

**Town of Haverhill
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
PUBLIC HEARING
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 4, at 6:00 PM
R. E. Clifford Memorial Building
65 South Court St.
Woodsville, NH 03785
And on Zoom**

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mike Bonanno, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

Roll Call Attendance: Esther Hodges-LeClaire (Here); Sandi Pierce (Here); Rick Henson (Here); Matt Bjelobrk, ex officio (Here); Mike Bonanno (Here). A quorum was met.

Town Employees Present:

- Brigitte Codling, Town Manager (TM)
- Jennifer Boucher, Assistant Town Manager (ATM)
- Joanna Bligh, Zoning Board of Adjustment Clerk

Members of the Public Present In Person: Ron Willoughby, Joe Longacre, Mary Patridge, Susie Tann, Mary Patridge, Megan Thayer, Mark Johanson, Wendy Wright, Matt Coulon, Aaron Palm, Marilyn Blaisdell, Susie Tann, Mike Adamkowski, Greg Mathieson, and Francis Parisi (Vertex Towers).

Members of the Public Present Online: Joanne Young Joanne O'Meara, Tom Johnson (Vertex Towers' engineer).

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. AGENDA APPROVAL

MOTION #1: Bjelobrk made a motion and Pierce seconded the motion to approve the Agenda as written.

Roll Call Vote: Esther Hodges-LeClaire (Aye); Sandi Pierce (Aye); Rick Henson (Aye); Matt Bjelobrk, ex officio (Aye); Mike Bonanno (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The Agenda has been approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

MOTION #2: Bjelobrk made a motion and Hodges-LeClaire seconded the motion to approve Minutes from **12-2-21** as written.

Roll Call Vote: Esther Hodges-LeClaire (Aye); Sandi Pierce (Aye); Rick Henson (Aye); Matt Bjelobrk, ex officio (Aye); Mike Bonanno (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The Minutes from 12-2-21 were approved.

MOTION #3: Bjelobrk made a motion and Hodges-LeClaire seconded the motion to

approve Minutes from **12-21-21** as written.

Roll Call Vote: Esther Hodges-LeClaire (Aye); Sandi Pierce (Aye); Rick Henson (Aye); Matt Bjelobrk, ex officio (Aye); Mike Bonanno (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The Minutes from 12-21-21 were approved.

5. PUBLIC APPEARANCES (previously scheduled): None.

6. PUBLIC HEARING:

Housekeeping Items:

Chair Bonanno stated that those who wish to speak must sign in and that anyone from the public who wishes to speak state their name before speaking. Chair Bonanno stated that speakers will be able to speak for 5 minutes, and then after the list of speakers was done, there would be another round with speakers having the floor for 3 minutes. Chair Bonanno introduced Fran Parisi from Vertex Towers and asked the audience not to interrupt Mr. Parisi during his presentation.

MOTION #4: Bjelobrk made a motion and Pierce seconded the motion to open the PUBLIC HEARING at 6:10 PM.

Roll Call Vote: Esther Hodges-LeClaire (Aye); Sandi Pierce (Aye); Rick Henson (Aye); Matt Bjelobrk, ex officio (Aye); Mike Bonanno (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The PUBLIC HEARING was opened.

Fran Parisi, Vertex Towers LLC, provided background information stating that the Haverhill Panning Board approved the site plan for the construction of the tower on Mitchell Hill, 12 Teepee Rd., Haverhill, with the following variances appealed to and reviewed by the Zoning Board of Adjustment:

- Height variance of 161 feet.
- Design variance, i.e., camouflage.

Parisi provided a map of the proposed cell phone coverage, which showed how the tower will fill in the gaps of the other towers in the area. Parisi showed the results of the 3-day Balloon Test (December 17, 18, 20) for height and superimposed the lattice tower image on the pictures to give the attendees an idea of what the tower will look like from various locations within a 1-mile radius.

