

Gallatin Planning Board
667 County Route 7 Gallatin NY
Meeting Minutes

ACCEPTED

July 23, 2012

Attending: Chairman Terry Porter, Bruce Humphries, Ira Levy, Phil Peebles, Councilman John Reilly,
Attending Public.

Absent: Brian Arico

Chairman Porter called the July 2012 GPB meeting to order at 7pm. Chris Ciolfi of Mariner Tower, distributed copies of Visual Resource Assessment and pictures, of the floated balloon, on the proposed Wireless Communications Cell Tower at # 23 Wilmer Hill Road and State Route 82. Prior to the balloon test, Public notice was placed in the Columbia Newspaper, posted on Town of Gallatin Website. Gallatin Planning Board, Gallatin Town Board and all abutting neighbors were also notified. The balloon float was conducted on July 9th, 2012 from 7:06am until 12 noon. A 3' diameter red weather balloon was flown at a height of 150' to evaluate the visual impact in the 2 mile radius area of Gallatin, Ancram and Taghkanic, surrounding the proposed 150' communication tower. The land use of the proposed study site is comprised of residential, agricultural and vacant land, with mixed deciduous and coniferous forest... A handheld Garmin GPS was used to coordinate the proposed site N: 42-03-39.9 W: 73-39-16.2, with the site plans of the property, tax parcel #205-1-1.1. Ground elevation is approximately 828 feet above mean sea level. Prior to performing the balloon float, a software generated View-shed Map, (using National Geographic TOPO v4.5.4 mapping software) was created to identify the areas where the tower would be expected to be visible, based solely on terrain data. The site was marked with 3 pink survey ribbons. Weather conditions were ideal, sunny skies and 60 degrees with no noticeable wind. The visibility of the view-shed area was documented, photographed and fully researched, while in the field. While the balloon was flown, most roads within the project area were driven and the spotter noted on the map where the balloon could or could not be seen, in accordance with the GPS unit. Surrounding land uses, similar structures and potential scenic/historic locations were noted as well. The attached Visual Resource Assessment contains all pertinent information on methods and results of the balloon test. (See pg. 3 and View-Shed Analysis map for locations where balloon was visible. Photos of various locations where the balloon could be seen are also attached in the booklet.

Terry welcomed neighbors of the proposed cell tower and many members of the Ancram Fire Department. Terry commented that he had driven around to see where the balloon could be seen and that it was hard to see the balloon from the area he was riding around, but Tower may be more visual after leaf fall-off. Betty Walsh commented she had met Mr. Ciolfi, walked up to where the Tower site is and the measurement is close to 300' to the stone wall along the border of her property. One neighbor asked if the antenna is at the top of the Tower. Chris responded that the antenna is the top of the tower. Steve Sorman commented he drove around and did not see adverse objection but could see it in a number of places from his property. He also stated if he could see it in winter, from all points and windows of his property, he would not like it. He asked why it could not be moved from the ridge on St.

