



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH PLANNING BOARD

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Approved 10/06/09

Planning Board Meeting Minutes 9/15/09

Members Present: Rick Leif, Daniel Lewis, George Pember, Michelle Gillespie, Leslie Harrison

Others Present: Kathy Joubert, Town Planner; Bill Farnsworth, Zoning Enforcement Officer/Inspector of Buildings; Bill Donovan, Robin Smith, Megan Tupper, Attorney Robert Longden; Brian Allen, KJK Wireless; Laura Ziton, Anthony Ziton, Patti Stackhouse, Dr. Lyna Watson, Kim Henderson-Lee, Stacy Archibald, Harry McLeod, Deb Blasko, Tom Blasko, Attorney Stephen Madaus, John Stevenson, Shin-Yi Lai, Kathryn Milton, Michael Lamphier, Lisa Gardner, Janet Sandstrom, Art Duffy, Leslie Rutan, David Murphy, Fran Bakstran, Selectman

Chairman Leif called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of April 21, 2009, June 18, 2009, July 14, 2009 and August 4, 2009 were approved.

Continued Public Hearing for “Cyrus Brook Estates”, Definitive Subdivision @ 276 & 290 West Main Street, Rear

Applicant: Cyrus Brook Estates LLC of Northborough; **Engineer:** Quinn Engineering, Inc.; **Date Filed:** August 6, 2009; **Decision Due:** November 3, 2009

Ms. Joubert stated a letter was received from Quinn Engineering, Inc. requesting the public hearing be continued to the October 6, 2009 Planning Board meeting. Currently they are in the process of meeting with the Conservation Commission and want to finalize that review, incorporate any changes into their plans and submit revised plans to the Planning Board before the October 6th meeting.

Daniel Lewis moved to continue the hearing to October 6, 2009 at 7:00 pm, Michelle Gillespie seconded the motion and the vote was four in favor, with Mr. Pember abstaining.

78 Maple Street Common Driveway Decision: Mr. Leif, Ms. Gillespie, Mr. Lewis and Ms. Harrison reviewed and signed the decision for a common driveway at 78 Maple Street. Mr. Pember did not sign the decision as he had recused himself from the hearing for this project.

Next Meeting Dates: Upcoming meeting dates for the Planning Board are September 29, 2009 work session, October 6, 2009, and October 20, 2009.

73-85 West Main Street: The hearing for the project at 73-85 West Main Street was continued to the ZBA’s September 22nd meeting. The applicant submitted their information for the Design Review Committee (DRC) late, but Ms. Joubert stated she will ask the DRC to

meet on Monday, September 21st so they can review the revised plans and submit comments to the ZBA prior to the September 22nd meeting. The applicant has been before the Conservation Commission and is done with that process.

Virtual Town Hall: Ms. Joubert reported the town's website has been updated and should be going live on September 21st.

2009 Zoning Bylaw Update: Ms. Joubert noted the Attorney General has approved the Zoning Bylaw approved at 2009 Town Meeting. AG's office made corrections to the 1986 Groundwater Protection Overlay District bylaw. Reference to variances had to be taken out. New copies of the bylaw should be available in about a week.

Genzyme Open House: Ms. Gillespie reminded everyone about the open house tomorrow from 12 pm - 2 pm at the Genzyme facility at 11 Forbes Road.

Assabet Farm Estates Update: At the request of Mr. Pember, Ms. Joubert presented an update on Assabet Farm Estates. Ms. Joubert explain that National Grange, the bonding company for the developer, hired an engineering company to do an assessment of the situation and determine whether it makes sense for National Grange to keep the bond money and hire someone to do the remaining work, or tell the town to keep the bond money and do the work, if the work is in excess of the bond amount. The engineer has met with staff a few times and explained that they will provide a report to National Grange and National Grange will then let the town know of their decision. The Town Engineer will follow up with it and the Planning Board will be advised. The Town Engineer and DPW Director have discussed who will be responsible for the overlaying of Hudson Street. National Grange is looking for information as to the drainage work in Hudson Street and handling of the curb cut. Ms. Joubert stated she will have an update on this for the next meeting.

