

ISABELLA COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

July 9, 2020

An Electronic Meeting of the Isabella County Planning Commission was held on July 9, 2020 via Zoom on the above date.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim O'Neil, Phillip Vogel, Nathan Rogers, Ann Silker, Kelly Bean, Jerry Neyer, Bob Campbell, Jim Horton

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT: Timothy Nieporte, Community Development Director
Ray Johnson, Planner/Zoning Administrator

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bean at 7:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the commission.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Nieporte stated that an amended agenda was sent to the members which added a farmland agreement from Coe Township.

Mr. Bean requested that the amended agenda be approved as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Neyer supported by Mr. Rogers to approve the agenda.

Mr. Bean called for a roll call vote.

Commissioner O'Neil – Yes
Commissioner Silker – Yes
Commissioner Neyer – Yes
Commissioner Vogel – Yes
Commissioner Campbell – Yes
Commissioner Horton – Yes
Commissioner Bean – Yes
Commissioner Rogers – Yes

No: None

Motion carried

PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of the June 11, 2020 electronic meeting were circulated to the commission prior to the meeting for their review.

A motion was made by Mrs. Silker supported by Mr. O'Neil to approve the minutes.

Mr. Bean called for a roll call

Commissioner Silker – Yes
Commissioner Neyer – Yes
Commissioner Campbell – Yes
Commissioner Horton – Yes
Commissioner O'Neil – Yes
Commissioner Vogel – Yes
Commissioner Bean – Yes
Commissioner Rogers – Yes

No: None

Motion carried

LIAISON REPORTS

Zoning Board of Appeals – Mr. Vogel reported that variance for Verizon Wireless was approved at the June meeting.

Parks & Recreation – Mr. O'Neil reported that a meeting was not held last month.

Board of Commissioners – Mr. Horton reported that there was no Board of Commissioners meeting last week because of the 4th of July holiday. Mr. Horton indicated the Board may discuss a land purchase at its upcoming meeting and budget discussions are underway. He also indicated it was reported that there was a COVID-19 outbreak at Littlefield Lake and another employee at the Casino has tested positive.

TOWNSHIP CONCERNS

Mr. Bean announced that Township Concerns are being moved to the Public Comment section of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Nieporte reported that Jackie Curtis, Denver Township Trustee, sent staff an email to let the Commission know that all is good in Denver Township.

Special Use Permit #20-03– Verizon Wireless- Gilmore Township

Mr. Nieporte reviewed the staff report for the Commission indicating that a special use permit

application was received from Verizon Wireless for a Wireless Communication Tower (Cellular Tower). Mr. Nieporte gave a brief background on the location indicating an approval of a special use permit for a cellular tower was made in 2017. He stated that staff was informed by Verizon that the project was put on hold and the special use permit expired before construction began. He indicated, as Mr. Vogel reported, that Verizon had obtained a variance for two setback requirements and that all other requirements and approvals have been met or received (i.e. FAA determination, FCC compliance, the required surety bond, etc).

Mr. Nieporte indicated that if an approval is going to be made, staff recommends conditioning the approval on the applicant providing a copy of the driveway permit, and be approved to operate 24/7.

Amy Rodriguez, from Telecad (acting as a representative for Verizon), reiterated the 2017 approval and indicated this tower, as shown in the submitted propagation maps, would fill a gap in coverage while not interfering with established towers.

Mr. Horton asked if there is any lighting on the tower.

Ms. Rodriguez indicated there would not be any tower lighting because the tower is under 200 ft. and the FAA does not require lighting at the proposed height.

Mr. Horton asked if any of the other towers in the area have lighting.

Ms. Rodriguez indicated she was not aware of any that have lighting.

Mr. Nieporte stated that carriers are building towers at 199 ft because the FAA doesn't require lighting.

Mr. Gaber (attorney for Verizon) asked if the review is for the special use and the site plan.

Mr. Nieporte indicated it was.

Public Hearing opened at 7:07 p.m.

Ray Johnson, Isabella County Planner and Zoning Administrator stated that there was no public in the meeting.

Public Hearing closed at 7:07 p.m.

Mr. Bean called for a motion and a second.

A motion was made by Mr. Neyer supported by Mr. Vogel to approve Special Use Permit 20-03 (SUP#20-03) as submitted by Amy Rodriguez on behalf of Verizon Wireless to establish a Wireless Communication Tower (Cellular Tower) in the General Commercial (C-1) district and shall further be conditioned upon the following:

1. The applicant shall provide a copy of the driveway permit issued by the Isabella County Road Commission.
2. The special use shall be approved to operate 24/7.

Mr Bean called for a roll call vote

Commissioner Rogers – Yes
Commissioner Bean – Yes
Commissioner Horton – Yes
Commissioner Campbell – Yes
Commissioner Vogel – Yes
Commissioner Neyer – Yes
Commissioner Silker – Yes
Commissioner O’Neil – Yes

No: None

Motion Carries

Mr. Garber thanked the Commission for their time.

Farmland Agreement – Aaron and Heather Mills - Coe Township

Mr. Nieporte indicated that Aaron and Heather Mills have submitted an application to the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program (PA116) in Coe Township. Mr. Nieporte indicated the application is for 59.91 acres in Section 30. He stated that the application and maps are attached for review. Mr. Nieporte indicated the property is currently being used for agricultural purposes and is zoned for and planned as Agricultural by Coe Township.

Mr. Nieporte stated application appears to be complete and the applicant is applying for the property to be in PA116 for 90 years. He stated that staff will forward a letter to Coe Township indicating the Commission had reviewed the application.

The board discussed the length time for farmland agreements.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None heard.

STAFF COMMENTS – Staff had no comments.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER’S COMMENTS

Mr. Vogel asked about progress of the turbine project.

Mr. Nieporte indicated many are constructed in Denver Township and construction is underway on the west side of the interstate. He also indicated staff is working on addresses for the turbines.

Mr. Rogers asked if there have been any comments from the public.

Mr. Nieporte indicated staff has received no calls.

Mr. Rogers stated he has heard from some people about how close they are to homes, and stated he is encouraging the public to contact Community Development with concerns. Mr. Rogers also asked if there was any word on expansion of the project.

Mr. Nieporte indicated there are not additions to this project.

Mr. Rogers stated heard Wise Township may be creating a new ordinance for a project.

Mr. Nieporte stated the County doesn't currently have jurisdiction in Wise Township so we would have no involvement in a turbine project in Wise Township.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Horton to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Neyer at 7:23 p.m.

Mr Bean called for a roll call.

Commissioner O'Neil – Yes

Commissioner Silker – Yes (by visual indication because of sound difficulties)

Commissioner Neyer – Yes

Commissioner Vogel – Yes


Commissioner Campbell – Yes

Commissioner Horton – Yes

Commissioner Bean – Yes

Commissioner Rogers – Yes

Motion carried



Ann Silker, Secretary