Rte. 82 to a better location which may not be as visible. Chris responded, that chosen site was picked taking into consideration that the tower should not be placed at the top of a ridge, optimum radio frequency transmission, avoidance of unregulated environmentally sensitive areas, and moving from one site to another, will probably be visible to some- one else. Phil asked if the chosen site meets all codes. Mariner is meeting all setbacks and code requirements and obeying what Gallatin zoning requires. Charles Randolph, representing Karl Krauss Industries, LLC commented that the balloon was visible from their property to the north, but not totally intrusive. He is concerned as to the increased visibility in winter as well. Ira asked if restrictions requirements, could keep trees remaining around site. Terry advised Zoning requires limitation on removal of vegetation. Landowner has logged in the past but beyond Mariner's plans to place those restrictions not to allow logging and to re-forest the property in case the trees are destroyed by disease, fire, etc. Steve asked why Tower can't be move 100' here or there. Terry asked if GPB could request another balloon test after leaf fall. Chris answered time frame won't permit it. Chris Ciolfi advised, moving the tower 100' may not make a difference, but the more it is moved, it could interfere with service to the Brody and Copake site on Rte. 7A and also to the service to Ancram. Question from the audience, How much is the height. Answer, 150', ½ the length of a football field. Chris also stated it is in the owner's interest not to clear cut around the site. Trees create a buffer. He also responded that creating a new road would be more of an impact to the area. David Boice from the Fire Department commented that in the South East corner of Columbia County, service is lost. He is hoping to put repeaters on the Towers to get better communication, to offer better service. Another fireman asked how far this Tower would reach. Chris showed maps of the Taghkanic Parkway and Route 7, where the Tower will improve service. Audience member advised that RTE. 23 near the Extra Mart has a 180' monopole and the area now has service. Bruce asked Chris to tell the Public where service will be helped and how towers interact together. Chris said it is very complicated not to interfere with other users, but did show with maps where better service might be achieved in many areas. There is a possibility that once the two towers go up, better service in a lot of areas. Someone in audience advised he would be comfortable if no other towers go up. Chris responded that RTE 22 would need something to give them service. Terry commented that our Consultant advised that 4 towers are needed. Chris responded that we may need less towers if repeaters are used, but that determination could not be made until the towers were up. The more traffic, the more towers are needed. Phil asked the Public, do you prefer monopole or lattice? Steve prefers monopole. Ira prefers lattice. Terry commented that the more users, the more cables go up. Chris responded that they are using more Ethernet cable, which is smaller. Q. Can more antennae go on them? A. Chris does a spread sheet and design in extra whips, and also seeing more wireless internet providers. Phil asked if 1 or 2 antennae would handle all emergency services like Police, Fire and EMS. Chris responded, Mariner offers top spot to emergency but emergency units determine where they want their antennae. John Reilly asked if white on the Radio Transmission maps indicated the lowest level of service. A. Chris advised green and yellow are strongest, but orange and red may tighten up when this tower goes up and white does indicate no service on the maps. Q. Will a taller tower help? A. Not always, because RTE. 11 is a weak spot, but Mariner will try to correct with repeaters. Terry asked if neighbors have any concerns. Steve responded if it is not a big deal could they move the Tower. Terry asked if Mariner could simulate bare leaf picture. Chris commented the site area is 100 X 100 and 50' must be retained clear around the site. John Reilly asked about planting more

trees and could a provision be put in lease to plant more trees. Q. Size of lease. A. ¼ acre, plus right of way, plus any code restrictions. Q. Ira asked why site can't be 100 X 100. A. Takes more acres. Steve commented that Google Earth says that Gallatin is most heavily treed. Take a few sites and put balloon up. Terry asked if this site is the best picked one, how do we know. Chris is concerned with Federal view, that we must protect wet lands. John Reilly asked if more than 1 balloon put up can neighbors pick which is best site. A. Chris advised site is not usually determined by neighbors. Audience commented that this is not the best time to put up balloon because of heavy leaf. Melissa asked who takes the tower down if it is not needed. A. Chris advised Mariner put up Bond to remove tower if no longer needed. Terry is concerned with view with no leaf on trees. When you look between the trees, what is the view? Chris showed pictures again. Deed restrictions can prohibit no clearing along that property line. Steve said it is a guessing game, but he will be unhappy if he can see it when leaf is off. Terry commented that the height won't change, just what you can see through the trees. Chris commented that when we get to that time, they can do selective planting to block the view. He has answered all the questions and would like to get this moving and go through SEQRA and move on to the Public Hearing. Terry responded that he would like to go through SEQRA also. Phil asked if electric is overhead. A. yes.

Terry went over the SEQRA long form part 1 and 2 / with visual EAF addendum, line by line with the GPB members. (Tab 5) After going through SEQRA, Terry made a motion to declare negative declaration. Phil 2nd. All were in favor. Ira asked if this is now a completed application for Mariner Tower. Terry responded, yes, this is now a completed application and a Public Hearing will be set for the next GPB meeting August 27th, 2012. Chris will put a Public Notice in the Columbia Paper and notify all abutting neighbors.

Chris gave Terry the results of the SWPPP for the Ten Neighbors Road Tower complying with item 11, and letter from Morris Associates. Terry made a motion to accept the letter from Morris Associates and SWPPP. Phil 2nd. All were in favor. Terry gave Chris a copy of the approved application for his records.

Bob Ihlenberg representing the Varlamos two lot subdivision appeared before the Board. He presented maps of Tax parcel # 204-01-5.221 located on Hill Top Rd. Total acreage is 10.173 and they propose lot 2B1 to have 7.437 acres and lot 2B2 to have 2.736 acres. The Board advised there is only 160' of road frontage, so a variance will be needed from the ZBA, two deep hole perc tests noted on the map, driveway permit and application fee.

Meeting minutes were read and Terry made a motion to accept. Bruce 2nd. All were in favor.

With no other business, Terry made a motion to adjourn at 9:35pm. Bruce 2nd. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Fecci