Continued Public Hearing for Special Permit Wireless Communications Facility @ 55 Bearfoot Road; Applicant: Massachusetts Electric Company/DBA National Grid; **Engineer:** Aerial Spectrum, Inc.; **Date Filed:** July 7, 2009; **Decision Due:** 90 days from close of hearing

Ms. Joubert updated the board as to documents that have been provided since the last meeting, as follows:

1. A letter by email to the Planning Board dated 9/8/09 from Dr. Peter Valberg, consultant for National Grid, in response to a request from the Board of Health regarding RF emissions in the area;
2. A letter from Atty. Steven Madaus, Mirick O'Connell, dated 9/11/09. (Ms. Joubert stated she had neglected to note at the last meeting that a letter dated 8/14/09 from Mr. Madaus had been received by the Planning Board on 8/15/09 and provided to the Board on 8/15/09.);
3. A letter from Lyna Watson regarding the environmental impact of cell towers on wildlife and birds;
4. An email from Bill Farnsworth to the Planning Board regarding the common practice of taking tower measurements with a tape measure; and
5. A series of photographs taken by Daniel Lewis for those members would were not able to see the balloon test on Saturday.

Ms. Joubert stated that, on behalf of the Planning Board, she had asked Town Counsel two questions, as follows:

1. If the applicant didn't want co-locators on their monopole, could the board make it a condition of their decision that there would be no co-locators?
2. Could the Planning Board limit co-locations to be façade-mounted?

In response to the first question, Town Counsel stated the Planning Board could not state in their decision that no co-locators would be allowed because the bylaw requires co-location. In response to the second question, Town Counsel stated the board does have the authority to state what kind of co-locations could occur on the monopole.

Mr. Farnsworth summarized email conversations he has had with Brittany Dohman, Application Manager for AT&T Towers, in which he asked her for clarification of a statement she made to Tom Blasko in an email message dated September 1, 2009. In response to Mr. Blasko, Ms. Dohmen stated "From the Metro PCS tower elevation drawing that you attached, 140' would be a suitable height for a 30" Microwave dish." On September 2, 2009 Mr. Farnsworth asked Ms. Dohmen if there was space available at the 140' height. Ms. Dohmen responded, stating this information is not something she can provide at this early stage. Mr. Farnsworth then asked her if she could clarify a statement she made to Mr. Allen in an email in which she said the highest available RAD on this tower is 80'. He asked her to explain the difference between the two statements. Ms. Dohmen replied by email that, at the time, she was not aware that National Grid would only be installing a 30" dish. She thought it would be a full array of antennas. When Mr. Farnsworth emailed Ms. Dohmen again on September 15, 2009 requesting an answer as to whether or not there was space available on the tower for a 30-inch dish and at what height. Ms. Dohmen stated she could not go into this any further because National Grid has not filed an application with them.

Mr. Leif stated it seems like Ms. Dohmen is in a position of coordinated decision-making as to what gets located where and then the applicants file with her and she may then send those through technical reviews to make determinations/decisions.

Mr. Farnsworth stated she coordinates the process but not the technical review work. After all is approved, she handles the real estate transaction. Her reply may not have been based on all the information.

Mr. Leif stated it sounds like she can't do anything or give any other response unless National Grid files with them.

Mr. Farnsworth stated Ms. Dohmen doesn't know the technical information of the co-locators that are there now. He suggested looking further into what's actually on the tower at 119 Bearfoot Road now. He stated he was out there with a company looking for a building permit for an array at 140 feet. Also, he was out there this morning with another company with an open permit for the 145-foot level. Mr. Farnsworth stated that when he got out there, the person gave him the normal documents for compliance, which included 3 photographs. A man from AT&T who was there at the site told him they have 3 dishes on the tower at about 145 feet in height. All the companies were using the same reference point as to where the connections are. They have side mounts that the dish is mounted on, which are chained to the tower. That's what the pictures are showing. This is not the typical information he gets from other permits. This is from someone who has nothing to do with the application at all and someone from AT&T who was out there verifying what is and what is not available on the tower.

Ms. Joubert stated the Planning Board had asked at both meetings about an independent peer review. The bylaw allows the board to get an independent review at the cost of the applicant. National Grid has a presentation regarding the availability of the 140 foot location on the 119 Bearfoot Road tower. The board has the option to hire a consultant to confirm if the 140 foot location is available or not.

Mr. Leif asked if they have the option of having an independent assessment of the 80-foot location on the pole.

