



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT (ZBA)
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 4, 2024
Whipple Town Hall, 6:30pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Michael Todd (voting), Ann Bedard (voting), Heidi Lauridsen (voting), Lauren Snow Chadwick (voting), Steve Root (voting), Conrad Bolton, Peter Theroux, Julia LeMense.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Frank Anzalone

OTHERS PRESENT: Adam Ricker, Zoning Administrator, Melissa Allen, William Griffiths, Sr., William Griffiths, Jr., Lori Underwood, Karen Epstein, Budget Committee member, and Peter Nichols, Chair of Housing Commission.

1. **Call to Order:** Michael Todd called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and called the roll.

2. **Public Hearing(s):** Application for an Appeal of a Variance.

Case #	ZBA 24-01
Applicant	William S. Griffiths Irrevocable Trust, William S. & Dorothy J. Griffiths Trustees
Address	133 Newport Road
Parcel ID	059-002-0-0-0
Lot Size	+/- 0.55 acres
Zone(s)	Commercial (C)

Summary: The applicant is requesting a variance from Article VII Commercial District, D. Residential Density, 1, to convert the mixed-use building to a multi-family residential property with nine apartment units. The building is currently a mix of apartments and professional office space.

Chair Todd welcomed new member Julia LeMense, serving as an alternate. Voting members tonight were Heidi Lauridsen, Ann Bedard, Michael Todd, Steve Root and Lauren Snow Chadwick. He explained the five criteria necessary for a variance to be obtained. He also explained that the applicant may decide not to present tonight, and the meeting will be continued to a later date.

Bill Griffiths, Jr. addressed the board with a desire to speak at a later date but also provided background for the acquisition of the building. His father bought the building in 1985, operating much the same since purchased. Two units were commercial: a radio station and a midwifery office. Bill Griffiths, Jr. states his family wasn't aware of the difference in the zoning between commercial or residential and at the time of applying for a "change of use", they were informed they would need a variance. Ms. Allen, agent for Mr. Griffiths, Sr., explained at this time she does not feel comfortable addressing the five criteria for the variance and feels it may be necessary to seek counsel and requests additional time. Chair Todd review the criteria for the applicant.

Mr. Griffiths, Jr. reviewed the current floor plans of the building. There was a discussion of the units being used in a pre-existing, non-conforming manner. Mr. Theroux questioned if the units might qualify as workforce housing.

Ms. Allen has been working with Fire Chief Lyon and Lt. Mike Matthey for every unit to have fire protection and automatic monitoring systems. They have been working to bring the entire building up to the current code. If the variance is successful, the next step will be to apply for Site Plan Review with the Planning Board.

Ms. Chadwick asked for clarification of the occupants for each apartment. Mr. Ricker asked Ms. Allen to note on the copy of the plan the apartment and number of occupants. Ms. LeMense also added to note a scale drawing of each apartment and its square footage.

Chair Todd asked if the acceptance of this variance will change or alter the character of the neighborhood. Lori Underwood, Chief Operating Officer of New London Hospital, and an abutter, is in support of the variance application that has providing housing to employees of the hospital. Karen Epstein, asked if the water precinct is aware of this change? Mr. Ricker stated the precinct is aware, and he has been told by the precinct that the change in usage is minimal. Peter Nichols, who spoke as a resident of New London, expressed his support for the project and to encouraged the additional housing units.

There was a discussion of the Workforce Housing Overlay District and the required procedures for assurance of affordability. Mr. Ricker stated it typically requires a third-party administrator with the ability to review tenants' taxes and compliance with requirements. The workforce housing ordinance does allow for a density increase; however, a variance would still be needed for the additional units since density would still be too high. Ms. Allen stated that they will pursue the variance that they have applied for. In the meantime, the applicant will seek help to revise the application and provide updated documents.

IT WAS MOVED (Steve Root) AND SECONDED (Heidi Lauridsen) to continue the hearing to July 2, 2024. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Approval of Minutes: December 5, 2023

IT WAS MOVED (Steve Root) AND SECONDED (Ann Bedard) to accept the minutes as written. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Other Business: Introduction of welcoming the newest member Julia LeMense with current board.

5. Motion to Adjourn:

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Todd) AND SECONDED (Steve Rood) to adjourn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer M. Sweet

Recording Secretary
Town of New London

Note: RSA 91-A:2, II provides that “*Minutes of all such meetings, including nonpublic sessions, shall include the names of members, persons appearing before the public bodies, and a brief description of the subject matter discussed and final decisions.*” A video of the entire meeting may be available for viewing on the town website, NewLondon.NH.gov, if more than the brief description contained in these meeting minutes is desired.