

MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD
MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP, SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 23, 2016

MINUTES

Chairman DeRochi called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. and read the opening statement which affirmed that adequate notice of the meeting had been posted and sent to the officially designated newspapers.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman DeRochi; Mr. Fedun; Mr. Post; Mr. Thompson; Mr. Vecchione; Mr. Voitach; Mr. Kristjanson, Alternate #1; Mr. Campeas, Alternate #2; Mr. Tuosto, Alternate #4

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Drollas, Board Attorney; Ms. Goldman, Board Planner; Mr. Cline, Board Engineer; Dr. Eisenstein, Board RF Engineer; Mr. Palmer, Zoning Officer, Mr. Conforti, Township Committee Liaison

I. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

II. RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 07-2016

Case BA-06-16

Block 30001 Lot 16.01

Bulk Variance

Applicant: David J. Long, III

A motion to memorialize the resolution was made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Post. The motion carried on the following:

Ayes: Fedun, Kristjanson, Post, Thompson, Tuosto, Vecchione and DeRochi

Nays: None

Resolution No. 08-2016

Case BA-05-16

Block 15013 Lot 25.02

Bulk Variance

Applicant: Paul Tedeschi

Michael Fedun, Esquire represented the applicant. Mr. Fedun's comments on the resolution have been incorporated into the latest version.

A motion to memorialize the resolution was made by Mr. Post and seconded by Mr. Thompson. The motion carried on the following:

Ayes: Campeas, Thompson, Tuosto and DeRochi

Nays: None

III. APPLICATIONS

Case BA-05-14

Block 8001 Lot 1

Use Variance and Site Plan

Expiration Date – 10/31/16

Affidavit of Notification and Publication Required and Previously Found to Be In Order

Applicant: New York SMSA Limited Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless

Richard Stanzione, Esquire represented the applicant.

Mr. Villecco, who remains under oath, discussed his July 26, 2016 letter to Dr. Eisenstein. The letter corrects the structure and antenna heights in Table 1 in the RF Analysis and Report – Revised dated April 5, 2016 since some of the numbers were transposed.

Mr. Villecco discussed the Alternate Height report dated March 23, 2015. The report describes how the report was prepared and how they came up with the alternate height analysis. The propagation model was used and some testing was done to validate the propagation model at heights of 120', 110' and 100' above ground level. The centerline of the antenna is at 120' and the height of the silo is at 135'. Figure 1 shows the coverage at the different heights with each color representing a different height. As the antenna height is increased the coverage is expanded. The proposed height is the minimum needed to fill the gap. The test is performed by putting up the crane at the various heights with an antenna that transmits a test signal. Data was then collected and Figures 2, 3 and 4 were prepared showing the signal strength on various roads at the various heights. The range of the site is limited by the height.

Mr. Villecco described how the DAS (Distributed Antenna System) works. There is a hub and RF nodes that are connected back to the hub via fiber optics. The fiber optics sends the signal over light. When it gets to the node, the node transmits to a radio signal and then broadcasts out. The nodes are typically located on utility poles or light poles and have to be located near the area to be served.

Dr. Eisenstein referenced Figure 1. Mr. Villecco confirmed Figure 1 is RSRP and Figure 2 is RSSI. He explained the difference between RSSI and RSRP. RSRP (received signal reference power) is the reference measurement for 4G LTE systems. LTE is a broadband signal. RSRP is the average of the reference points across a signal. RSSI is what was previously used for more narrow band older generation networks. RSSI (receive signal strength indicator) is for a narrow band. Because of the difference in bandwidth there is compensation for the difference in the way it is measured. When the crane test is done it is measured in RSSI and then the difference is correlated.

Dr. Eisenstein noted that Figure 2 shows the green and yellow as acceptable. Figures 2, 3 and 4 don't have big differences between them. Mr. Villecco noted that Figure 1 shows big differences in coverage. Mr. Eisenstein noted that the figures show better coverage at a lower height in one area and there is not a big difference in coverage at a height of 120' versus 100'. Mr. Villecco agreed the difference is not tremendous but noted that there is a difference and the 120' proposed is the minimum height needed.

Dr. Eisenstein and Mr. Villecco discussed Figure 1 and the terrain and wooded areas as seen on Google Maps.

Dr. Eisenstein asked if an exhibit could be prepared to show only the extra propagation Verizon would get as a result of the extra 10' in height. Mr. Villecco stated that he wasn't sure he could produce an exhibit like that.

Mr. Voitach asked about the benefit to Montgomery since improvement seems to be toward the east into Franklin Township. Mr. Villecco responded that it benefits both Townships and Verizon is required to service areas where there is a gap in coverage regardless of what Township it is in.

Ms. Goldman noted the application that has been submitted at Nassau Racquet Club and asked if the green on the map includes the service from that proposed tower. Mr. Villecco referenced his report dated April 5th. Everything that is either proposed or existing is shown on the map. Mr. Voitach asked if the applicant could provide information about the sites in the area that had an application that was denied. Mr. Stanzione noted that the prior Board, as part of the T-Mobile denial resolution, recommended this site as an appropriate site.

Mr. Vecchione asked if the tower on South Middlebush Road covered any of this area. Mr. Villecco and Mr. Stanzione said it did not.