Ms. Joubert said peer review is a review and report of the information submitted by the applicant.

Mr. Longden stated he was going to present evidence from their consultants and engineers showing that there is no availability on the tower at 140 feet. Mr. Longden stated requiring flush-mounted antennas as a condition of the board's approval of the monopole would be acceptable to National Grid. He noted they had agreed to make the tower available to the town and asked if a whip would be all right.

Mr. Farnsworth stated the Fire Chief said it would not be a problem.

Mr. Longden stated the visual impact from the proposed monopole would be nothing like the antenna arrays on the 119 Bearfoot Road tower. It would be different and have less impact. Mr. Longden stated he agrees with Town Counsel that under the requirements of the bylaw, they could not prohibit other co-locators from the proposed monopole as part of their decision. Mr. Longden stated they will cooperate with the board's decision to get an independent consultant and agreed to pay for it.

Ms. Gillespie stated she thinks they need to hear applicant's presentation first.

Mr. Leif stated the crux of their decision at this point is whether or not they can locate at 80 feet or 140 feet on the 119 Bearfoot Road tower. The bylaw is clear that our first objective is to minimize the number of towers, the second is to locate them in an industrial area and then limit co-location. He stated he understands why they must allow co-location. He stated he also understands the issue of health effects is outside of their jurisdiction. Since it is not a focus of their decision-making, he does not want to discuss health issues for the rest of the hearing. Mr. Leif stated it's up to AT&T if National Grid can co-locate on their 119 Bearfoot Road tower. Even hiring a consulting firm to do an independent review, ultimately it's going to come down to what AT&T says. National Grid should apply to AT&T and then see what they say. If the board knows it can't happen, then it can't happen. He stated they know the 80-foot location is available, but National Grid said it won't work for their purpose. They need a consultant to get verification as to whether or not they can locate on the AT&T tower at 140 feet and at 80 feet. Depending on what the consultant says, they will know clearly what they have to do. That's what it comes down to. Mr. Leif stated they don't have to hear what National Grid has to say tonight because until they get that question answered, it's always going to be suspect.

Ms. Gillespie stated it's clear in the messages from AT&T that Ms. Dohmen could not make a decision because there was no application. I think it's the responsibility of the board to ask the applicant to submit an application to AT&T and have them deny it.

Mr. Longden stated the application process is not that simple and they think it's unnecessary because they'd be applying for space they know is full. Mr. Allen will explain the process. He stated it seems to him they're being asked to do something that's pointless because there's no space on the tower and an independent consultant would be able to confirm that.

Mr. Farnsworth stated he went out to the site this morning. An AT&T crew person was out there and he asked him if space was available at 140 feet. Mr. Farnsworth stated the AT&T person said it's not available and told him he was there because the antennas were so close, they stepped on a dish and had to fix it. Mr. Farnsworth stated he doesn't know if this person can be considered a consultant, but he had nothing to do with National Grid.

Mr. Leif stated the technical division can verify what the tower looks like now and AT&T will know if something will happen in the future. The real estate division may have some information as to what's going to happen with the tower down the road. Information from both divisions would be best.

Mr. Pember stated they don't know who is going to renew their lease and it's highly unlikely for someone to announce it. That's not how it works. Nobody with space will give it up and it's highly unlikely they'll give it up and announce it. It makes sense to hire a consultant to make sure space is feasible, and if it works with their equipment and with the connection they need to make. The first step is the consultant. Eighty feet is a waste of time, but if the consultant is there anyway, why not check it out, too.

Ms. Gillespie stated the consultant may come up with the same issue that they need to file with AT&T.

Mr. Leif stated the consultant would go out independently and see what is there today. He doesn't think the consultant would get as far as AT&T's opinion.

Ms. Joubert stated the diagram she and Mr. Farnsworth have seen is proof there is no space there.

Mr. Leif stated it's not from a lack of trust, but the Planning Board has to do its own due diligence. The intent of the bylaw is to do co-locations and the board has to feel comfortable that there's no other way of doing this.

Ms. Joubert stated the 119 Bearfoot Road tower is on town property and the town wishes there was more space for co-locators. It is completely in the town's interest to have more co-locators on that tower but the space doesn't exist.

Ms. Harrison stated she thinks the board has to require them to go through the application process with AT&T or she won't feel comfortable.

