

George Leveille
Chairman

Nicholas Behuniak
Member

Thomas Coffey
Member

Christine Motta
Member

Kate Powers
Member

Stephen Rice
Member

John Smolinsky
Member

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Asst. Engineer, L.S.

Keith Silliman
Counsel

Deborah Kitchen
Assistant to the Board

MINUTES
December 21, 2010

1 A meeting of the Town of Bethlehem Planning Board was convened in public session in the Bethlehem
2 Town Hall, 445 Delaware Ave., Delmar, NY at 6:00 p.m., on Tuesday, December 21, 2010. Attendance
3 was recorded as follows:
4

| <u>Board Members Present</u> | <u>Board Members Absent</u> | <u>Counsel Present</u> | <u>Town Staff Present</u> |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------|--|
| George Leveille Nicholas Behuniak Thomas Coffey Kate Powers Stephen Rice John Smolinsky | Christine Motta | Keith Silliman | Michael Morelli Robert Leslie Terrence Ritz Deborah Kitchen |

5

| <u>Others Present</u> | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Tom Butler James Loder | Adam Walters Thor Holbek | Charles Radliff, Sr. Charles Wiff | Dan Coffey |

6
7 Chairman Leveille called the meeting to order and noted the presence of a quorum:
8

9 **Public Comment on Regular Agenda Items**
10

- 11 • ESCO Towers – Telecommunications Facility (Site Plan / SUP)

12
13 There were no public comments and the comment period was closed.
14

15 **ESCO Towers - 75 Van Dyke Road, Delmar (Site Plan/Special Use Permit)**

16 Chairman Leveille referred to Mr. Leslie’s memo to the Planning Board, dated December 16, 2010 and asked
17 that he provide the Members with a brief summary of the status of the project. Mr. Leslie stated that the
18 Board had voted in favor of a monopine tower and not yet determined if they preferred the high density or
19 medium density tower.
20

21 Adam Walters of Philips Lytle LLP, and Thor Holbek of the Holbek Group were present to assist the
22 applicants, Thomas Butler & James Loder in providing up-to-date information. Mr. Walters indicated that
23 the applicant is feeling optimistic about the project and his firm has been working with the Town’s
24 Engineering Division to finalize the lease agreement between the applicant and the Town of Bethlehem for
25 installation of the Town’s Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) antenna. It is his
26 understanding that the Town’s consultant is on vacation and will respond to an information request upon
27 his return. Mr. Silliman requested that the draft agreement be sent to him for review.
28

29 Mr. Holbek stated that he has 30 years experience creating realistic habitats. He knows trees well and has
30 been working throughout the northeast for the past 10 years to assist communities in concealing structures
31 so that they blend in with their surroundings. Seeing this site in person, from different directions, was
32 helpful. He provided the Board with photo simulations of a high density and medium density white pine
33 that would be appropriate for the site. Mr. Loder circulated a sample branch with needles/bristles that
34 would be installed on the tower. He also distributed packets of materials that included a document entitled:
35 Natural and Architectural Concealment for Telecommunication Applications which shows images of
36 towers his company has designed. The packets also contained medium density layout (58 branches) and
37 high density layout (70 branches) for comparison. Mr. Holbek stated that the difference in cost is between
38 10 – 15%.

39
40 Mr. Holbek indicated that the tower would be 132 feet tall. The top of the Town's SCADA antenna will be
41 131 feet. The current proposal is seven (7) feet shorter than the previously proposed. The width of the
42 monopine would be 30 feet. Branches will extend down to 65 feet above the ground. The length of the
43 boom would be between 8 – 12 feet. The trunk/tower of the monopine can be painted to blend in with the
44 surroundings. Mr. Holbek stated that he believes a painted tower would be appropriate for this site. Bark
45 is not appropriate for this site, but if required, it would be made of fiberglass and glued on. It is an
46 expensive process and Mr. Holbek does not think it is needed because the trunk of the monopine will not be
47 close enough to be seen by the naked eye. (The tower is approximately 800 feet from Van Dyke Road.)
48

49 Mr. Holbek stated that wind, ice and tower load must work together. The bristles/needles will be
50 constructed with an ultraviolet ray protected Christmas decoration product that he purchases from China.
51 The bristles have a one (1) year warranty. The branches will be constructed by Mr. Holbek and have a ten
52 (10) year warranty. Mr. Holbek stated that the climate in the northeast is less harsh on the bristles because
53 there is less sun and damage caused by ultraviolet rays. Chairman Leveille asked if the tower could be
54 repaired if it were damaged or begins to show signs of wear and tear. Mr. Holbek stated that the branches
55 are bolted to the tower. They can be rebristled. They are extremely strong and he has used the same
56 materials to create a gorilla habitat in 2005. He is not aware of any recycling opportunity at this time. Mr.
57 Holbek estimates that it would cost 60% of the original price to replace the branches, if needed.
58

