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VILLAGE OF PLAINFIELD
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING
RECORD OF MINUTES

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DATE: August 17, 2010

Vice-Chairman Renzi called the meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals to order at 7:10 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners O'Rourke, Sanders, Kiefer, Heinen Vice-Chairman Renzi; Fire District

Absent: Chairman Sobkoviak, and School, Park and Library Districts

Also Present: Jonathan Proulx, Planner, Merrilee Trotz, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes dated July 6, 2010 were approved as presented.

DEVELOPMENT REPORT: There was no development report.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

CASE NO: 1519-071410.V WESCOM Plainfield Tower

Planner Proulx stated this was a public hearing and the public notices have been posted and published in accordance with state statute and local ordinance and was carried forward from the previous meeting at which there was no quorum. This is a request for a variance to allow an accessory structure with a height of approximately 190 feet in lieu of the 60 feet that would be called for by the zoning code. The structure is a communications tower for Wescom (our emergency 9-1-1 dispatch.) The tower would be located at the Plainfield Police Station, 14300 S. Coil Plus Drive at the rear of the building. The adjacent properties are industrial uses to the North and East and some vacant property to the west zoned B-3 (Highway Business District) and residential to the south.

Mr. Proulx summarized the findings based on the evidence as follows:

- a) *The variance is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this Zoning Ordinance;*

Staff believes that the proposed construction of a new emergency tower for WESCOM is in harmony with the existing use of the subject site and does not anticipate any impact on the surrounding uses. Staff believes the tower would be well separated and buffered from the Patriot Square Development.

- b) *The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances and thus strict enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance would result in practical difficulties or impose exceptional hardships due to the special*

and unusual conditions that are not generally found on other properties in the same zoning district; and

Staff finds that without this variance the property owner would not be able construct a tower which would provide the needs for emergency communication that WESCOM requires for the area.

c) The property cannot yield a reasonable use if permitted only under the conditions allowed by the Zoning Ordinance; and

Staff finds the property could yield a reasonable use as currently permitted even if no communication tower was approved. However, Staff notes that the height restriction would prevent WESCOM from constructing this communications tower.

d) The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality and will not be a substantial detriment to adjacent property.

Staff notes that the tower would be visible from all the adjacent properties but the visible impact would not be a substantial detriment. There is no evidence to suggest that property values would be negatively impacted.

Mr. Proulx stated that Staff would recommend the motion included in the staff report.

Vice Chairman sworn in the applicant Steve Rauter, executive director of WESCOM. Mr. Rauter stated they are a unit of local government comprised of 19 agencies. WESCOM dispatches for seven police departments and twelve fire departments. Plainfield is their largest police and fire users. Other affiliates include PEMA; Lockport ESDA and Wilmington ESDA. They are one of eight 9-1-1 centers in the county. Mr. Rauter stated there will be a 20 X 12 standardized communication shelter under the 190 foot tower. Mr. Rauter stated there will be a fence with slats so you cannot see the base of the tower. The fence will not interfere with the Fire Department connection and the vendor for both fence and tower have been contracted to ground, bond and properly outfit the tower. WESCOM was formerly stationed at the old police station and moved to the new police station in April 2007. The 100 foot tower at the old police station will be taken down. He presented a picture of a similar tower. The tower will be a three legged tower, with a pier style footing. The village engineer has looked at this. This tower will greatly help the Police communication side of it just for Plainfield. We need the height to cover the neighboring towns.

Commissioner O'Rourke asked the reason for the 190 foot height and asked how this height would compare to the ComEd towers.

Mr. Rauter indicated they have four main sites, one in Lockport, Minooka, Wilmington and this one. WESCOM leases space from a 400 foot tower. Mr. Rauter further indicated if you exceed 200 feet then you have to go through FAA regulations; paint it red and white and put a light on it. This is the reason for the 190 feet tower which gives the maximum amount of coverage and least amount of impact to the neighborhood. This tower will not be painted red and white and there will not be a light on it. They are subject to FAA and FCC rulings. Mr. Rauter thought they were very close; the tower will either be on par or slightly lower than the ComEd.

Commissioner Heinen stated a similar project came before us for the location at the old police station, so essentially we are taking the same model and moving it to the new Police Station and the old towers will be taken down.

Mr. Proulx said yes it is the same proposal but a different location with different adjacent uses.

Mr. Rauter said their one tower will be taken down.

Commissioner Kiefer asked if there would be guide wires.

Mr. Rauter said this is a self supporting tower and no guide wires are required.

Commissioner O'Rourke asked if there were plans to lease space to cellular companies.

Mr. Rauter said they allowed space under the tower and within the fenced area to put in two additional structures/shelters if either the Village or WESCOM are approached to take on a cell carrier. At this time we do not intend to lease space. WESCOM is working out an intergovernmental agreement so PEMA and the Police Department can put their antennas on it. If any changes are made to that WESCOM will come back and re-negotiate.

Commissioner Sanders asked if those additions would be on the upper 50 feet where it narrows and also asked about the massing.

Mr. Rauter said each cell provider needs to do their own engineering; it could be at any height on the tower depending on their needs. Mr. Rauter said this tower is designed for three carriers, meaning it could take up to three sets of panels.

Commissioner Kiefer asked if we had been contacted by the residents of the adjacent property.

Mr. Rauter indicated that the certified letters were sent out as required and his office has not been contacted by the residents.

Planning did not receive any calls regarding this project.

Commissioner Heinen likes this proposed location better and if they take down the tower at the old police station will make that area better also.

Vice Chairman asked for public comments.

No one approached the microphone.

Vice Chairman Renzi thanked Michael Garrigan for his report as it cleared up a lot of questions from the last proposal.

Commissioner O'Rourke said his only concern was if the variance was in harmony with the general intent of the Zoning Ordinance; there will not be any lights on the tower and the residents were notified. Most people expect to see a tower near the police station.

Commissioner Sanders suggested the words designed to has been omitted under the paragraph entitled Tower Design the last sentence should read “However, the tower is designed to survive almost any weather event in the Midwest.”

Vice Chairman Renzi said he shared all the concerns raised earlier with respect to the four findings and felt this is a better place for the tower.

Commissioner Sanders made a motion that the Zoning Board of Appeals recommends approval of the proposed height variance subject to the following stipulations:

- 1. Compliance with the requirements of the Village Engineer.**
- 2. Compliance with the requirements of the Plainfield Fire Protection District.**

Commissioner Kiefer seconded the amended motion.

Vote by Roll Call:

**Commissioner Heinen, yes; Commissioner O’Rourke, yes; Commissioner Kiefer, yes;
Commissioner Sanders, yes; Vice Chairman Renzi, yes. 5 yes, 0 no. 1 absent. Motion carried.**

Motion carried 5– 0.

DISCUSSION - None

Adjourned 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Merrilee Trotz, Recording Secretary