Mr. Campeas asked if the map being referenced was for 4G LTE which is primarily data with some voice. Mr. Villecco said it is and was primarily data but is transitioning to voice. The plan is to get off of 2G to put more on 4G.

Exhibits A-6 and A-7, which were DAS exhibit boards, were marked.

Mr. Villecco discussed DAS. He looked at how many households were served by the proposed coverage at 120'. Coverage would include 465 households in Montgomery, 174 in Hillsborough and 534 in Franklin for a total of 1,173. The Alternate Candidate Analysis dated February 11, 2015 notes that approximately 6-10 homes are served per pole with DAS system. Therefore, it would take 120-196 nodes on poles throughout the whole coverage area to get the same coverage. He referenced Exhibit A-6 which is google earth map showing the Quick property and 3 radii showing 1, 1.5 and 2 miles. There are significant amounts of residential areas that have underground utilities so there are no poles. The report shows the streets with usable poles and unusable poles in the area. When there is a large area to cover, the area would be covered with a macro cell (the silo in this case) and then augmented with the DAS nodes to pull traffic off the macro cell. To put DAS in this area would require the installation of up to 80-100 new poles which is not a cost effective solution.

Mr. Campeas asked how many houses would be served if the antenna was lower than 120'. Mr. Kristjanson asked if they could use a hybrid to supplement a lower tower height. Mr. Villecco will provide the information at the next meeting.

Mr. Villecco discussed the RF Emissions Study dated October 7, 2014. The report was prepared to show that the proposed tower will meet the FCC requirements for emissions. The report concludes they are several hundred times below the FCC standard and they are below NJ Standard as well. The tower will remain below the standards if there are co-locators. All the equipment is FCC approved.

Dr. Eisenstein confirmed they are several hundred times under the FCC limit.

Chairman DeRochi asked if a shorter tower could be designed with supplemental DAS to cover the areas.

Chairman DeRochi opened the meeting to question Mr. Villecco.

Robert Wilmot remains under oath. A copy of Exhibit A-6 and A-7 will be sent to the Board office. Mr. Wilmot asked if the number of poles required for a DAS system would be less than what would be required for hardline telephone. He asked if the tower height is guided by whether it will deploy 2G, 3G or 4G.

Mr. Villecco replied that the height of the proposed tower is driven by the frequency bands that have been allocated by the FCC and the requirement to provide adequate service.

The Board took a five minute recess.

June Staats remains under oath. Ms. Staats asked if the applicant has considered placing the silo on the sewer treatment plant lot just north of Staats Farm Road. She asked if there was a reason they are proposing a silo instead of tree tower. Mr. Stanzione replied that a silo was more in keeping with area since it is on a farm but if the Board wants a tree tower they will put up a tree tower. Mr. Stanzione will have the site acquisition person look at the treatment plant lot and report back at the next meeting.

Lloyd Staats remains under oath. Mr. Staats commented on the look of the silo over the trees.

Liz Palius remains under oath. Ms. Palius asked why this site was called the Griggstown Alternative and wondered if it was because there were two sites proposed in Griggstown that have been denied. She asked if the proposal is being placed in Montgomery because they couldn't get a site in Franklin. Mr. Stanzione replied affirmatively. Ms. Palius asked if they have counted the number of poles that could be used for the DAS. Mr. Villecco replied that they had not specifically counted the useable poles. A majority of the coverage area has no poles. Ms. Palius asked who would collocate below Verizon if Verizon wasn't satisfied with the lowest spot. Mr. Villecco replied the application is for Verizon and the Township requires collocation. The other carriers could have problems with some of the lower heights.

Candy Willis, Knickerbocker Drive, remains under oath. Ms. Willis asked how many members were on the Board when the T-Mobile application came in. Ms. Willis commented that the proposed location is not where the prior Board suggested putting it and asked that the Board read the resolution.

Jessie Havens, Ludlow Avenue, was sworn in. Ms. Havens asked if there were a number of applications in the area for cell towers. Mr. Villecco said there are two other Verizon applications and confirmed that each carrier builds their own network. Each carrier's network is different and completely independent. Wireless has grown and there is a tremendous demand for wireless. There may be some customers who still prefer cable. Ms. Havens said the value of a historic district has to be weighed against the convenience of being able to play games on a cell phone.

Mr. Wilmot asked if the wireless router in a person's home could be used for voice over phone calls. Mr. Villecco replied that the wireless routers have limited abilities and won't reach outside the home. Comcast, which covers Montgomery, does not give coverage for Verizon Wireless phones.

Ms. Palius asked if Verizon is required to provide coverage or have permission to provide coverage under their FCC license. Mr. Villecco said they are required to provide coverage. If Verizon doesn't they forfeit the license. As part of the license renewal process they are required to show how they are effectively filling their level of service.

The hearing was continued to the September 20, 2016 Zoning Board meeting. No further notice will be provided.

IV. MINUTES

July 19, 2016 – Regular Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Post and seconded by Mr. Fedun. The motion carried on the following:

Ayes: Fedun, Kristjanson, Post, Thompson, Tuosto, Vecchione and DeRochi

Nays: None

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.