

Town of Longmeadow
Planning Board
MINUTES
Of Meeting Held
June 6, 2006

PRESENT: Chairperson Walter Gunn, Bruce Colton,
Roy Johansen and Louis Kornet

A meeting was held at the Longmeadow Fire Department Conference Room, Williams Street, Longmeadow, MA. Walter Gunn opened the meeting at 6:15 p.m. Richard Curran was not present at this evening's meeting.

Eric Twarog from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission came before the Planning Board and made a presentation to help develop a scope of services for the Town of Longmeadow. This is a long-range transitional plan which includes open space and a comprehensive zoning review. Eric went over each item in the proposal. Louis Kornet stated that this grant would enable the Town to look at Smart Growth development in town, i.e., Twin Hills, etc. Roy Johansen stated that he would like to see a focus on code enforcement violations. After discussion, Planning Board members agreed to go after the zoning Smart Growth grant for up to \$20,000.00. June 29th is the deadline for application. A decision from the state should be by September 1st. The Planning Board assistance program is another grant. The Planning Board agreed to the scope of the work for the Smart Growth grant and Planning Board assistance programs, Items A, B, and C to go forward with these proposals by July 1st. Walter Gunn stated that he would give Robin Crosbie a call to find out when the next Select Board meeting will be held. If the grant is approved, work may start by September 1st.

ATTORNEY PETER SHRAIR & ROBERT BORNSTEIN, JEWISH NURSING HOME, 770 CONVERSE STREET, LONGMEADOW – REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

– Attorney Peter Shrair and Robert Bornstein representing Jewish Geriatric Services, Inc., came before the Planning Board. They passed out to Planning Board members a map of the Jewish Nursing Home campus. They are proposing adding 50 additional parking spaces for employees on the grassy area near the service entrance where the road ends and where there is grass; it is on the far west side of the building. This will be a 21% increase of parking on-site. There will be no taking of trees during this project. The purpose of this proposal is the alleviate congestion for visitors.

After review, Walter Gunn made a motion to waive site and design review for plans (PB060606) for the Jewish Nursing Home, 770 Converse Street, for the addition of 50 paved parking spaces on the west and north side of the building on the condition that the applicant adhere to the requirements of Article XII, Sections B & C of the Town of Longmeadow by-laws. Roy Johansen seconded the motion; it was approved 4-0.

PUBLIC HEARING – OMNI-POINT COMMUNICATIONS – Walter Gunn opened up a public hearing at 7:45 p.m. The purpose of the public hearing is to consider the application for Omni-Point Holdings, Inc., T-Mobile Wireless, for the installation of telecommunications equipment and cell tower at 260 Meadow Road, Longmeadow, MA. Attorney Simon Brighenti indicated that Omni-Point Communications is the new corporate name for the cell tower company. He stated that they applied for site and design in October of 2005. He also agreed to an extension of a 65-day public hearing process time period. Walter Gunn explained the procedure for tonight's public hearing. Attorney Brighenti will give a presentation, Planning Board will ask questions, and the public will be invited to speak. The Planning Board will not render a decision tonight. Attorney Brighenti made a presentation to the Planning Board. He stated that he represents Omni-Point Holdings, Inc. for T-Mobile. T-Mobile would like to place a cell tower facility at 260 Meadow Road, Longmeadow. Attorney Brighenti explained the telecommunications act and towns have been working together to put by-laws to mesh the execution of cell towers in the community. A special permit (ZBA is the granting authority) and site and design review (Planning Board is the authority) are required in Longmeadow. The Planning Board will write a decision and then the ZBA must hear testimony in order for Omni-Point Holdings, Inc. to obtain a special permit. Attorney Brighenti was told by the ZBA chairperson that the ZBA was going to open and close their hearing and reschedule the meeting until July 11th. The proposed project is a fenced compound with trees around the area on a 10' wide access on the end of a gravel road. They are more than 300' away from any residences. The tower is 100' in height and is within the set-backs as required within the zoning by-laws. The lot area is 341,000 square feet; lot frontage 85'; front yard setback 871'; side yard setback 50' and 62'; rear yard setback 136'. The tower is of conventional design. The top of the antennae are 103'; they use small BTS units. The BTS cabinets and battery base unit dimensions are 83" H X 52" W X 28" D (a total of 3). The tower could be expanded for future use with another carrier, if desired. The cell tower is proposed in and for the southwest part of town. Coverage would be 90% in Longmeadow as well as close by to neighboring Route 91. Attorney Brighenti showed pictures from various locations near the proposed cell tower during different foliage times (low foliage and full). An additional feature of the tower is a GPS/GSM antennae (6-8" in height, conical in shape) for 911 situations. The feature would allow for location detection and would work with FCC and search and rescue emergencies. There is no lighting on this tower because of height and location.