Mr. Lewis and Mr. Pember stated they would like to hear the applicant's presentation.

Brian Allen, KJK Wireless, explained his company provides site acquisition services for the wireless community. He has gathered information on behalf of various clients. His job is to see if space is available to lease. Last year his company provided site acquisition services for 500 leases, and he himself has done hundreds of leases. Mr. Allen explained National Grid has very specific requirements for this monopole. They are trying to connect from 55 Bearfoot Road to the Channel 27 tower in Boylston and then to a tower in Paxton. KJK Wireless hired Transwave to study the most efficient way to get to Paxton to support the things for which

they need the link. The bylaw says they are supposed to co-locate, which is the first thing they look at. On first determination, they believed the tower was full on the top section above the tree line. However, when he went to the tower himself, the gap between the top group and lower group appeared to be filled with dishes and they decided they needed a new tower. Ms. Dohmen said the highest available location was at 80 feet. After obtaining an entry and testing agreement, they explored the 140-foot height and took measurements. Mr. Allen stated the measurements are not readily available to Ms. Dohmen or his company, however Mr. Farnsworth provided pictures of the Fiber Tower as-built plans showing the direction in which those dishes are pointing. In order to hit Channel 27 towers, they have to have a dish that would be at 267 degrees. Fiber Tower has a dish that is at 257 degrees. They have a dish on mounts that they have put up and maintain. There are 3 side mounts attached to the tower by a chain and on that they have their dishes. Mr. Allen stated he talked with Ms. Dohmen this morning and she's decided its not her job to be the go-between between AT&T and the board. They had information that the space they wanted to lease, where Fiber Tower is now, was unavailable and Ms. Dohmen told him that, in that case, it wouldn't be worth it for them to apply. There is no point for them to submit an application and do a structural analysis of the tower. The height they need is not available and they don't know in what direction the dishes there are pointing. They would only know that from plans and information received from Fiber Tower, not from a structural analysis. If they went through the application process and did the structural analysis, then AT&T would ask them where they want to locate and they would be told there's no room.

Mr. Allen explained he went up on a Verizon tower with engineers after he was given a sketch with an X marking a certain location. The tower was not in the center of the compound and Verizon was not where it was supposed to be. Only going up on the tower would they know if space was available. They're still in the process of straightening that out. Verizon had co-located in the wrong place. He stated he doesn't believe Ms. Dohmen has been to the tower and he has been there many times. The potential tenant does the leg work. If the board hired a wireless communications engineering firm, he's confident they would come to the same conclusion that there is no space at 140 feet on the 119 Bearfoot Road tower. He explained his measurements may be 6 inches off. The AT&T equipment comes down to 146 feet at the bottom and Nextel goes up to 141 feet. Fiber Tower has their mounts from 142 feet and behind the AT&T antennas because it's the only way they could attach them, but they can't use them. Mr. Allen presented pictures to the board members.

Mr. Allen reviewed the pictures, explaining the 119 Bearfoot Road tower is a 3-sided triangle around a pole. The faces of the triangle are 16.6 feet and the standoff mounts are very significant compared to façade mounts. On the side of the tower they need to be on, AT&T mounted down from the platform, which is at approximately 150 feet, with 4 feet of antenna hanging down. No one can co-locate behind those. The next co-location is a pipe mount with three sets of pipes that have been mounted in 3 general direction so they can get the most antennas up for their company. The bottoms of Nextel's antennas are at 147 feet and go up 4 feet from there. Realistically, the only space is from 141 feet to 146 feet, even for Fiber Tower, and it shows they are filling the space in which National Grid needs to go. Mr. Allen stated he provided information to Ms. Dohmen and Mr. Farnsworth, but it's his job to deem if their equipment can fit in there, not hers. He stated he has never seen a tower on which space is shared. No one would think of asking Nextel if they could locate their equipment on Nextel's antennas or platform. That's Nextel's space. There is not space on the tower for National Grid to lease.

Responding to a question by Mr. Leif regarding the difference in elevation between the AT&T tower and the 55 Bearfoot Road tower, Mr. Allen stated it is his understanding there are

obstructions between the tower at 119 Bearfoot Road and the Channel 27 tower that are not an impediment at 140 feet but in the way at 80 feet.

