

WATERTOWN TOWNSHIP

PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

June 20, 2019

---

Members Present: Al Stoutenburg, Bob Danek, William Dixon, Mark Batkie, Dale Schoen, and Sheila Coats, also present Zoning Administrator, Scott Franzel.

Members Absent: Nathan Campbell

Guests: Scott Campbell, Brandon Garrett from T-mobile and Dave from Stulls Construction, Tubbs Builder.

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm by Al Stoutenburg, all present rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Agenda:** Additions or corrections to Agenda, switch Cell tower/antennae replacement (Brandon/Stulls) with Tubbs Brothers addition.

**Minutes:** Any additions or corrections from March 21, 2019 minutes, none stated, motion to approve minutes by William Dixon, second by Bob Danek, minutes approved. Al Stoutenburg welcomed Bob Danek to Planning Commission.

**Business before the Planning Commission:**

- A. Cell tower antennae replacement – Brandon Garrett stated they are switching out 6 antennae, doesn't need approval, just land use permit. PA 143 says we cannot deny for height increase, compound infraction. Gates Rd antennae has a \$500 fee for application which has been paid by T-mobile already on tower T-600 unit upgrade. Motion to approve by William Dixon, second by Dale Schoen, motion approved.
- B. Dave from Stulls Construction presented Tubbs Brother's addition, 60 x 130 body shop addition. No problem with setbacks. Will start construction in July. Motion to approve by William Dixon, second by Bob Danek, motion approved.
- C. Scott Campbell wants to talk about setbacks for solar farms. 125 ft is the current setbacks, Scott thinks that is a problem. 33 ft set back from road from fence all around is all that is needed. Filter strips from USDA does not allow for Solar Farms. Cannot get a farmer to farm 50-60 ft. He understands that would be acceptable around houses, but it would be no different than a cornfield. Would like to move setbacks to more normal setbacks. He has signed up 600 acres, 125 ft around would be wasted land and would not be enough to farm. Solar company has to go by the Township's Ordinances. Bill Dixon asked how it is taxed, if owner is taxed at agriculture rates. Solar company pays Personal Property Tax on the solar system units (similar to how the Samsung transmission lines are taxed). They are 100 ft from homes, rest is a minimum setback. Bill stated they are constantly lobbying to remove PPT from tax rolls. He would sign up for a 35 year contract, 1 year just for the paperwork, 600 acres of Scott's land and 300 acres in another township. Trying to go where least resistance. 100 Megawatt (equivalent of 66 windmills). Al stated we will look at our setbacks and see if we can make some adjustments, believes 125 feet as in ordinance now is too much.

- D. Discussed work time to update Zoning Ordinance booklet. Decided Bill will have his staff scan and prepare for work. Mark Batkie made motion to scan, second by Bob Danek, motion approved.
- E. Planning Commission By Laws, Bill will scan and prepare that for Planning Commission review. Motion to adjourn at 8:45 PM by Dale Schoen, second by Mark Batkie, motion approved.

Respectfully submitted: *Sheila Coats*, **Watertown Township Planning Commission**