



# TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH PLANNING BOARD

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Approved 7-12-11

## Planning Board Meeting Minutes May 3, 2011

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

**Others Present:** Kathy Joubert, Town Planner; Tom Blasko, Anthony Ziton, Laura Ziton

### **Finalize Wireless Communication Facilities Discussion**

The board members discussed how they would like to proceed regarding final review of the Wireless Communication Facility (WCF) bylaw. They agreed they would like to have a technical expert review the current bylaw and then come to a meeting to talk with them about the bylaw, and about future WCF technology.

Ms. Joubert stated she will talk with John Coderre, Town Administrator, to see if they can get a technical consultant through US Wireless, the real estate development company that was the successful bidder for the construction of the WCF at the Police Station at 211 Main Street. She noted there are other consultants as well who are used by other towns interested in developing a WCF bylaw. She stated it would be approximately \$20,000 for a consultant to review the bylaw and talk to the board.

Mr. Leif stated they could also review the spreadsheets with the analysis of the WCF bylaws of other towns and see where Northborough stands. In addition, there may be other sources of information to review and other experts who could talk to the board.

Tom Blasko, 18 Pond View Way, stated he came to the meeting to make sure the board's discussion on this matter was not closed. He stated he was not surprised the Police Station WCF was approved. He stated he feels the required 500-foot setback of a WCF from a residential property line is too close. He stated his ultimate goal is to find some common ground. He explained his take on what the Town's attorney said at a previous meeting is that there is quite a bit of leeway for boards to deny towers.

Mr. Leif stated that was not exactly his take. If the board determines they need to change the bylaw, they will need to address the visual impact of towers on the neighborhood, which is a major negative factor, and look at the fall zone. He stated if they do decide to make changes, it would be important to know from an expert what affect the changes would have and if they would end up being in violation of the bylaws.

Mr. Pember noted the zoning is like that of the adult stores in that they cannot be prohibited.

Mr. Blasko stated he would like to see the board look at feasible areas to allow WCFs without impacting neighborhoods.

Ms. Gillespie stated she would like the technical expert hired to address locating cables inside monopoles. She stated she likes the look of the flag pole tower at 300 West Main Street. She suggested the WCF at the Police Station may be unique in that the police antennas are on it.

Ms. Joubert reminded the board they could have told US Wireless that the antennas had to be interior-mounted.

Mr. Blasko said US Wireless will just say they cannot do it. He stated the problem with the proposed 55 Bearfoot Road WCF is that the board had to accept the application, but could not get them to say whether or not they could locate somewhere else.

Mr. Leif stated the board has to get as educated as they can. If this technology expands and the FCC requires towns to let them have as many carriers as they need, the board is going to have to determine what the necessities are - for example, if they can co-locate and how the board will determine if they can or not. Mr. Leif stated he voted to allow the tower to be taller in order to have more co-locators, so if they companies locate on that tower, they will not be asking to build another tower somewhere else in town. The board will be trading aesthetics so the number of future towers can be reduced.

Mr. Blasko stated his other problem with T-Mobile is that they already had coverage in the area, but now want coverage inside houses. The Town will be flooded with towers.

Mr. Lewis stated this is progress and people will get upset if they do not have phone service in their homes. It's a balancing act for the board.

Mr. Leif stated the board will have to do some research and will discuss what their options are at the June meeting. He noted the technical person will not be coming to that meeting.

Ms. Joubert noted the Wind Committee will be coming to the next meeting to discuss a Wind bylaw.

### **Old/New Business**

**Next Meetings:** The next Planning Board meetings will be held on June 7<sup>th</sup>, July 19<sup>th</sup> and August 16<sup>th</sup>. The Wind Bylaw will be discussed at the June 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**ZBA Applications:** Ms. Joubert briefly reviewed the applications that will be heard at May 24<sup>th</sup> ZBA meeting.

**Washburn Street Landscaping Business:** Ms. Gillespie expressed concern about a landscaping business on a residential lot on Washburn Street. She asked Ms. Joubert to whom she could complain about it and if the Building Inspector has a time-frame in which to respond to a complaint of this nature.

Ms. Joubert stated the Building Inspector is very familiar with the site, and she suggested all questions regarding the situation should be directed to him.

**Design Review Committee:** Ms. Gillespie stated she would like the board to talk about how to strengthen the authority of the Design Review Committee at some point in the future. She stated she

and Tony Abu talked about coming up with a fee that all applicants would have to pay and the Town would use to hire someone to inspect those projects from an architectural viewpoint.

Ms. Joubert stated they can look at strengthening the committee, and could create an historic district. As far as hiring someone, that would be a building department issue. She noted very few applicants complete their applications with ZBA correctly. The problem is that once they file, the hearing has to be held within a certain time frame. The application for 6 Church Street was filed, but was held off because the application was incomplete.

Mr. Lewis noted most commercial projects are required to have an architect. The committee could have the architect sign off on it. Smaller projects could be a different matter.

Ms. Joubert stated the building inspector does not have any certification from the architect of the 79 Main Street. The architect is in Florida for the month, at his other business location.

Mr. Pember stated applicants will take advantage of the town until the board show some backbone.

Ms. Joubert stated this is the first applicant that has done something like this in all the years she has worked for the town. United Bank thought they could come in with their own site plan without having an architect. She noted the applicant has to work some issues out with the Fire Chief.

**Mr. Lewis' last meeting:** Mr. Leif noted it was Mr. Lewis' last meeting as a board member, and thanked him for his time and input during his term on the Planning Board. Mr. Lewis stated he got a lot out of his time on the board. He stated it was a good experience to be on the other side of the table and hoped he was able to give some good advice to the board and applicants. He said he would like to help the Design Review Committee with their process and guidelines.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Grampietro  
Board Secretary