

Ashfield Planning Board Minutes
Final
9/17/2014

Meeting is called to order @ 7:35PM

Present: Micheal Fitzgerald (MF), Ken Miller (KM), Lauren Preston-Wells (LPW), Judy Haupt (JH)

Absent: Alan Rice

Guests: Chris Gray, Anne Madocks, Ken Kippen, Helene Uprichard, Dana Romer

Minutes Of 9/3/2014 were moved for approval by LPW and 2nd by KM

Old Business: KM has accepted LPW's nomination to represent Ashfield to FRCOG's Planning Board. MF seconds.

Cell Tower: Anne Madocks (AM) has questions re: cell tower map coverage. She has consulted a firm in Albany who has experience with working for municipalities. An issue is that the Applicant in Spruce Corner has no coapplicant with a carrier which appears to be the norm. AM presents a letter to the board regarding redundant coverage among other issues (see attached). MF responds he does not expect the coverage maps to be accurate since we are dealing with electricity. LPW reminds Anne that our premise is that taller towers mean fewer towers in the town as a whole. There is disagreement as to what actual coverage there is on Rt. 112. MF reiterates the point that this a lawful use of property. KM suggests getting an opinion from our consultant, Bruce Beliveau as to whether the Applicant should have a carrier as a co-applicant. LPW reminds Anne that the Federal Government does not want dropped calls. AM suggests a "drive test" (#5 in her letter) with installing a temporary signal from the proposed height to a computer to test signal strength.

Camouflage: MF wants the Applicant to get our camo consultant's info before the next hearing. He will send an Email proposing a 120' tower with or without camouflage with the possible extension with camo to 150' if necessary in the future. LPW suggests 2 120' towers with Camo to be more in keeping with neighborhood character. MF wonders what these suggestions would mean to their NEPA Study. Better to have for 150' now, than to have to go back for a Taller tower later.

Buckland: AT&T is looking into placing a tower site further away from the current location so as to not be visible from the Historic District. It is not clear how this would affect coverage in Apple Valley.

Telecommunication Bylaw: Discussion ensued as to fine tuning our telecommunications bylaw. LPW shares that in her research, setbacks for school properties are hard to come. And how do we define a school? Public and private?

What do we do with “home schools”? For health reasons – is 500’ enough? And setbacks for the Historic District and “parks” for aesthetic reasons.

Town owned parks? Any parks open to the public? Is 1000’ enough?

LPW moves to adjourn @ 9:05 PM, KM seconds

Next Meeting 10/1/ 2014 7PM Planning Board

7:30 PM Special Permit Hearing on the Spruce Corner Cell Tower.

Respectfully submitted, Judy Haupt

Internet Coverage: Chris Gray (CG) informs the board that Decker Machine Works has offered a chimney on their Main Street building for CG to install an antenna which would widen internet coverage to the village if his proposal for antennas on Town Hall Steeple is approved by the Town at the Special Town Meeting next week. The booster would sit 4’ above the chimney. He presents a picture of the building. MF advises that he should get an opinion from the Building Commissioner who may return the matter to the PB for a special permit or to advise us to get an opinion from Town Council. Coverage would be for the Lake District with 3 antennas pointing in different directions. A concern is safety and structures would need to be well anchored to the chimney. LPW asked about radio frequency emissions. CG states that dishes are more radioactive than antennas (4 watts per call – up and back) Cell towers are up to 157 watts/call.