

MINUTES OF THE 486TH REGULAR MEETING OF THE
WEBSTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2018

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Zamansky at the Township Hall and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

WTPC Members Present: Charles Estleman, Andrea Zamansky, John Westman, George Goodman, Tammy Koch, Kay Stremmler, Paul Zalucha

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Martha Zeeb, Randy Raiford, John Kingsley, John Scharf, and 9 citizens

I. Approval of Agenda: Charles Estelman moved, 2nd by George Goodman, to approve the agenda as written. Motion carried unanimously.

II. Approval of Minutes of August 15, 2018 Meeting: John Westman said in item II Approval of Minutes it should be July 18 and July 20, 2018 as opposed to August. George Goodman moved, 2nd by Tammy Koch, to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2018 Webster Township Planning Commission meeting as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Township Board Report: John Westman reported that the Board approved the junk vehicle amendment to the Zoning Ordinance and the change to the Nuisance Ordinance. The Board returned the escrow deposit for Riverside Cellar as they will not be building it.

IV. Zoning Administrator Report: Randy Raiford reviewed his Zoning, Property Inspection and Code Enforcement Activity Report dated September 19, 2018 (attached).

V. PDR Report: John Westman related that Jason Wiley has been appointed to the PDR Committee. They have approved a 16% expenditure for Purchase of Development Rights for 90 acres of woods and farm field, in partnership with the Greenbelt, County Parks and Recreation Department, and landowner participation. This brings us to just less than 2000 protected acres in Webster Township.

VI. Comments from Citizens: None

VII. Public Hearing regarding the Tele-Site Wireless, Inc. application for combined Preliminary and Final Site Plan for monopole cell tower for Verizon Wireless at 2833 West Northfield Church Road.

- A. Andrea Zamansky opened the Public Hearing at 7:15 pm and said there are no written communications. Melanie Staub said she sent an email this afternoon.
- B. Rob LaBelle, attorney for Verizon Wireless, said TeleSite Wireless is the site acquisition agent for Verizon Wireless. He related that yesterday they received information from a resident of more towers than they show on their map.
 1. Rob LaBelle asked to table discussion until the next meeting so they have time to verify the number of cell towers on the map and that they are all more than 2 miles apart.
 2. Andrea Zamansky suggested holding the Public Hearing tonight so we don't have to republish the meeting and it will be as speedy as possible.
- C. David Antoun, of TeleSite Wireless, Inc., explained that they plan a 190 foot tall tower of galvanized steel. It will have a 5 foot lightning rod on top to be 195 feet tall total. The tower will be surrounded by a fence with all equipment inside. They will use the existing drive and extend it to the tower. They will pull the driveway permit after they get approval.
- D. Rob LaBelle showed the map of existing and potential coverage. Each tower helps the other towers, but the existing towers in the Ann Arbor area are getting over used and will lose signal. The map of existing coverage is a measure of dropped calls and customer complaints.
 1. Competitors can co-locate on the tower, but Verizon will be at the top. It is expensive to put up a tower and Verizon would rather go to another tower but none are available.
 2. The Federal Communication Act created license limitations on towers, but if a Zoning Ordinance prohibits a tower there must be substantial evidence shown to deny.
 3. Andrea Zamansky read the email from Melanie Staub, who lives at 5291 Jennings Road. It came in at 3:40 pm today (attached). It expressed concern for the unpleasant view, health risks, and need as she is satisfied with her current cell phone coverage.

