

**Sturbridge Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 23, 2024
Town Hall**

Present:

Charlie Blanchard
Wally Hersee
David Bourbeau
Brad Goodwin (Virtual)
Taylor Stedman
Jean Bubon, Town Planner
Jeneé Lacy, Administrative Assistant



Absent:

Dane LaBonte
Sue Waters

Also Present:

David Mazson, Isotrope Wireless (Virtual)
Francis D. Parisi, Esq., Parisi Law Associates, P.C.

C. Blanchard called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and read the agenda.

ANR – If Any

No ANRs filed.

Approval of Minutes

January 9, 2024

Motion: To approve the minutes of January 9, 2024 as written.

By: D. Bourbeau

2nd: T. Stedman

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

Town Planner Report

J. Bubon discussed the following:

- Update on the Open Space/Master Plan Survey, currently have 365 response and will be keeping the survey open until February 1st.
- February 13th meeting:
 - Continuation of Public Hearing – 505 Main Street
 - Continuation of Public Hearing – 200 Haynes Street

Continuation of Public Hearing – Special Permit & Site Plan – Vertex Towers, LLC – 92 Stallion Hill Road

J. Bubon gave a short update on the project. F. Parisi gave an update, stating that the project had been approved by the ZBA, requested information had been provided to the Fire Department regarding fire safety and requested information had been provided to the Conservation Commission. D. Maxson discussed his peer review report including the following:

- Cellular coverage is lacking in the area;
- Height of the tower & requested Waiver;
- Tree canopy coverage;
- Options for camouflage if needed;
- Radio frequency analysis – compliant with FCC standards;
- Noise – no issue due to remoteness of location. Also condition added for a sound dampener containment unit to be installed;
- NEPA process;
- The Federal telecommunication Act;
- Tenant for applicant is Verizon;
- FCC/FAA – Safe for aircraft without a light;

J. Bubon recommended not closing the public hearing as per recommendation of Town Counsel. She asked the Board where they stood on the possible need for camouflage. The Board agreed that they did not see a need for additional camouflage.

J. Bubon asked the Board to vote on the requested Average Tree Canopy Waiver.

Motion: To grant the Waiver request to allow the facility to be constructed at a height of 15' above the average tree canopy.

By: W. Hersee

2nd: D. Bourbeau

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

J. Bubon recommended the Board vote to grant the Special Permit and Site Plan with condition outlined in her report.

Motion: To grant the Special Permit and Site Plan Approval as requested for the construction of a wireless communications facility at 92 Stallion Hill Road as presented with the conditions.

By: W. Hersee

2nd: D. Bourbeau

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

Motion: To close the Public Hearing for 92 Stallion Hill Road.

By: W. Hersee

2nd: D. Bourbeau

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *Report from David Maxson, WCP, Isotope, LLC entitled "Report on Vertex Application for Special Permit and Site Plan Review – 92 Stallion Hill Road Sturbridge". Dated January 16, 2024;*
- *A document from Francis D. Parisi, Esq., Parisi Law Associates, P.C. dated January 17, 2024 entitled "Supplement No. 2 to Application for Special Permit, Site Plan Review and Waiver (Planning Board) for Wireless Communication Facility." The Supplement contained the following items:*
 - *Letter to the Planning Board regarding Fire Safety;*
 - *Revised Wetlands Review Report;*
 - *Radio Frequency Emissions Report;*
 - *Revised Site Plan with erosion controls. Site Plan entitled "Verex Towers Sturbridge, MA VT-MA-3155D – 92 Stallion Hill Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566." Plan prepared by Dewberry Engineers Inc. – 99 Summer Street Suite 700 – Boston, MA 02110. Plan date 7/26/23 revised through 1/17/2024*
- *Town Planner Report.*

Old/New Business

- W. Hersee asked about the status of the small manufacturing facility across from the Stop & Shop plaza that was approved by Planning Board.
 - J. Bubon stated that it was approved by the Planning Board and Conservation Commission and that the applicant was probably trying to get a tenant to fill the space.
- T. Stedman stated that he was at the Pilot truck stop recently and it looks like the issue with the trucks parking past the no parking signs has cleared up.
- D. Bourbeau asked if the Verizon antenna, that was going to be added to a utility pole across from Teddy G's, was working yet.
 - J. Bubon stated that she wasn't sure, the project was completed and approved but she can reach out to the applicant and find out.

Update on Recently Adopted Historic Preservation Plan

J. Bubon gave a background on the Historic Preservation Plan project.

C. Blanchard and W. Hersee, asking as representatives of the Historical Commission, presented to the Planning Board.

C. Blanchard discussed issues/challenges, goals/policies and recommendations reviewed in the plan. J. Bubon stated that one of the recommendations was to update the ZBA application with the year the structure was built to catch any demos that would trigger demolition delay.

W. Hersee discussed the Historic Inventory/Survey and stated that it was always being updated with locations and buildings. D. Bourbeau asked how the inventory was researched. W. Hersee stated that it was researched through archeological surveying and searching through historical records. C. Blanchard stated that it used to be done locally in the 1960s but in recent years it's been outsourced to independent firms. D. Bourbeau asked

what the criteria was for being added to the inventory. W. Hersee discussed what is considered historic, in Sturbridge it's 100 years, or if a property has specific unique architectural it could be considered even if under 100 years old. D. Bourbeau asked if the inventory information could be used for permit applications. J. Bubon stated that the Planning Department does currently refer to the Historic Inventory while processing permits and stated that all of the information is on the Historic website and the website will be updated this year as well.

J. Bubon discussed the demo delay process and stated that if a house is 100 years or older it can't be torn down without going to the Historical Commission. If the Historical Commission deems it historically significant it will have to go through a 12 month demo delay. The Board discussed historic architectural restrictions that other towns have implemented.

T. Stedman asked if there were any incentives to registering with the Historic Register. C. Blanchard discussed some grants that are offered. J. Bubon discussed rehab tax credits and a formerly offered plaque program.

W. Hersee discussed his Historic Facebook group. J. Bubon stated that the Planning Department will try to get some of W. Hersee's stories from his Facebook page on to the Town website.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn meeting.

By: W. Hersee

2nd: D. Bourbeau

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM

Minutes prepared by: Jeneé Lacy