Walter Gunn asked what the minimum requirements for the project are. Attorney Brighenti stated that they are proposing 70' X 70' square feet to allow for co-location; these are minimum requirements. Mr. Gunn also asked if Omni-Point considered any other sites. Attorney Brighenti indicated, no – they decided on this property because it is on the side of the highway, much conservation area is nearby, and they tried to get as far away as possible from residences. A 6' chain link fence would surround the arbor vitae. Maintenance would do work at the cell tower site 11 times a year; 1 time a month after construction. Mr. Kornet asked how many parking spaces would be at the site. The response was one.

Walter Gunn opened the public hearing to public comments and questions.

1. Denise Brown, 9 Kingsbury Lane – She stated that the proposed property is directly behind her home. She had several questions. How big a road do they propose and how long will it take to construct? Attorney Brighenti stated that it will be a 10' wide gravel road and construction usually lasts no more than one month but it depends on the season. Ms. Brown asked if this is a lease agreement. The response was that it is a long-term agreement. There is a confidentiality agreement. There is small safety lighting on the transmission equipment. Another question was, “would this open up to other development?” Walter Gunn replied, “only other cell tower-type structures.”
2. Mary Breeding, 57 Shady Knoll Drive – Ms. Breeding asked about the requirements under zoning by-laws relative to plantings and fencing. Attorney Brighenti stated that he would be requesting a waiver for rear and access to Route 91 (west and north) from the ZBA.
3. Bud Breeding, 57 Shady Knoll Drive – Mr. Breeding asked for clarification about the “green areas” on the map relative to cell tower transmissions. Attorney Brighenti stated that the “green” areas are areas of “best transmission”; “orange areas” are acceptable or minimal service areas. The sound transmission at the base of the equipment is similar to air conditioning equipment.
4. Kurt Zinnack, 44 Shady Knoll Drive – Mr. Zinnack asked about the height of the tower. The response is that it is 100' from the ground; 30/40' would be visible from Route 91. He also asked if there is any gas generator power. The response was, no – it is battery back-up power.
5. Denise Brown, 9 Kingsbury Lane – Ms. Brown asked if there will be signs posted; i.e., no trespass, high voltage, radiation, owner, etc. The response was yes and there are also specific regulations for signs. Mr. Gunn also indicated that the Town has new sign regulations and Attorney Brighenti indicated that he will research information on the number and size of signs as required by law for cell towers. He also indicated that he will research the power of the radio frequency.

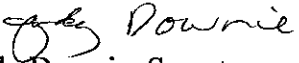
Walter Gunn stated that there is a 90-day time period allowed to render a decision. There being no further comments or questions, the public hearing closed at 9:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on July 6, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. with a location to be determined.

Attorney Brighenti will be invited to come to the next Planning Board meeting. Planning Board members decided to postpone approval of the May 3, 2006 meeting minutes until the next meeting.

There being no further business, Roy Johansen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Walter Gunn seconded the motion; it was approved 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Judy Downie, Secretary
Longmeadow Planning Board