Responding to a question from Mr. Lewis, Mr. Allen stated Fiber Tower has dishes that go to Church Street and somewhere in Marlborough. The concept is point to point between towers, eventually getting to Worcester. He stated if he was to guess, the 147 degree dish is going to Church Street. He doesn't know if there are wireless carriers on the Channel 27 tower. He believes they connect to the rooftop installation at Pleasant Valley. Mr. Allen explained dishes are never shared. The carriers run their own networks and carry traffic for various companies - Sprint, T-Mobile, etc. They have their own business plan and model, and the same issues that National Grid has. At each tower they have to get the signal from the tower back to their switch site in Framingham. Sometimes land wires don't work and they have to switch to Fiber Tower's. National Grid is proposing a wireless network. They have a fiber network but need to switch if they have problems.

Ms. Harrison asked if the Channel 27 tower is the only option.

Mr. Allen stated it is his understanding from National Grid that it's the best way to achieve what they need.

Michael Maljanian, National Grid engineer, stated Transwave was hired to find the best connection. They looked at reflecting on the building across the street - a passive reflector like a billboard - to get the signal to another site. They tried a lot of alternatives but there were none, other than Channel 27. It sits in a bowl and they need a tower to get over the bowl.

Mr. Leif stated they need to discuss the proper approach. He questioned if the scope of the study would be to verify that National Grid's information on the availability of space on the tower is valid and supportable or if it would be to see if the consultants could solve National Grid's problem in another way.

Ms. Joubert stated a peer review takes information presented by the applicant, reviews it, and then gives the board their analysis of that. Peer review is not a new study. As with Stop & Shop's traffic issue, the board hired a traffic consultant to do a peer review. The board didn't question the number of cars on Route 20, but wanted to verify that what Stop & Shop presented was the best that could be done. In peer review they review what's been presented and offer analysis of it. The main issue heard over the last few meetings is the question of whether or not there is space at 140 feet for co-location on the 119 Bearfoot Road tower. The consultants would review the information, go out and climb the tower, etc. The other question would be if there was a way to make it work at a lower height.

Mr. Leif asked if the peer review could look at the use of direct reflectors, since the Transwave study looked at that.

Ms. Joubert said the peer reviewer would review the Transwave stuffy.

Mr. Lewis stated he would be interested in hearing if National Grid's dish could be mounted on the same level as the dish that is heading in the same direction on the AT&T tower, but just further apart.

Mr. Leif stated he believes the independent peer review is a valid next step and then, once they get the information, they can make a more valid decision. At this point, he doesn't

believe it is logical to ask them to apply to AT&T, but that's not to say they may not ask that in the future.

Ms. Harrison stated she agrees, and getting information and alternatives from an independent peer review will be a good thing. The process is very technical and after hearing Mr. Allen's presentation, she doesn't think asking the applicant to submit an application to AT&T would be appropriate right now.

Ms. Joubert stated the peer review could be completed within 30 days.

Ms. Harrison asked if part of the review will be to determine if Channel 27 is the only option.

Ms. Joubert stated they will review the Transwave information and all information provided regarding tower heights and the line of where it needs to go, but it's not in the board's jurisdiction to decide if Channel 27 is the best place or not.

Mr. Leif stated Channel 27 is critical to the solution.

Ms. Harrison asked if there is another tower available.

Mr. Leif stated he would like the peer review to verify that Channel 27 is the only tower.

Ms. Harrison stated they're saying Channel 27 is the best way, and she's asking if it's the only way.

Ms. Gillespie stated there must be a number of cell towers between here and Paxton.

Mr. Longden stated they looked at that, took their consultant's advice and that's how they came to the proposal they've presented. They are asking the board to pass judgment on this proposal, which is best for National Grid. They're asking the board to rule on the proposal as presented. It is not in the board's purview to go beyond and ask for other ways to get to the Paxton. It is not required for them to use any and all ways to get to Paxton or any other site. This is their proposal, the way they want to go and it meets the requirement of the bylaw. The bylaw does not require an applicant to explore all ways to get where we want to go. The board has to deal with the application being presented.

Mr. Leif stated the gray area is balancing the needs of National Grid with the community. The board has to have enough information to do that. National Grid has done their work and done a good job. The thrust of the bylaw is to minimize the installation of new towers and the board has to make sure it's necessary to build the proposed tower.

