

Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2021 7:00 p.m.
Public Hearing
Northfield Town Hall

Members Present: Jennifer Cox, Chair, Erin Jaworski, Shawn Foster, Al Dietrich, Timothy Rogers and Vivien Venskowski, administrative assistant.

Applicant present: Jeff Matosky

Audience members present: John McDougal, Mark Clark

Zoom attendee: Patricia Kinsella

Jennifer Cox, Chair opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m. The Zoom meeting was connected as required by Governor Baker as per the order dated March 12th regarding social distancing and masks. She read the following public hearing notice: The Zoning Board of Appeals of the Town of Northfield will hold a public hearing at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 11th, 2021 at the Town Hall, 69 Main Street, Northfield, MA on the application by Jeffrey Matosky, 8 Upper Farms Road, Northfield, MA 01360 for a Special Permit or whatever relief is needed for a junk yard (pre-existing non-conforming use) at 952 Millers Falls Road, Northfield MA 01360 (Assessor's Map Parcel 41-C1) as required by the Northfield Zoning Bylaws per Section 6.2 B. She noted that she had documentation regarding certified mail to abutters, legal notice posted in the Recorder and at Town Hall.

The Chair asked Mr. Matosky to present information regarding his application. Jeff explained that he applied for his Annual Junk Dealers License the Selectmen told him he needed to go to the ZBA for a special permit. He gave some history of this license. Henry Boyd was the original owner, the house was built in 1972. Originally there was a junk yard and also body work done. There has always been a junk yard in this location and the license has been renewed every year. Jeff noted the only body work he does is to take 2 – 3 vehicles and make one. The house is part of the property, there are no other buildings, and the garage is part of the house. Jeff sends vehicles out to be painted or have body work done. He does mainly dismantling. His son rents the house and tinkers with vehicles in the garage. He inherited the property 2.5 years ago from Henry Boyd. Jeff kept working thinking that he had a special permit. He has a Class III Junk Dealer's license and has no other junk yards. The Board of Selectmen issued the license with the understanding that he would get a special permit within 6 months.

The Chair read the email from Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator, regarding her conversation with the Town Attorney. It was noted there was a typo on the Building Inspector Memo.

Jeff shared copies of the old Special Permits 1972 (45 cars), 1977 (added 3 vehicles for resale on roadside) and 1980 (100 vehicles not visible, fence).

Board members posed questions to which Jeff responded with the following information. He would like to keep the 100 vehicle limit, he has between 40 – 50 vehicles currently. And he displays one vehicle at a time for sale. The vehicle is displayed on Route 63, 30 – 40 feet off the highway, outside the fence. The dismantled frames are sold to WTE. There have been no complaints regarding

his operation. A neighbor requested that the fence be replaced, which Jeff did. His license says no trash, an inspection can happen at any time. The dismantling of heavy trucks are a majority of his work. He noted that he accommodates the customer's schedule regarding a pickup.

The Chair opened the meeting to comments from the public.

Comments included:

- Appreciate the improvement/new fence.
- Concern that some of the cars remain on the grounds for years and possible leakage/well issues
- The number of vehicles.
- The impact on property values
- Support of the application
- No issues with applicant/junk yard

Jeff responded that there were 300 vehicles on the site at one time with previous owner, he has cleaned up the yard, the oil is drained before recycling is taken to WTE, and he is across the street and feels that his operation would not impact wells. He would like to keep the 100 vehicle limit as a buffer for future purchases.

The Chair closed the public comment portion of the meeting and the Board began deliberations.

The Board members discussed the information that had been presented and asked the applicant questions:

- Regarding lighting
- Visibility/lack of from road
- Hours of operation
- New fence
- Junk yard expansion
- Property clean up if applicant was unable to continue what would be the plan
- Special permit to go with land vs person
- Auto body not an issue/not requested
- Height of stacked vehicles vs fence height
- Grandfathered as use has continued
- Keep with intention of original license and number of vehicles.

Jeff responded that his son would continue running the junk yard when he retired and currently helps in junk yard. There are three areas of the site and he is not going to expand the junk yard. As a junk yard licensee he is subject to inspections at any time. His junk license is connected to the special permit. Regarding body work he bolts vehicles together and sends them out to be painted. He does have a 14 ft. box truck to store parts.

The Board members discussed past special permits. And possible conditions based on input from abutters, the information received and the past permits.

On a motion by Jaworski, seconded by Dietrich it was unanimously voted (Cox/yes, Jaworski/yes, Foster/yes, Dietrich/yes, Rogers/yes) to grant a special permit to Jeff Matosky, 952 Millers Falls Road, Northfield, MA with the following conditions:

- 1. The proposed commercial usage shall not be visible from any other property or public way, nor shall it change the essentially residential appearance of the property.**
- 2. Such commercial use shall not produce noise, vibrations, smoke, odors or dust detrimental in any way to the normal use of any other property.**
- 3. Petitioner will maintain a solid fence where required in order to comply with the provisions of condition #1 above, and such fence shall not be less than four (4) feet in height.**
- 4. Petitioner shall not store more than 80 vehicles, which must be confined within the present fence enclosure, and such vehicles shall not be visible to any other property or public way. Three (3) vehicles, which are intended for re-sale, may be displayed on the front property area.**
- 5. This conditional permit is issued to the Petitioner directly and does not run with the land.**
- 6. This special permit shall continue so long as the Vehicle Junk Yard License, Class III is in effect.**

The Chair explained the process to the applicant and noted the Board would meet next Thursday, March 18th to sign the Notice of Decision.

The Board noted there was another application for a variance and that past minutes would be approved at the next business meeting.

On a motion by Foster, seconded by Jaworski it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vivien Venskowski
Administrative Assistant to
The Zoning Board of Appeals