

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING

March 20, 2012

6:00 p.m.

**Item 1. Roll Call**

PRESENT: Ambrose Buckman, Bruce Collins, Tim Glenn, Mark Seneker, Stephany Hughes, Bob Gerdes

STAFF PRESENT: Zoning Administrator Bill Ahrens, Building Official Larry Murry, and Secretary Cheryl Walters

ABSENT: Joe Arnold, Jim Rice

VISITORS: Eric Copeland, Bryan Jeffers

**Item 2. Approval of Minutes – February 28, 2012**

MINUTES APPROVED: Commissioner Gerdes motioned to approve the February 28, 2012 minutes. Commissioner Hughes seconded. The motion carried.

**Item 3. Zoning Text Amendment: Section 408: Telecommunications Facilities**

Bill Ahrens took the floor to give overview of proposed amendment. Over the years, cities have been dealing with requests to locate radio and microwave towers, cell towers, and now internet towers. The City is interested in accommodating businesses wishing to provide communication services, but we also wish to see that towers are properly located and designed. Ahrens said that he contacted ten other cities in the region and reviewed their zoning code requirements. Our draft code is very consistent with those found in other communities. In general, we will require that antennas be co-located on existing facilities whenever possible, new towers will be of monopole design, maximum tower height of 150', safety fall zones equal to ½ the tower height in C or M zones and full height in A or R zones, and the SUP valid for 10 years with 5-year renewals if the conditions of approval remain met.

Commissioner Gerdes asked if we don't inspect the tower for 10 years until the SUP is renewed? Larry Murry replied that it would be inspected during initial construction and that we can require an inspection at any time.

Commissioner Seneker asked if there was a reason for the 10 year and 5 year times for the SUP issuance. Ahrens replied that that was common among the zoning codes reviewed and that businesses wouldn't locate if a special use was only issued for a few years.

Commissioner Seneker asked if we can add language about plans for structural reviews or routine inspections. Ahrens replied that when a tower is inspected by the owning company, the city will receive a copy of the report. That type language has been in existing tower/antenna leases for the city.

Bryan Jeffers addressed the commission. Mr. Jeffers has worked for AT&T and Black & Veatch doing microwave engineering and plan preparation, and after-the-fact inspections. FCC guidelines are being proposed to be modified to allow amateur radio groups to put up towers that wireless or internet companies can then use. Generally, the higher the tower, the more profitable because of coverage and more carriers can locate. His wife owns a company that provides internet service but has only put up one new tower in 6-7 years; most antennas are co-located.

Commissioner Buckman mentioned that under 408.070 on the last page under exemptions, might want to add exemption for other government communication purposes to cover beyond what's already listed.

Commissioner Seneker said we maybe want to make sure towers are inspected in the 5-20 year time frame. Murry said it should be after the initial 10 years and as a condition of SUP renewal..

Commissioner Buckman said to state that the initial special use would go before city council after P&Z approval and the 5-year renewals can be admin approval.

Commission Gerdes moved to approve the draft zoning chapter, with changes, and to forward to city council with recommendation for approval. Commissioner Hughes seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Thank you to Mr. Jeffers for coming and explaining technical matters.

**Item 5. COMMENTS FROM VISITORS:**

No comments

**Item 6. COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:**

No comments

**Item 7. MEETING ADJOURNS:**

Meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.