Ms. Joubert stated with Stop & Shop, the scope of what the board had jurisdiction over was traffic, but they probably wanted to ask Stop & Shop if that was the best viable site and ask them to explore other sites in town. What's within the board's jurisdiction is to review what's been presented. The wireless consultant hired will review what's been presented and give the board their opinion of it.

Mr. Pember stated he agrees with Mr. Longden. They need to get to Paxton through Boylston. It's not the board's job to tell them to take a totally different route, nor is it in our purview. They said they can't co-locate and have to have a new tower. If they can't co-locate, the board can't tell them to go to another town to co-locate.

Ms. Joubert explained there were two towers before the Planning Board that were denied. One was in a residential area of Hudson Street, the applicant was not well-prepared and gave up. The second application denied was in an industrial area of Otis Street, but the company did not prove to the Planning Board they couldn't locate anywhere else. The Planning Board wanted them to pursue other towers and possibly going into Westborough. The applicant did not follow through and the Planning Board denied it. In these two situations, the Planning Board was able to deny because the applicants did not follow the bylaw. In this case, whether the board agrees with it or not, the applicant is following the bylaw. Ms. Joubert stated she will work up a draft of what the board would like included in the peer review and send it to the members for their review. Once the content has been approved, she will send it out to consultants that other municipalities have used in the past. She suggested continuing the hearing to the October 20th Planning Board meeting and if the consultant was not ready at that time, they would have to continue it to the next meeting.

Mr. Pember asked if the abutters could be notified if the information was not going to be available at the October 20th meeting.

Ms. Joubert stated that, in hearings like this, they ask the abutters to assign a couple of residents as contact people so the Planning Department can notify them and they can let the others know.

Mr. Leif asked for comments from those present and stated they were going to focus on the key points and restrict comments to that subject.

Larry McLeod, 5 Howe Lane, asked what the minimum height would be at which they could co-locate.

Mr. Allen stated it would be at 140 feet.

Attorney Steven Madaus stated they are now in their third meeting and there is more doubt now as to whether co-location is available then when the hearing first started. At the first meeting, National Grid did not give the information they did tonight. First they said they didn't want to co-locate for security reasons. That is not in the interest of the bylaw or the residents. Now they are starting to twist the facts to create their own pole for their own security reasons. He stated he hopes the consultant will know about mounting options. The representative from AT&T stated she reported 80 feet was available. He asked if the applicant has met the burden and stated he hopes the consultant will supply all the information on possible alternatives.

Mr. Blasko, Pond View Way, handed out prepared packets to the members. He stated there are trigger mounts and he urged the board to look at how to mount this antenna. Even though Nextel may be at 150 feet, we're talking 10 inches. Between 140 feet and 145 feet there's plenty of room to locate. He stated things are still going up on the tower. National Grid has 18 antennas registered with the FCC.

Mr. Blasko reviewed and commented on the documents he included in the packets he presented to the Planning Board, as follows:

1. Email to Bill Farnsworth from Brittany Dohmen, AT&T;

Comment from T. Blasko: Ms. Dohmen states she told Brian Allen highest location available on AT&T tower is at 80 feet, but thought that was for the installation of a full

array of antennas, not a 30” dish. National Grid was not forthcoming with information to make co-location work.

2. Four NGrid Northborough Plan Sheets by Aerial Spectrum, stamped & dated 7/09

Comment from T. Blasko: The submitted plan sheets by Aerial Spectrum are stamped by an engineer, but it looks like it was a stamp of the engineer’s stamp and signature.

3. BCI Communications, Inc. Line of Site Study - AT&T Tower at 119 Colburn Street;
4. Transwave Communications Systems, Inc. Site Survey Prepared for National Grid dated 11/10/08;
5. Sketch of National Grid’s proposed pole and the AT&T pole showing elevations, etc.;
6. Sketch showing AT&T and proposed National Grid pole, Route 1-290 & CHANNEL 27 tower; and
7. Two photographs of a cell tower with highway in foreground.

Comment from T. Blasko: The sketch on page 2 of the Line of Sight Study by BCI Communications shows the line of sight but nothing about the Channel 27 tower. It’s not an official sketch. It has no stamp or date, except for the date of the report. Trees, on property owned by the Town of Northborough, could be cropped and co-location could work. Why wasn’t cropping of trees in Northborough discussed? How is it that National Grid maintains that a location of 80 feet doesn’t work, but they can do it at the 125-foot mark on their parking lot? The board should keep this in mind when the peer review consultant is picked and should ask them for alternatives since National Grid has other towers.

