

CITY OF OLNEY
PLAN COMMISSION
AUGUST 1, 2016

AGENDA #1 “CALL TO ORDER” The meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Olney City Hall, 300 S. Whittle Avenue, Olney, Illinois, with Steve Eichhorst presiding.

AGENDA #2 “ROLL CALL” The following Plan Commission members were present: Barb Roberts, David Abell, Greg Eyer, Vicki Lobacz, Scott Jones, Belinda Henton, and Steve Eichhorst. Wesley Tolliver and Pat Everette were absent. Also present were Code Enforcement Officer Mike Mitchell, City Manager Allen Barker, Mayor Ray Vaughn, and City Clerk Kelsie Sterchi.

AGENDA #3 “APPROVE MINUTES OF THE PLAN COMMISSION MEETING ON APRIL 4, 2016” Mrs. Henton moved to approve the minutes of the Plan Commission meeting on April 4, 2016, seconded by Mr. Abell. Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Abell, Mr. Eyer, Mrs. Lobacz, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Henton, and Mr. Eichhorst voted yes. There were no opposing votes. The motion carried.

AGENDA #4 “SWEARING IN” Mr. Eichhorst asked that anyone wishing to testify on behalf of the item being discussed to stand and be sworn in. City Clerk Sterchi asked those standing to raise their right hand and “swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help me God.” Debra Hobbs, Mark Summers, Tony Adams, Holly Breeden, Mayor Vaughn, and Jack Voltz were sworn in.

AGENDA #5 “FINAL PLAT: GERTRUDE SUBDIVISION” Debra Hobbs came before the Plan Commission to request approval for the final plat of Gertrude Subdivision off of Cypress Road. Shawn Taylor, of Charleston Engineering, had drawn up the proposed final plat for the Plan Commission’s review.

Mrs. Henton and Mrs. Roberts were curious if everything on the proposed plat looked to be in order. Mr. Mitchell replied that the plat was efficient.

Mrs. Henton moved to recommend approval of the final plat of Gertrude Subdivision, seconded by Mrs. Lobacz. Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Abell, Mr. Eyer, Mrs. Lobacz, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Henton, and Mr. Eichhorst voted yes. There were no opposing votes. The motion carried.

The recommendation would be presented to the City Council for final approval on Monday, August 8, 2016, at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA #6 “SPECIAL USE PERMIT: TAYLOR DRIVE WATER TANK” Mr. Voltz distributed to the Commission a hard copy version of a slideshow, and extra copies of the proposed site plans.

Mr. Voltz introduced himself as a representative on behalf Verizon Wireless. He was present to request a Special Use Permit to allow a Verizon telecommunications site on and near the Taylor Drive water tank. The proposed install would include a six panel antenna, a new handrail, painters ring, and 24 foot footprint on the south side of the tank that would include a seven foot fence with gate lock access. There would also be an 11.6 foot by 12 foot equipment platform with a 4 foot by 10 foot pad for a diesel generator.

Mr. Voltz continued that the site would help to fill in coverage gaps in Olney and the East Fork Lake area. The site would allow for less dropped calls, better internet, a better capacity for data use, and improved 9-1-1 availability.

Mrs. Roberts asked if landscaping could be added to the plans to better camouflage the fenced area and equipment. Mr. Voltz felt that landscaping could be included if that were a point of contention for approval of the Special Use Permit. It would take about two weeks to update the drawings.

Mrs. Roberts then asked what type of noise would be produced by the generator. Mr. Voltz indicated that the internal diesel generator is designed to kick on in the case of a power outage. He was unsure on the exact decibel level. Mr. Voltz added that a noise reduction muffler would be included.

Mr. Abell asked what the timeline would be for installation if approved. Mr. Voltz replied that if approved by Council, he could apply for a building permit the next day. Construction is hoped to begin this Fall, and would hope to be on air by the end of 2016.

Mrs. Roberts was curious on the City’s benefit of allowing the install. Mr. Voltz indicated that a proposed lease agreement was being drafted that would bring \$15,000.00 of income to the City each year, in addition to a better coverage area.

Mrs. Roberts then questioned if Verizon would assist with future maintenance of the water tower. Mr. Voltz replied that Verizon would not cover maintenance of the entire tank, but would certainly take responsibility over their own equipment. An install usually lasted for 15 to 20 years.

Mr. Eyer asked if any of Verizon’s water tank installs had been struck by lightning, and wondered how the railing would be attached. To Mr. Voltz’s knowledge, none of his installs had ever been struck by lightning although each install includes a lightning rod. The railing would be welded.

Mrs. Roberts then asked if other cellular companies would be able to use the antennas or equipment. Mr. Voltz answered that the install would be exclusive to Verizon.

Mr. Eyer asked how often the equipment would be inspected. Mr. Voltz answered that once or twice per month, the ground equipment would be inspected. The process should take about 20 minutes. It would be rare that any individual would need to go to the top of the tank.

