

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
NOVEMBER 15, 2007
MINUTES**

Chairman Barringer called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM in the Town Hall

Members present: Barringer, Capes, Eliot, Giger, Hess, and Wilson

Member absent: Perkins

PUBLIC HEARING – VERIZON WIRELESS SPECIAL PERMIT

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Sections 9 and 11, the Groton Planning Board held a public hearing on November 15, 2007 to consider the application submitted by Verizon Wireless, Cellco Partnership-BAMMC, Ltd., for a special permit to utilize the provisions of Groton Zoning By-law Section 218-25.1 Personal Wireless Services Facility to add a single two-foot diameter microwave antenna to the existing Personal Wireless Services Facility at Gibbet Hill. The tower is located on land owned by Cell Tower Lease Acquisition, LLC; Unison Site Management, LLC; 149 Lowell Road, Assessors Map 224, Parcel 49, on the northerly side of Lowell Road.

Chairman Barringer called the public hearing to order. Member Hess read the legal notice posted with the Town Clerk on October 30, 2007, and published in the November 2 and 9, 2007 issues of *The Groton Herald*. Attorney James Valeriani represented the applicant at the public hearing.

Member Giger read his disclosure statement regarding his employment by Alcatel-Lucent. The disclosure statement is on file with the Town Clerk and in the Planning Board office.

Attorney Valeriani presented the plan to install a two-foot diameter microwave antenna at the 141 above ground level (AGL) elevation on the existing telecommunications tower at Gibbet Hill. Verizon Wireless recently activated a site off Route 119 in Littleton near the Groton-Littleton town line. The equipment on the Gibbet Hill tower communicates with the South Acton site. The additional two-foot microwave antenna will supplement the coverage for greater reliability. Attorney Valeriani requested that the Board waive Site Plan Review because there will be no changes to the ground equipment associated with the installation.

Member Giger asked if Verizon Wireless did its due diligence to be sure the equipment would not interfere with the Town's emergency radio frequency equipment. Attorney Valeriani said all the carriers have dedicated licensed frequencies so there would be no interference.

Member Wilson asked about the visual appearance of the new equipment. Attorney Valeriani said a fact sheet and illustration were included in the special permit application. The existing microwave antenna is 4 ft in diameter, and the proposed antenna is 2 ft. Member Eliot said the Board would require that the new antenna be painted the same color as the existing tower and other equipment on the tower.

Chairman Barringer read the comments from the Board of Health and the Water Department.

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Chairman Barringer asked for an estimate of the number of microwave antennae needed to connect the towers in South Acton and Billerica. Attorney Valeriani said the Gibbet Hill tower is a monopole which has less capacity than a lattice-type tower based upon structural engineering requirements. The Gibbet Hill tower does not have the capacity to become a “mini-hub” for microwave antennae.

Reporter Connie Sartini asked if the tower generates revenue for the town. Attorney Valeriani said it is a taxable structure.

The Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

MINUTES

The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 20, 2007 and September 27, 2007.

ANR PLANS

The Board considered the Approval Not Required plan submitted by John Amaral to create a 3054 SF parcel off Flavell Road. The parcel will be conveyed to the abutter because the existing driveway is located on the lot line. There will be no change to the frontage of either lot.

The motion was made by Eliot to endorse as Approval Not Required the plan entitled, “Plan of Land in Groton, Mass. Prepared for John B. Amaral and Diane M. Keating,” prepared by David E. Ross Associates, dated November 2007. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

STATION AVENUE COMMITTEES

The Board discussed the reconfiguration of the Station Avenue Redevelopment Committee and the need for additional sub-committees or working groups. The Board decided that it would like to have the support of the sub-committees to work on the tasks outlined in the application for funding under Chapter 43D. The Board will review the Committee structure with the Station Avenue Redevelopment Committee at its joint meeting on Tuesday, November 20, 2007.

MINUTES

The Board voted to approve the minutes of October 4, 2007; October 18, 2007; and November 1, 2007.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Town Planner