

Hope Township Planning Commission

Regular Meeting & Public Hearing for Verizon Cell Tower

Unapproved Minutes

November 4, 2015

Meeting was called to order with the pledge of allegiance at 7pm

Members Present Diane Vaughan, Marge Kobisa, Bob Davis, Wendy Faber

Rodney Nanney of Building Place was also present

Open public hearing: Roll call vote taken: Marge yes, Wendy yes, Diane yes, Bob yes

Kathie Hayes with Verizon Wireless and Rob O'Dell the attorney for Verizon presented information regarding request for special use permit and site plan approval for the plan to erect a cell phone tower at 6840 N Meridian Road.

Kathie noted there is a need for cell phone service in the area and has been working with the property owner Gretchen Marsh to erect a cell tower on her property.

250 foot height of the tower is needed to provide sufficient service in the area. The property owner is requesting a set-back of 185 feet so as not to disturb farming operations. Location of the tower has been researched by Verizon and location on the property has been approved by the property owner. Details of the plan have been being worked on for 2 years. Engineering and aviation studies have been done.

Proposed planned tower height would be 250 ft. with a set back from Meridian road of 185 ft. There would be no lighting at ground level. The equipment would be enclosed by a brown colored vinyl covered steel fence. The tower would be built to be a "collapsible" tower to collapse at 1/2 or 1/3 the height of the tower in the event of a wind event. A light would be placed at the top of the tower for safety to aircraft. Other carriers would be allowed to install equipment to provide service and 911 services could be available also. Many residents and visitors use cell phone service exclusively.

Darrell Marsh grandson of the property owner was present to request the cell tower be allowed to be installed at the location planned. He also requested that landscaping requirements be waived. He is concerned that trees or bushes would damage tile drainage lines on the farm and that the normal spraying of herbicides used in the farming operation would damage/kill the landscaping. It would also take away from the use of the land for farming.

Other locations could be used but would start the engineering process over again taking time and money and Verizon would likely suspend the project.

Other community members were present and expressed their need and approval for the cell tower.

There were no township residents in attendance that were not in favor of the installation of the proposed cell tower.

Concern was noted about the possible collapsing of the tower on power lines or obstructing the road way.

Motion was by Marge and seconded by Wendy to accept the application for variance subject to conditions. Roll call vote taken- Bob yes, Wendy yes, Diane yes, Marge yes.

Marge made a motion and Diane seconded for approval to accept the removal of the landscaping requirement in the ordinance. That variance is to be decided by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Verizon must apply to Zoning Board of Appeals for variance for the height of 250 feet and for the waiving of the landscaping requirements.

The following conditions must also be met:

Signed documentations from the property owner granting permission to locate the tower on the parcel.

Need approval from Consumers Energy in the case of folding over of the tower on to power lines.

Need engineering certification demonstrating the manner in which the structure would fall in the event of failure and how it would affect property lines, road-right-of-way and utility easement.

Bond to guarantee future removal of tower or repair.

Roll call vote taken to close public hearing. Marge yes, Diane yes, Wendy yes, Bob yes.

Open regular planning meeting.

Approved minutes from August 5, 2015 planning meeting.

Previous business-Master plan review. Rodney Nanny has presented his report and quote to the township board for their review.

Will discuss Master Plan next meeting.

Meeting adjourned 9:15 pm

Next meeting February 3, 2016

Note after the meeting Nicole Kelley expressed interest in being a planning board member.