Parisi noted the rationale for having a high tower at that site:

- The height must exceed the height of the Grafton County existing public safety tower so as not to create interference.
- The demand for telecommunications is “overwhelming.”
- It is a safety hazard not to have appropriate telecommunications.
- The site has existing road access, the appropriate Rt 10 and abutters’ setbacks, and appropriately sized compound for installation of the tower mount.

- The large tower encourages colocation of providers, withstands adverse weather, and is the least intrusive design.

Parisi noted that the design meets all the requirements of the Haverhill Ordinance, as follows:

- The tower does not decrease property values, is in the public interest, allows for public safety, is in the spirit of the Ordinance, and has no FAA lighting requirements (5 miles from the Dean Memorial Airport).

Parisi noted that one provider (T-Mobile) is on board with a second (AT&T) soon to be confirmed.

Parisi concluded stating that Vertex Towers request that the Town of Haverhill, Zoning Board of Adjustment approve the variances. Subsequent to approval, Vertex Towers must be approved for additional Federal regulations, including a geotechnology analysis and an environmental impact analysis.

Questions and Answers from the Zoning Board

Hodges-LeClaire: Hodges-LeClaire asked about when the tower becomes outdated. Hodges-LeClaire asked about the fake tree camouflage.

- Parisi responded that this latticework design is structurally engineered to withstand adverse weather conditions and changes in electronics and antennas.
- Parisi responded that the attempt to camouflage the towers create more visibility.

Pierce: No questions.

Henson: Henson asked about the search for alternate sites.

- Parisi responded that considering the topography of the river valley, this knoll is the only site.

Bjelobrk: Bjelobrk asked if the service area include the airport and beyond. Bjelobrk commented on 5G in the future.

- Parisi commented that it will be a long time (~20 years) before 5G gets to rural New Hampshire, and with the tower proposed for 5 miles from the airport, it will not impact air navigation.

Bonanno: Bonanno asked if the proposed height is to accommodate the number of providers on the tower and if Parisi was the contact to reach out to other providers.

- Parisi replied that T-Mobile signed up quickly, and AT&T will be in talks in 2022.

Questions and Answers from the Public

Greg Mathieson: Mathieson discussed the radiofrequency tests that are required for contractors in telecommunications, and he commented on the plans for reclamation.

- Chair Bonanno replied that the FCC was discussed during the Planning Board meeting.

Mary Patridge (No. Haverhill): Patridge asked about the first presentation by Vertex Towers during the Planning Board meeting and that she is waiting to see those photos even though they were not great. Patridge noted that property values will be affected.

- Parisi stated that they were sent.
- Longacre noted that the Planning Board did ask for the photos so that they could be distributed to the public.

Megan Thayer (No. Haverhill): Thayer noted that the gully of two valleys was selected and asked if there was not a higher elevation of land to place the tower. Thayer asked what the lowest possible tower could be.

- Parisi replied that Rt 10 is in a gully, but to the north, south, and east, there are ridges and that the 161 feet is the lowest.

Bjelobrck: Bjelobrck asked what the distance was needed between providers on the tower.

- Parisi replied that with five tenants, 10 feet to 15 feet is required between them.

Adamkowski (Upper Valley Stewardship Center, Pike): Adamkowski stated that he does outdoor work and is in favor of expanding service.

Tann (No. Haverhill): Tann commented that the Town is at a pivotal point to preserve the scenic landscape, and the latticework tower is not compatible. Tann asked the Board to consider hiring a lawyer, an RF engineer, and a real estate appraiser to assess the impacts of the tower proposal.

Blaisdell (No. Haverhill): Blaisdell noted that Mr. Parisi needed to include the pictures from the Planning Board meeting and that photos are subjective and can be altered. Blaisdell stated that we need to get a true picture of the ugly tower.

Johanson (Mt. Lakes): Johanson stated that the Town needs cell phone coverage because we cannot conduct business, and the children cannot do their schoolwork remotely.