From the audience, Tony Adams, 1304 Taylor Drive, wished to speak. To Mr. Adams' recollection, the four lots that had been given to the City in that subdivision from Bill Taylor were supposed to be for the purpose of a water tower and a playground. The playground never materialized.

Mr. Adams also had concern with welding the railing onto the tank. He felt that the welding would damage the inside of the tank and compromise sanitation.

Mr. Adams was also concerned that if granted a Special Use Permit, that Verizon could install less desirable equipment at any time in the future. Mr. Voltz replied that any changes to the detail in the lease would need to be amended. In that case, it would again need to go before the Plan Commission and City Council for approval.

Mr. Adams was also concerned with his neighborhood receiving increased amounts of radiation. He indicated that certain studies showed that increased radiation contributed to health problems.

Mr. Adams had also heard that the generator would run once per month for a minimum of three hours, and that it would run one time per year at seven hours. He was concerned with the sound the generator could produce. Mr. Voltz felt that the generator was approximately a 60 kilowatt generator.

Mr. Adams felt that if installed, the road back to the water tank should be improved at Verizon's cost.

Mr. Adams continued to describe his displeasure with being able to see the fencing and barbed wire from his home. He was not confident that landscaping would help very much, especially if the trees were seasonal. He added that the City would then have to maintain the landscaping.

Mr. Adams then expressed concern by wondering if his cell phone service and television service would be compromised by the frequencies. Mr. Voltz strongly felt that Mr. Adams' cell phone service would be better, and that his television service would not be affected.

Mark Storm, 1404 Jason Lane, then wished to speak. Mr. Storm's largest concern was with the esthetic changes to the neighborhood. When he bought his home, he assumed there

would always be an esthetically pleasing view around his home.

Mr. Adams requested a copy of the material Mr. Voltz had distributed at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Voltz complied.

Mrs. Roberts felt that if landscaping was added at the base of the water tower, it would look better than even at its current state. Mr. Eichhorst pointed out that landscaping decisions should be made by the City and not the Plan Commission.

Mr. Storm asked Mr. Voltz if there were any other feasible locations for the install in the area. Mr. Voltz explained that the most ideal way to better service the area is to install on a current structure instead of building something more unsightly from the ground up. No other existing structure sights were appropriate for the area.

Mr. Eyer wondered if a tower would be constructed elsewhere if the City denied the Special Use Permit for this existing structure. Mr. Voltz indicated that if the permit was denied, it would be at least two years before an appropriate site could be determined for a new build.

From the audience, Holly Breeden echoed her concerns with health effects. She had also heard that service would not be improved by all near the tower, and that benefits would only be felt from a certain range away from the tower.

Mrs. Breeden was also concerned with how the install would affect her property value. Mr. Adams replied that such an install would not be used to appraise the property, but the curb appeal may suffer. Mr. Voltz added that the infrastructure proposed to be added would look as if it had always been there.

Revisiting Mrs. Breeden's concerns with health, Mr. Voltz told that a person being on the tank, directly next to the antennas for extended periods of time would not be good for health. With the antennas being 140 feet high and radio waves propagating outward, there would be no danger to residents.

Brian O'Neill then wished to speak. Mr. O'Neill had entered the meeting after Agenda #4, so Mr. O'Neill was sworn in.

Mr. O'Neill told the audience that Verizon was looking to improve service and the local economy. He was unsure why certain members of the audience were in opposition. He understood the esthetic concern, but pointed out that problem could be fixed with landscaping. Mr. O'Neill also pointed out that daily use of cell phones and other devices were more damaging to their health than the tall antenna would be.

As an aside, Mrs. Roberts commented that the Arborvitae would be a very appropriate addition for any proposed landscaping as it was esthetically pleasing and was green year round.

Mr. Adams again voiced concern over potential interference with his cell phone service, specifically because his mother-in-law's emergency call button went directly to he and his wife's phones. Mr. Voltz again stated that there would be no way that the install would harm his cell phone service.

Mr. Adams wanted the Council to demand a guarantee of improved coverage by Verizon.

Mrs. Roberts moved to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit under the condition that significant landscaping be added to cover the fencing, that Verizon pay for the purchase of the greenery, planting and accessories, that Verizon would maintain the landscaping, and be as esthetically pleasing to the neighbors as possible, seconded by Mr. Abell. Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Abell, Mr. Eyer, Mrs. Lobacz, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Henton, and Mr. Eichhorst voted yes. There were no opposing votes. The motion carried.

Updated visual renderings of proposed landscaping would be created by Verizon. The Plan Commission's recommendation will be heard at the City Council meeting on August 22, 2016, to allow enough time for the renderings to be created.

AGENDA #7 "ADJOURN" Mrs. Roberts moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Lobacz. Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Abell, Mr. Eyer, Mrs. Lobacz, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Henton, and Mr. Eichhorst voted yes. There were no opposing votes. The motion carried. The Plan Commission meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Kelsie J. Sterchi
City Clerk