59 Mr. Leslie stated that a section of the Town code related to telecommunication facilities allows for the
60 Town to inspect the tower on an annual basis. Remediation would be necessary if an inspection shows that
61 the condition of the tower has deteriorated. Language could be added to the Special Use Permit to address
62 this concern.
63

64 If more carriers are added at a later date, some redesign work will be needed. Branches can be added by
65 updating the stub plan and welding more brackets to the tower. Mr. Holbek stated that he has already
66 provided images showing the worst case scenario. Chairman Leveille noted that there are typically less
67 branches on white pine trees in this part of the country. Mr. Holbek indicated that he laid out the tower on
68 the floor of his shop to make sure the proposed antennas are concealed. If additional carriers were added,
69 Mr. Holbek could provide the Town with an updated stub plan.
70

71 Mr. Leslie asked if AT&T had responded to his December 7, 2010 letter that requested an evaluation to
72 reduce the antenna boom width. Mr. Walters stated that AT&T's response was that an eight (8) foot
73 antenna boom could work at the site but that coverage may be slightly reduced. Mr. Leslie recommended
74 to the Board that an eight (8) foot boom would receive better screening than a 12 foot boom. The Board
75 expressed concern that the shorter boom would reduce cellular coverage, and based on Mr. Holbek's
76 statement that the high density monopine would adequately screen both the eight (8) foot or 12 foot antenna
77 boom, agreed to allow the 12 foot boom.
78

79 Chairman Leveille asked the Members to indicate their preference for medium versus high density
80 monopine. It was determined that the high density was preferred because it provides more screening from
81 antennas and more flexibility for repositioning branches should other carriers be added at a later date. The
82 maximum height will be 132 feet, neutral paint, and boom length will be no greater than 12 feet to enable

83 increased service capability. **The Board will rely on the experience of Mr. Holbek to determine the color of**
84 **the monopole based on the surrounding trees adjacent to the site.**
85

86 Mr. Holbek will provide a standard package with details and construction drawings for a high density
87 monopine. Chairman Leveille stated that the applicant and Town will also discuss the terms of the Special
88 Use Permit with regard to inspections.
89

90 Mr. Leslie stated the applicant may also need to submit a landscaping plan for the fenced-in compound
91 surrounding the tower. The Planning Board has the authority to waive the landscaping around the fenced in
92 compound. Mr. Leslie stated that this option should be discussed at the next Planning Board meeting with
93 the applicant. Mr. Walters noted that the applicant had already extended the lease area to include additional
94 trees.
95

96 Mr. Silliman stated that the Zoning Board of Appeals will be targeting the variance discussion at the
97 January 5, 2011 meeting.
98

99 Chairman Leveille asked the Board Members if they had any comments or questions. Hearing none, he
100 called for a motion to approve the time extension for Review of the SUP Application.
101

102 Upon motion of Mr. Behuniak, seconded by Mr. Rice, the vote was recorded as follows: Six (6) for, zero (0)
103 against, and one (1) absent, the Members voted in favor of approving the Time Extension through January 18,
104 2011 as proposed. Ms. Motta had previously indicated her desire to abstain and was not present for this
105 discussion.
106

107 Chairman Leveille asked the Board Members if they had any further questions. Hearing none, he called for
108 a motion to table the application.
109

110 Upon motion of Mr. Coffey, seconded by Ms. Powers, and approved by all Members present, further
111 discussion related to the project was tabled.
112

113 **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

114 Senior Planner, Robert Leslie, presented information about the PaTHs 4 Bethlehem Committee's Bicycle
115 and Pedestrian Priority Network. The purpose of the presentation was to provide the Members with
116 information about what role they will play with respect to implementation. All seven Planning Board
117 Members were present. The Priority Network provides guidance and vision for bicycle and pedestrian
118 mobility in the Town. The Board's role would be to consider pedestrian and bicycle improvements when a
119 project is located on a Priority Network roadway. Improvements may consist of, but are not limited to,
120 easements, location of parking areas, crosswalks, sidewalks, bike racks, and possible installation of sub
121 base for future sidewalk construction. Funding will also need to be considered. Local, low vehicle volume,
122 low speed roads may not require pedestrian improvements. Implementation will require Engineering,
123 Education and Enforcement.
124

125 Chairman Leveille thanked Mr. Leslie for his presentation and noted that report and related information can
126 be found on the Town's website at <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/AdvisoryComs/advPaTHs.asp>
127

128 **MEETING SCHEDULE**

129 January 4, 2011 - Regular Meeting

130 January 18, 2011 - Regular Meeting
131

132 **MEETING ADJOURNED**

133 Upon motion by Mr. Coffey, seconded by Mr. Rice, and approved by all Members present, the meeting was
134 adjourned.
135

136 Respectfully submitted,
137 Deborah Kitchen