Coulon (Pike): Coulon addressed the peer-reviewed research on 5G radiofrequency that was shown to be deleterious to all life. Coulon noted that the industry has their own interests at the forefront and not the deleterious effect on citizens.

Wright (Pike): Wright noted that the public should be aware of 5G because it has been associated with the spread of Covid.

Follow-Up Questions from the Board

Hodges-LeClaire: Hodges-LeClaire asked if the tower will supply 5G because there is concern from the public.

- Parisi replied that it will be 5G eventually, but not for 20 years to 30 years.

Pierce: No questions.

Henson: Henson stated that he will make a motion

- Bonanno killed the motion until all public questions were addressed.

Follow-Up Questions from the Public

Mathieson: Mathieson asked why the water tower could be used at the communication tower.

Tann: Tann noted that this is a complex issue. Tann recommended putting off voting and have another public hearing.

TM Codling: TM Codling offered results from the Town's Public Opinion Surveys. For the question "What is the most important issue in Town?" TM Codling provided the replied, as follows:

- In 2019, 78% replied cell phone coverage.
- In 2020, 85% replied cell phone coverage.
- In 2021, 77% replied cell phone coverage.

TM Codling read a letter from the Town's Assessor, Tim Northcott, stating that cell coverage increases property values. TM Codling provided an anecdote from businesses coming to the area, in that, broadband, cell phone coverage, and sewer are the most important services they require.

TM Codling (Emergency Medical Services Officer): As the Town's EMS officer, TM Codling noted that from the many calls related to Covid with the State public safety officer, telehealth and business and school broadband coverage were the most discussed issues.

Johanson: Johanson commented that in 1998 his daughter did a college exchange to Finland, and at that time, Finland had 100% cell coverage.

Coulon and Wright: Coulon and Wright noted that they run a business and have no problem with WiFi service on their phones.

Parisi: To address the obsolescence issue, the company has to provide a bond to the town for reclamation, and the Planning Board addressed that.

MOTION #5: Pierce made a motion and Bjelobrk seconded the motion to close the PUBLIC HEARING at 8:05 PM.

Roll Call Vote: Esther Hodges-LeClaire (Aye); Sandi Pierce (Aye); Rick Henson (Aye); Matt Bjelobrck, ex officio (Aye); Mike Bonanno (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The PUBLIC HEARING was closed.

MOTION #6: Bjelobrck made a motion and Pierce seconded the motion to recess the meeting for 5 minutes.

Roll Call Vote: Esther Hodges-LeClaire (Aye); Sandi Pierce (Aye); Rick Henson (Aye); Matt Bjelobrck, ex officio (Aye); Mike Bonanno (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The meeting was recessed for 5 minutes.

The meeting was reconvened at 8:15 PM.

MOTION #7: Bjelobrck made a motion and Pierce seconded the motion to reconvene the Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting on **Monday, January 10, 2022, at 6:00 PM** for reconsideration of the Vertex Towers appeal of variances and vote.

Roll Call Vote: Esther Hodges-LeClaire (Aye); Sandi Pierce (Aye); Rick Henson (Aye); Matt Bjelobrck, ex officio (Aye); Mike Bonanno (Aye). The vote was unanimous.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Review of the Town of Haverhill Personal Wireless Service Utilities Ordinance

Chair Bonanno noted that review of this ordinance may require a joint session of the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment. ATM Boucher stated that with this busy time of the year, there is a full year to work on these revisions.

Chair Bonanno recommended tabling this work until a later date and to reach out to the Planning Board.

8. PENDING BUSINESS: None.

9. CORRESPONDENCE / COMMUNICATION: None.

10. COMMENTS OF TOWN STAFF:

- Bligh: None.
- Boucher: None.

11. COMMENTS of the PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS:

Henson: None.

Pierce: None.

Bjelobrck: Is anyone online?

Hodges-LeClaire: None.