Mr. Lewis stated there may be a problem with the engineer’s signature. It looks like it’s been copied and repeated on each page.

Mr. Longden reviewed the signature as well.

Laura Ziton, 1A Pond View Way, asked if the consultants could confirm it is a point-to-point dish.

Mr. Leif stated the type of communication device would be included in the consultant’s recommendations.

Deb Blasko, 18 Pond View Way, wanted to know what would happen if they couldn’t connect to the Channel 27 tower. She stated she called that tower and Channel 27 has no signed paperwork and they don’t know if the tower is structurally strong enough.

Mr. Longden stated they have an antenna on the Channel 27 tower. They are talking about adding new equipment as part of point-to-point towers. They have had communications with the general manager of Channel 27 for months, however they are not signing a lease on that tower until they know they can build their tower. If they get approval of the proposed monopole, they will file for approval in Boylston and then take steps to locate on the Channel 27 tower.

John Stevenson, 19 Edmunds Way, encouraged the Board to pursue an independent analysis. Along the same lines, if National Grid is happy with the 140-foot location, their new tower could be placed next to the AT&T tower. This would be better for the residents and will be no different except the new tower will be closer.

Mr. Leif stated the board has to rule on the proposal presented to them.

Art Duffy, 114 Hudson Street, Mr. Allen talked about the complexity of already installed co-locators, that AT&T didn't know where the equipment was located and that their information was wrong as to where the antennas were located on the equipment shed. He asked if they were putting two more antennas on that tower.

Mr. Allen stated those plans were sent from their engineers to Verizon towers. There is a 50' x 50' enclosure at the base of the tower. They didn't want to change that configuration so they had the engineers figure out how to reconfigure it. The people who installed it first did so wherever they felt like it. The fence was in the right location but boxes inside were known by people who own the towers. In many instances, the engineer fills out the form and stamps that equipment on the tower is installed per the plans. The building inspector does not climb the tower to see what actually goes on it. Many times the location is different from the plans, but not materially different. He stated his job is to have their engineers verify that they can go in the location they need.

Mr. Duffy asked if there could be instances where placement of arrays for antennas could be misplaced?

Mr. Allen said that can happen. Structural analysis had made those adjustments. It's simply a representation of what's on the tower. The details of their plans are specific at 120 feet and everything about it that was previously permitted, may not be exact. This goes on all the time. There could be an installation before the tower owner knows what's going on.

Mr. Duffy asked if the town has the jurisdiction to tell a co-locator who located in the wrong place to move it.

Mr. Allen stated it happens all the time. Sometimes building permits don't get used because they can get a building permit without a lease. If they're in the process of getting a lease, they can get a building permit.

Mr. Duffy, referring to Mr. Allen's picture #2 showing a downward configuration, asked if an upward configuration would work.

Mr. Allen stated the RF engineers who design it will tweak it from year to year. If there's a new tower to connect to, they will tweak it but reserve the right to move it.

Leslie Rutan, 22 Hemlock Drive, asked if there is any legislation that requires all the carriers to have submitted and proved they are on the pole where they need to be. She asked if some carriers were higher than they used to be, would they have to be shifted and then National Grid could go on where they need to be.

Mr. Allen stated if they had to readjust the tower, they would have to adjust every pole in the whole Worcester-Metro service area.

Mr. Allen stated they would all like to be at 150 feet because they'd have less towers. The locators in lower spots have the worst networks because they have the lowest connection on every pole. AT&T and Verizon generally hold the highest sites. The companies with the lowest connections have to put up more towers in order to get the same coverage as the ones on top.

Fran Bakstran, 76 Cedar Hill Road, stated there have been expectations raised about the peer review. It's a review of information submitted saying they can't locate at 140 feet. National Grid can appeal the decision or look at alternate configurations. Requesting alternative configurations is not within the board's jurisdiction.

Mr. Madaus stated that, in light of the discrepancies described by Mr. Allen, the board should require the consultants to climb the tower and see what's actually there and at what height.

Michelle Gillespie moved to continue the hearing to October 20, 2009 at 7:00 pm. Mr. Pember seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Grampietro
Planning Board Secretary