

TOWN OF ELMA PLANNING BOARD
1600 Bowen Road, Elma, New York 14059
Phone: 716-652-3260

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING ~ June 21, 2022

The Regular Meeting of the Town of Elma Planning Board, hereinafter referred to as the EPB, was held on Tuesday, June 21, 2022, at 7:00 PM in the Elma Town Hall at 1600 Bowen Road, Elma, New York.

PRESENT:

*Chairman Michael Cirocco
Member James Millard
Member Charles Putzbach
Member Robert Waver
Alternate Thomas Reid*

ABSENT:

*Member David Baker
Member Michael Cleary
Member Gregory Merkle
Raymond Balcerzak - Asst Building
Inspector
James Wyzykiewicz – Town Engineer*

TOWN REPRESENTATIVES:

Phyllis Todoro - Town Attorney

I. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from May 17, 2022

Charles Putzbach motioned to approve the Minutes of the EPB Regular Meeting held on May 17, 2022. Robert Waver the motion. Motion approved.

II. Site Plan review for installation of wireless communication antennas and equipment on an existing @ 7331 Seneca St Applicant -Crown Castle USA, Inc

Mr. Richard Zajac with Crown Castle presented plans on behalf of Dish Wireless to install 3 new antennas to an existing 190-foot tower located at 7331 Seneca St. The antennas would be at 121' level and there will be a 5' x 7' concrete equipment pad added. There is no tower height increase. Mr. Zajac cited section 6409 of the FCC rules.

Chairman Cirocco asked if there was an engineered study, Mr. Zajac said a structural evaluation had been done. Mr. Putzbach asked about the concrete pad to hold the equipment cabinets. Mr. Putzbach also asked what would be broadcast for the antennas. Mr. Zajac explained they will be used for a cellular signal by Dish Network who is looking to be the 4th major cellphone provider. They will be 5G capable. There was discussion about it means to be 5G capable and if this will be used to replace cable. Chairman Cirocco asked why there are 3 antennas. Mr. Zajac stated it was just to cover all directions. The board agreed that the location is not located close to any neighboring homes. Mr. Millard mentioned that if they are to make any changes then they need to provide new plans to the town. Chairman Cirocco stated that they meet all requirements of code 59-4 for a special use permit. The checklist was reviewed, and all items were provided that apply to this case. The EPB reviewed the SEQR noting that #3 was not answered. They also discussed the answers given to #13 and #20. Mr. Zajac stated they auto fill when the SEQR was done. Since this is not a newly build tower, it was determined that they did not apply to this case.

II. Site Plan review for installation of wireless communication antennas and equipment on an existing @ 7331 Seneca St Applicant -Crown Castle USA, Inc (continued)

Mr. Millard motioned to identify that the Elma Planning Board does not have any concerns regarding this project and the short form SEQ. Mr. Putzbach seconded. Yes-5 No-0. Motion Carried.

Mr. Reid motioned to give a recommendation of approval of the site plan to the Elma Town Board Mr. Waver seconded. Yes-5 No-0. Motion Carried.

III. Site Plan Review for a 13.5 KW ground mounted solar array @ Wojtkowski, 1510 West Blood Rd. Applicant- Jacob Kawecki- CIR Electrical Construction Corp

Darrin Harzewski from Solar by CIR and the homeowner Tara Wojtkowski were present. Mr. Harzewski explained they are building a ground mounted solar array that will be engineered for the wind and snow loads in the area. It will be 400 feet from the road and 333 feet from the house. The neighboring properties to the east and south are vacant. There are trees screening the neighbor to the east. This neighbor has provided a letter stating they do not have any problems with the project. Mr. Harzewski mentioned that they have been to the town board and that the project meets all requirements for size and setbacks. Mr. Harzewski explained that a ground mount was chosen over a roof mount due to solar access, available space, and shade issues. The property is all electric including heat pumps. They are planning to add electric cars in the future and plan to be a totally energy neutral house. Mr. Putzbach asked what the solar access is. Mr. Harzewski stated a shade analysis was done and it is about 80%. The panels face away from the house. Mr. Putzbach asked the homeowner what she expect to do with these. She stated she wants to have a sustainable and reliable house for her family and any future residents. Mr. Waver asked if the size is enough to achieve this. Mr. Harzewski explained that the size of the current system is enough to be off the grid and be 100% energy neutral. This plan was designed to include electric cars in the future. Mr. Reid asked which direction the panels will point. Mr. Harzewski explained that ideally, they will point due south. Mr. Reid also asked about cleaning the panels. Mr. Harzewski explained that the analysis plans for dust so they do not need to be cleaned but that they can be sprayed off with a hose from the ground. He also mentioned that a foam roof rake could be used to remove snow in the winter. Mr. Putzbach asked what the life span of them are. The panels and inverters have a 25-year warranty on them. Mr. Millard asked how they sit. They are 18 feet by 35 feet and sit at a 26-degree pitch, so the highest point is 14 feet high and 3 feet from the ground. They are designed to allow snow to slide off and accumulate underneath. Mr. Millard asked where the neighbor's house is in relation to the panels. Mr. Harzewski answered that there is a tree line screening the neighbors and that they are 400' from the neighbor's house. This neighbor has provided a letter stating they do not have any problems with the project. Chairman Cirocco asked about the nearest fire hydrant. Ms. Wojkowski did not know where the closest fire hydrant is. Mr. Harzewski explained they have a rapid shut down at the house to disconnect from the panels. He stated these meet all safety requirements and that he has never heard of any problems

III. Site Plan Review for a 13.5 KW ground mounted solar array @ Wojtkowski, 1510 West Blood Rd. Applicant- Jacob Kawecki- CIR Electrical Construction Corp (Continued)

with them. The EPB discussed that they did not have any concerns regarding the short form SEQR. Chairman Cirocco stated that under code 118A-9 that a public hearing is required so that will be the next step in the process. The applicant will need to check with the building department to see what needs to be done for that.

Chairman Cirocco motioned to identify that the Elma Planning Board does not have any concerns regarding the short form SEQR. Mr. Putzbach seconded. Yes-5 No-0. Motion Carried.

Mr. Reid motioned to recommend that the Elma Town Board grant a special use permit based on the applicant have meet all the requirements. Mr. Waver seconded. Yes-5 No-0. Motion Carried.

Mr. Millard motioned to approve the site plan contingent on the Elma Town Board approving the special use permit. Mr. Reid seconded. Yes-5 No-0. Motion Carried.

The EPB discussed in general about solar panel tax credits, usage and where the panels were made.

IV. Adjourn Motion to adjourn at 7:52pm by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Blair

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Elma Planning Board Secretary