for the new house and garage. Mr. Diehn asked clarifying questions. Mr. Schuster and Ms. Foley agree it would be 1700 sf for house, 900 for the garage.

Mr Diehn asked about guest parking. Mr. Schuster pointed out two cars plus three cars visiting would be five cars in the road but with the garage, there would be two cars in the garage, one in front of the garage and only two in the road.

Facts Found

a list of facts found by the board in this hearing

- Odd shape of lot and setback requirements create a very small buildable area
- Actual travel-way uses very little of the full private right-of-way (ROW).
- Three existing buildings are situated in the setbacks, closer to the travel-way than the proposed house would be.
- Two houses larger than the proposed house already exist south and west of the Foley property.
- Current Foley property is the lowest valued property in the area and improving it can only improve it's
 values and the surrounding property values.
- Existing single story house is 900 s.f. New two story structure to be 1700 s.f. and the garage would be an additional 900 s.f.
- Houses on comparable lots on Rollins Point are also similarly improved.
- Proposed plan would not alter the essential character of the locality
- Property tax on Foley property is similar to the Conlon and Hazelton properties
- The proposed plan would increase the assessed value.
- The Lake will be well served with an improved septic system.
- 640 s.f. of the proposed building will be within the 30 foot setback
- Proposed building will be 7 to 8 feet from private right-of-way property line.
- Rollins Point is a unique feature of the lake and town

Chair Diehn asked the public and members of the board if all present agreed that the findings of fact are accurate. No one spoke to object or correct.

Public Hearing Closed

The Chair declared the public hearing on this case closed at 09:12 P.M.

Deliberation of Variance Criteria

Per RSA 674:33, I(b) [the board] may authorize a variance if [the following are all true]:

- 1. the variance will not be contrary to the **public interest**;
- 2. the **spirit** of the town zoning ordinance is **observed**;
- 3. **substantial justice** is done;
- 4. the values of the surrounding properties are **not diminished**; and
- 5. literal enforcement of the [...] ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship....

Opening Straw Poll

Initial straw poll on the question: "are each of the criteria statements true or false in the case?"

Criterion/Member	Mike	Tim	Ed	Celie	Kurt
Not contrary to public interest	True	True	True	False	False
Spirit of ord. observed	True	True	True	False	False
Substantial justice done	True	True	True	True	True
Property values not diminished	True	True	True	True	True

Unnecessary hardship not created	True	True	True	True	True

Discussion

Based on the straw poll above, the board discussed the meeting of the five criteria and below are noted members explanations for their assertions that various criteria are not met.

Contrary to Public Interest

Kurt Gotthardt believes that the because of the amount of the building in the set-back area, the granting the variance would be contrary to the public interest.

Cecilia Aufiero believes the house will be too large and will crowd the property contrary to the public interest.

Mr. Diehn

Spirit of the Ordinance.

Kurt believes grant this variance would allow overcrowding of the land, directly against the spirit of the ordinance

Celie also believe this variance would allow overcrowding of the land and also violates 101. E, H, and I of the Purpose of the Enfield Zoning Ordinance and section 103.

Mike and Tim both said they'd previously held that granting the variance would allow overcrowding be against the spirit of the ordinance but have been persuaded by the arguments presented tonight to change their positions.

Substantial Justice is Done

The board stipulated that the loss to the Foleys would not be balanced by a gain to the public good and so this criteria is met.

Kurt and Celie would like to review the case law about this criterion and record provisional objection to it on the basis that the proposed house would overcrowd the area. They may reverse themselves on this matter at a later date.

Values of Surrounding Property not be diminished

All members agree that the proposal would enhance property values.

Denying the Variance would Create a Hardship for the Applicant

Cecilia Aufiero objects that she hasn't had enough time to work through the information presented to determine her position on this criteria.

Cecilia Aufiero objects to this procedure and to taking a vote at this time without all the information.

Diehn, Lenhan and Mclaughlin all believe denying the variance would create an *unnecessary* hardship for the Foleys.

Motions

Mr. Diehn moved to approve for the following reasons the Foley's application for a variance that would permit them to build a new hosue on their property on Rollins Point Road not in compliance with the

side-line setback requirements in section 401.3, L of the EZO: the Foley's lawyer Mr. Schuster has explained to our satisfaction that their request meets all five of the criteria for granting a variance, as explained in the minutes of this meeting.

Tim Lenihan seconded the motion. The motion carried with three votes in favor (Mike, Time and Ed) and two votes against (Celie and Kurt).

Decision

Granted

Application of The Foley Rev. Trust for a variance from setback requirements of EZO 401.3, L has been **granted** by the vote of at least three members of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Unfinished Business

The board briefly discussed the matter of Mr. Mayer's opinion of the recordings heard at the beginning of the meeting.

Mr. Diehn moved that the board adopt a policy that electronic recordings made the board to draft or review meeting minutes will be destroyed after the minutes are approved. Mr. Lenihan seconded the motion. After brief discussion the board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

After discussion about 200 foot language in 1993 bylaws all agreed with Phil that we should remove that language from the ZBA bylaws and ask the planning board to define abutter to include the 200 foot language.

Mr. Diehn moved and Mr. gotthardt seconded that the ZBA propose to the Planning Board that the zoning ordinance definition of abutter be changed to mean all property within 200 feet. Motion carried four to one with Ed voting against. (4/1)

Mr. Diehn moved and Mr. McLaughlin seconded that the ZBA drop the 200 foot noticing requirement language from the ZBA bylaws. Motion carried five to zero (5/0)

The board will be reviewing the other bylaw amendments proposed on 4/26 at the next meeting and not today.

Communications and miscellaneous

Mr Diehn moved the board direct the Zoning Administrator to arrange a suitable Certificate of Appreciation for Paula Rowe for her many years of service to the board as recorder and to accompany a letter reading:

Dear Ms. Rowe:

We on the Zoning Board of Adjustment thank you most sincerely for your many years of service taking minutes as recorder for the board. We know it's been at least fifteen years and believe it may have been you doing it since the very beginnings of board. Your service and dedication are remarkable and we are writing this letter to acknowledge it and put on record our appreciation. You will receive along with the letter a formal Certificate of Appreciation.

With so many new members on the board, as a group we're unpracticed and we've noticed meetings haven't run as smoothly as they have in the past. We've noticed that our confusion has made it nearly impossible for

even one as experienced as you to make accurate minutes as we go. We think that until we've gotten better at the process, it will be smoother if we make audio recordings of the meetings, take notes and then have our Chairman draft the minutes afterwards from those recordings and notes. So, for now, we're not going to require your services as recorder at our meetings.

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We hope that you will remain available to resume your duties at some point in the (hopefully) not too distant future.

Signed,

Chairman of the Board

Next Meeting

The board discussed holding another procedural meeting and decided not to schedule one at this time.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment will next meet in regular session at 7:00 PM on June 14th, 2016 at the Enfield Dept. of Public Works. (Subject to change)

Ed will not be present on June 14 but Tom Blodget, alternate, will sit for him.

Adjournment

Tim moved that the meeting be adjourned, and	this was agreed upon at 9:56 PM
Chairman	Date of Approval
[Organization Name]	