



TOWN OF SAUGERTIES
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
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November 2, 2020
WebEx Meeting Minutes

Present: Jeanne Goldberg, Henry Rua, Patti Kelly, Joe Mayone, Tim Scott & Holly Strutt, Alternate
Also Present: George Redder: ZBA Attorney, Dan Shuster: Town Planner, Dennis Doyle: Ulster County Planning Department, Ed Wright, Eric Kenna, Jim Dickens, Robert Pietkowicz, Steve Peterson; CSN Consultants, Kevin Freeman: Zoning Board Secretary

- Jeanne called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.
- Jeanne took roll call of ZBA members and, with full attendance, announced a quorum was reached.

New Business:

Jeanne announced the opening of the session explaining it was a new presentation by Mr. Doyle concerning a 180' proposed public safety radio tower to potentially be constructed on the property located at 35 Quarry Road in Saugerties. The property is owned by Ulster County and the county was seeking, under Section 245-38, public projects and improvements, a decision from the ZBA under the Monroe balance of public interest test for exemption.

She emphasized that this presentation was NOT a public hearing and then turned over the meeting to Mr Doyle.

Mr Doyle presented the approval process.

Steve Peterson discussed the project need, explaining the current system is analog, not simulcast which broadcasts to multiple towers at the same time. He noted there are areas in Saugerties with issues in coverage. The slides showed the 7 current sites in the county. They are proposing new towers in both Saugerties and Shandaken. The propagation maps shows improvement in the Saugerties/Upper Ulster area.

Mr. Doyle continued, explaining the current site is a former tire dump. He showed a slide indicating the county had run studies: SEQRA Short EAF, Viewshed analysis, Photo simulations and a historic and archeological report. The site design had a plan, geotechnical analysis and a study of the structural tower needs. For the viewshed analysis slides indicated aerial views. The site sits in a bowl except for in the south. He said the tower would be obscured during leaf-on periods.

Jeanne had a question, having driven to the site saying she could not find the tower site. She asked if it were possible not mark the site of the tower. Jeanne asked if flags could be put out. Steve said

there was a stake presently. Patti was also on location over a week ago but indicated she wanted to know exactly where the tower would go. Mr. Doyle said it was not open to the public, but it is not open to the public. He said ZBA members could be escorted to the site if desired. Jeanne asked if Quarry Road was public. Mr. Doyle said he was not of the opinion that it was not public. Jeanne said she believed it to be a public road, running up to the gun club. Mr. Doyle said the road was not maintained for some time. Jeanne believed the town maintained up to the gun club. She asked if the site could be flagged so the site would be visible from the road.

Patti said it was problematic that the balloon test was run during leaf-on. She asked if the tower would be visible from the residences on Church Road.

Mr. Doyle showed the results of a drone flight from multiple angles at the height of the proposed tower. Patti was disappointed the tests were run during leaf-on.

The viewshed analysis using DEC guidelines was shown and photo simulations. Eric Kenna explained the balloon test practices. He showed simulations showing the tower in situ. When he showed a representation of the site view from a church it was incorrectly identified as Quarryville Methodist. Jeanne corrected him as being Kaatsbaan Reformed Church.. Mr. Doyle indicated that he would change the reference. Mr. Kenna explained SEQRA and NEPA review finding no evidence of archeological and historic impact.

Jim Dickens discussed the site design and layout, showing location for the tower, shelter, generator and propane fuel tank.

Mr. Doyle displayed a slide covering the 9 points to the Balance of Public Interest Test. He followed with a project schedule looking at a possible completion by end of 2021.

Jeanne asked that Mr. Doyle check a 2005 survey of Saugerties historic locations. Dan Shuster spoke to the coordinated review but the ZBA was not referenced as an involved agency. The board should be on record as an involved agency and the county should apprise them as such. Jeanne said the ZBA is concerned with historic locations from the 2005 survey, the ZBA was not aware of the July assessment or the autumn aerial assessments. She asked that we have a reference without leaves on the trees.

Mr. Doyle spoke to the technology having advanced beyond balloon flights. He offered to fly the drones when the leaves were off. He asked when the ZBA would like the tests run by drone. Dan asked if they could provide pictures from the exact same locations. Jeanne asked the test be run in a couple weeks when leaves were off. Mr. Kenna said it would not be possible to simulate the balloon test from existing pictures where the balloon/tower site would be obscured.

Patti asked if owner ship would be public, private or county owned. Mr. Doyle said it would be county owned. Patti asked about maintenance for the tower. Patti asked about the fall zone for the tower concerning the solar facility. Mr. Doyle said loading for the tower were being examined for other first responders use. No plans to lease facility to cell providers. Patti asked about compatibility between the old analog and new digital services. It was answered that there would be no compatibility issues in the future. When Patti looked at the coverage map, she noted poor

coverage in Mt Marion and asked if the new tower could be used to improve that. She was told the other towers could fill in the gaps. She asked about the Mt Airy tower and was told it was insufficient to hold all the equipment required.

Joe asked if cell transmitters would be used on the tower. Mr Doyle said there would be no plans for cell equipment and, if there was proposed cell equipment, they would need to come to the board. Joe asked if alternate sites were examined and was told yes.

Jeanne asked about alternative sites, if they were county owned. She was told they have towers on sites not county owned. She asked if alternate sites within Saugerties were considered even if not county owned. They looked at Shear Road, but it is residential and not owned by the county. It is the same zoning as the proposed site but with more residences. She said the ZBA is very cognizant in the fact that emergency services need better communication.

There were no further questions. Mr. Doyle suggested the drone be used for a sense of what can be seen before deciding to fly balloons or not. Jeanne and Patti said it was a good compromise. Jeanne suggested waiting a week or two when the leaves were off. Patti responded to Joe that any balloon test would be given a public notice. Mr. Peterson said a drone, unlike a balloon, would not be visible from distant residences. Mr. Kenna mentioned that balloons are weather dependent.

Dan asked about the next steps. Jeanne thanked Mr. Doyle for presenting the Balancing Act slide. Mr. Doyle said they were preparing responses to RF from the public hearing.

Motion by Patti to have a public hearing dependent on drone footage to be submitted by 11/25/20. Second by Joe. Passed unanimously.

Mr. Doyle was instructed on the 500' letters to go out.

Tim motioned to accept the 10/5/20 minutes. Henry second. Passed unanimously

Joe motioned to adjourn, Henry second. Passed unanimously.

Meeting closed at 8:40 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Kevin Freeman
ZBA Secretary