- E. Andrea Zamansky opened the meeting to comments from the public.
1. Marilee Laeder said she has worked with Verizon for 4 years to get the tower installed to increase the cell phone service. She doesn't want the tower, but she has grandkids and when she needed to call 911 she couldn't get coverage. We need better service in the area.
 2. Emily Villegas-Umana, of 5289 Jennings Road, said she just moved here and uses Verizon. She has had no problem with cell phone coverage. In an emergency she suggested getting a land line for dedicated coverage. She doubted the coverage map.
 3. Rob LaBelle said cell towers need to be so tall to work. We have the Telecommunication Act to prevent denial due to unsightly view.
 - a. From a safety standpoint the first line of defense in a 911 emergency is the cell phone. All land lines went down in Katrina and cell towers saved lives to rescue people.
 - b. The Telecommunication Act prevents denial if they comply with FCC regulation standards for emissions. The American Cancer says there is no detrimental effect as it is non-ionized radiation. The Towers emit the radiation out, and not down, so it is less than our radios. Cell phones emit waves and have more emissions if they can't find a signal.
 4. David Antoun said they would prefer the site was a little north, but 7 or 8 farmers were not interested. They tried to find the best spot, in the trees and off the road. This new tower will help with dropped calls during peak times and by the highway now and in the future.
 5. Connie Savander asked about a spot on the coverage map that needs service. Rob LaBelle said that is a different hole, but it needs a new tower there too.
 6. Sergio Villegas-Umana of Jennings Road said there are no hurricanes in Michigan and on the highway cars can talk to another dispatcher. Rob LaBelle explained that now all cell towers have emergency generators. The three cell towers by the highway would be helped by this tower.
 7. As there were no further comments Andrea Zamansky closed the public hearing at 7:58pm
- F. Discussion by the Planning Commission:
1. George Goodman said Verizon needs to provide coverage where there is a gap in coverage, and the proposed cell tower location is best to fill the gap, and under the Federal Law Verizon is allowed to find a reasonable location to cover the gap if they can.
 2. Charles Estleman asked how long the tower will be in use before it is replaced by satellites. Rob LaBelle said satellite transmission is unreliable and the Zoning Ordinance requires us to take the tower down if it is not needed. David Antoun said satellite has no indoor coverage.
 3. Paul Zalucha asked for the maximum users for co-location and what causes the difference in coverage.
 - a. Rob LaBelle said 4 users can be on the tower and Verizon is on the top.
 - b. Mike Avery, of Tele-Site Wireless, said topography and antenna height determine coverage. 40 watts is the maximum power. They all use the same channel so if they overlap there is interference. Then they would tilt the tower down and only cover 1 mile out. Rob LaBelle said they place the towers so they don't need to down power. Increased height is no more effective. David Antoun said low towers are okay in urban areas, and we need tall towers when very rural.
 - c. Mike Avery said a 3rd party company uses a transmitter to measure. Their map is from 18 months ago and it is the best tool to measure. Now phones and data are just data and it is overtaxed. Rob LaBelle said they would send the map to Randy of overall usage and performance.
 4. Andrea Zamansky asked about the landscaping waiver request and if surrounding trees remain.
 - a. Rob LaBelle said the tower is in woods already but they would be happy to plant trees inside the compound. The compound is 46x60 feet for Verizon and 3 co-locators. Electronics are smaller now so it is enough space. They would need to expand the lease to plant trees outside.
 - b. Andrea Zamansky said we could grant the waiver but it would need a contract as they can't guarantee the future of the landscape.
 5. Andrea Zamansky outlined the 3 needs:
 - a. Investigate claims of surrounding cell towers and update inventory of surrounding cell sites if

current inventory is not accurate.

- b. Exhaustion map showing sectors that are being overtaxed.
- c. Release addendum or other mechanism regarding landscape screening

6. Randy Raiford said we need construction schedule for zoning compliance permit after they get approval. Rob LaBelle said 30 days after the building permit and they will be done in 90 days barring Indiana Bat and Frost laws.

7. Paul Zalucha asked about timing to make our decision. Rob LaBelle said state statute said within 90 days after application is deemed complete. He said the 90 days is running now, and they want to do it correctly, but we should have plenty of time.

8. Paul Zalucha moved, 2nd by Charles Estleman, to acknowledge receipt of the application and to post pone consideration of the combined Preliminary and Final Site Plan to construct a 195 foot tall monopole cell tower with antenna in the Agriculture zoning district, on 22.35 acres of land located at 2833 W. Northfield Church Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan, parcel number C-03-36-100-004 pending receipt of the following:

a. Investigate claims of surrounding cell towers and update inventory of surrounding cell sites if current inventory is not accurate.

b. Exhaustion map showing sectors that are being overtaxed.

c. Release addendum or other mechanism regarding landscape screening.

A roll call vote was taken and it passed unanimously.

VIII Public Hearing on application for Special Land Use approval regarding the monopole cell tower:

A. Andrea Zamansky opened the public hearing at 8:35pm and said we have one written comment. It is from Melanie Staub which was read earlier tonight.

1. John Scharf asked if the tower will be higher than the treetops. He said he saw a cell tower camouflaged as an evergreen tree and said it is a consideration.

2. Rob LaBelle said they usually avoid cell towers camouflaged as evergreen trees. The branches make the pole unusable as the other users would need to be farther down the pole.

3. Randy Raiford said the current trees are about 40 feet tall.

4. Emily Villegas-Umana was curious about the Indiana Bats and Indigenous species. Rob LaBelle said they go to Environmental Quality jurisdiction for approval and didn't find any Indiana Bats. It limits their time due to migration patterns. They comply with all regulations that affect them.

5. As there were no further questions she closed the public hearing at 8:40 pm.

B. Comments from the Commissioners:

1. Andrea Zamansky said the applicant asked to postpone the Special Land Use request until the October meeting pending receipt of the same items in the preliminary and final site plan.

2. Paul Zalucha moved, 2nd by Tammy Koch, to acknowledge receipt of application and postpone Special land use to allow the 195 foot monopole cell tower with antenna from Verizon Wireless in Agriculture Zoned District pursuant to 10.05A Webster Township Zoning Ordinance located at 2833 Northfield Church Road parcel # C-03-36-100-004 pending receipt of same items listed on preliminary and final site plan motion. A roll call vote was taken and it carried unanimously.

IX. Public Comment: None

X. Informational Items: None

XI. Charles Estleman moved, 2nd by Kay Stremler, to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Regular Meeting, Wednesday, October 17, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tammy Koch, Secretary

TK:mlz

copy to: J. Kingsley
B. Calleja
R. Raiford