

(reserved for recording information)

CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS RESOLUTION ZBA #2017-002

A RESOLUTION BY THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS OF THE CITY OF
NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA, APPROVING A VARIANCE REQUEST AT 1203
HIGHWAY 3 SOUTH

WHEREAS, Dan Lien has requested a variance to allow outdoor storage between the principal building and the property line in the C2 zone, legally described as Lot 1 Block 1 of NORTHFIELD RIVERVIEW 3RD ADDITION;
and

WHEREAS, based on LDC Section 3.3.3 Outdoor Dining, Display, and Storage part (B)(4)(c), Outdoor storage of goods may be permitted provided that the storage areas are located in the side or rear yard. In no cases shall the outdoor storage of goods be permitted between a principal building and a street; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Board of Appeals held a public hearing, following required public notice thereof, on July 27, 2017, and has reviewed the variance from regulations identified in the Land Development Code and has considered the statutory variance criteria identified in the Staff report and proposed findings.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northfield Zoning Board of Appeals has duly considered the required criteria contained in state law and the LDC and hereby adopts the findings of fact contained in the staff report, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as Exhibit A.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the requested variance is hereby approved and granted, based upon the above-referenced adopted findings, to allow outdoor storage between the principal building and the street at 1203 Hwy 3 South.

PASSED by the Zoning Board of Appeals of the City of Northfield this 17th day of August, 2017.

Chair

Member

VOTE: ☐ GASIOR ☐ SCHROEER ☐ JASNOCH
☐ STUART ☐ HALVERSON

EXHIBIT A

FINDINGS OF FACT

The criteria for approving a variance, according to Section 5.5.16(C), are as follows:

(1) Pursuant to Minn. Stat. §462.357, Subd 6, as it may be amended from time to time, the zoning board of appeals may only grant applications for variances where practical difficulties in complying with this LDC exist and each of the following criteria are satisfied:

- (a) The variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of this LDC; and,
- (b) The variance is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; and
- (c) The property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by this LDC; and
- (d) The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner; and
- (e) The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.

VARIANCE

The Northfield Land Development Code Section 3.3.3 (B)(4)(c) Outdoor Dining, Display, and Storage does not permit outdoor storage between a principal building and the street. The proposal is to allow outdoor storage between the principal building and the street enclosed by a six foot solid fence compatible with the main structure in material type and color. Analysis of the variance request is addressed below.

Criterion (a) The variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the LDC.

Supported: The project is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the LDC. The purpose of the Highway Commercial (C2-B) district is to provide a location for highway-oriented businesses that benefit from access to and visibility from the highway and a wider range of commercial building and site sizes than is possible in other districts. The standards proposed in this LDC are intended to support efficient use of the limited highway commercial land supply, attract and retain sustainable businesses which contribute to economic growth and job creation, and enhance the economic vitality of the district and of Northfield overall.

The variance from the prohibition of front yard storage will not adversely affect adjacent properties and is consistent with the general goals for the C2 zone district. The building previously had a large canopy in front of the building for covered storage. This was removed due to storm damage. The business is dependent on a highly visible and accessible location. Screening the storage of machinery will greatly improve the appearance of the property.

Criterion (b) The variance is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Supported: The variance is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Objective number one in the Economic Development chapter is to support existing businesses. Plan goal ED 1.1, seek opportunities to address barriers to retention and expansion of existing businesses, will be met by approving the variance to retain the business.

Criterion (c) Property Owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the LDC.

Supported: The applicant is proposing to use the property in a reasonable manner. The requested variance will result in a reasonable use of the property otherwise not permitted by the LDC by allowing outdoor storage critical to the business in the only available location on the property.

Criterion (d) The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.

Supported: The plight of the landowner is not self-created. This small lot was previously created by splitting off part of a larger lot and building. While the location is great, the property lacks adequate space for storage. Storing machinery inside would drastically diminish the capacity of the business to the point of not being financially feasible. There are no other affordable spaces in Northfield that could meet the business owners needs.

Criterion (e) The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.

Supported: Granting the variance will not alter the essential character of the locality. Allowing the existing outside storage to be screened will significantly improve the visual character of the area. The business is sandwiched between Dokmo Auto and Lampert's Lumber which are also busy highway oriented businesses.