

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF
REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 10, 2013**

To Order: Chairman Jim Rothgery called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. with the pledge to the flag.

Roll Call: Present were Planning Commission Members Tim Anderson, Jim Hurst, Larry Mollenkamp, Robert Olesen and Jim Rothgery.
Also present was Chief Building Official Guy Fursdon, Safety-Service Director Jeff Armbruster and Secretary Donna Tjotjos.
Also in attendance were Service Department Superintendent Al Swindig, Park and Recreation Director Kevin Fougrousse, Fire Chief John Reese, Police Chief Mike Freeman, North Ridgeville City Schools Assistant Superintendent of Building Services William Greene and TowerCo Business Development Director Jason Woodward.

Minutes:

Chairman Rothgery asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes dated August 13, 2013. He stated if there are no corrections to those minutes, then they are approved as presented and will be placed on file.

Old Business:

Chairman Rothgery stated that there is no old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Rothgery stated that there are no applications under new business. However, there is a Council Referral that Planning Commission will need to make recommendations. He asked Member Bob Olesen to explain a little bit about this referral.

Member Olesen explained that this legislation didn't come to Council. Planning Commission is the first stop for this. He added, however, Mr. Armbruster is here tonight to carry on discussion of this project.

Chairman Rothgery asked the Secretary to read the referral.

Referrals:

T 102-2013	AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NORTH RIDGEVILLE TO ENTER INTO AN EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH THE NORTH RIDGEVILLE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT.
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Council Referral was read along with Administrative Officer's comments received from Police Chief Freeman, Chief Building Official Fursdon, Mayor David Gillock, Safety-Service Director Jeff Armbruster and Assistant Fire Chief Scott Bement.

Chairman Rothgery addressed Safety-Service Director Armbruster and asked if he would like to make comment in reference to this project. He asked what will happen to the old tower.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster stated the objective is to have the old tower completely taken down and guide wires removed. The City is working on getting the tower taken down through TowerCo. He stated that the City is not sure how or when that will happen. He explained there is a market out there presently where the tower can be taken down for free. It will be out of the City's way in terms of liability from Jaycox Road running from where it is now at Fiesta Jalapeno all the way through to Bainbridge Road. Presently with all the guide wires and the tower itself, it seems to be real a problem to get that done. There were questions during evaluations as to whether or not Verizon could actually go up on that tower. It was realized that although we had control of the tower, there was really no inspection of the tower over the years. There was a concern by the Administration of the cost to keep the existing tower there. The tower was built in the early 70s when Continental Cable was here and it is about 50 years old. The life of that tower is just about done. Rather than renew and put Verizon up on that tower, we started looking at Verizon to come in and put up 150 foot tower. However, that would not have sufficed the City Services. We had to be at 300 feet for our utilities to be able to bring in all of our meters because tree foliage was in the way. We need to be that high. We then found a company called TowerCo. Jason Woodward is here representing TowerCo, which is located in Detroit. TowerCo installs communication towers all over the United States. Verizon and TowerCo agreed to put up a 300 foot tower with no guide wires at all, which would be self-sustaining. We would then be able to remove the existing tower and then go up with new coax cables and new antennas onto this tower and be good to go for the life of the new tower. Jason can reflect on how long the life of the new tower could be. I would assume that it would be good for 40 to 50 years. We will be placing the tower on the school property, which will require this easement. The Mayor did not want to block the yard beyond the Police Station with the tower. So we were able to work with the schools to have the school board enter into an agreement with TowerCo for the lease of the property and that lends itself to the easement coming from our property to the school property in order to build the tower and to maintain the tower. Mr. Bill Greene is here representing North Ridgeville City Schools. He concluded that is a long answer but that is where we've been over the last six or seven months.

Chairman Rothgery clarified by asking if he stated the tower was going to be 300 feet in height.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster stated yes.

Chairman Rothgery asked how tall the water tower is in comparison.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster stated he wasn't sure. He reiterated that there is no way this tower can be below 300 feet and be effective. A 300 foot tower exists currently near I-271 in Beachwood. It is located over by the new University Hospital. He stated that the tower is located in the ritziest areas of Cleveland. It is right there next to the freeway. He stated that he believes that is a 300 foot tower. The cage around it is about 100 by 100 and we are probably not going to use all of that space. He stated that the tower in Beachwood could be seen by driving on 271. It is right there by the new hospital and it is probably the size of the tower that we would be installing.

Chairman Rothgery asked how this will impact any future Corn Festivals.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster stated that it will take up minimal space. He stated that they leased space approximately 100 by 100 feet and maybe Bill Greene can answer how many acres of property that can be used. He stated that up until recently, that land was not used for anything but parking. There won't be any harm to the Corn Festival whatsoever. They will just have to move around it and move further to the north.

Chairman Rothgery opened the floor to the Planning Commission.

Member Olesen asked what the average height is of the traditional cell towers around town.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster stated that the original request from Verizon was for 100 feet, but Jason can expound on that answer.

Jason Woodward spoke from the audience. He stated that the equipment that is needed for the meter readers requires the 300 foot. It is about 200 to 300 range for the 9-1-1 calls and the F.B.I. to be at. The average site of a cell tower height ranges between 80 feet all the way up to 400 feet. It all depends on what the coverage objective is for the carrier, what the propagation is from the antennas and the ground elevation point. A perfect example is,

Chairman Rothgery interrupted and asked that Mr. Woodward approach the podium so that what he states will be picked up by the audio equipment.

Jason Woodward took a seat and restated that they range anywhere between 80 feet all the way up to 400 feet and that is really determined based on ground elevation, what the propagation the antennas are, the frequency that they run and the equipment that is on the tower. So, a 9-1-1 or emergency radio system requires a much higher height than maybe a PCS or a cellular carrier may need. In this case Verizon was looking for roughly 120 feet, a total rad center meaning 120 feet off of the ground elevation off that location. When they were looking at the other carriers to move them over, which would be T-Mobile and Sprint,

T-Mobile needs to be much higher at this location. They need to be at 170 feet and Sprint needs to be at 150.

Member Olesen stated that there are two towers off Lorain Road. He asked what would happen with those two towers.

Jason Woodward stated that those are about 250. So, this tower would be about 50 feet higher than those.

Member Olesen asked if those towers will remain there.

Jason Woodward stated that is correct.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster stated that this tower will replace our tower and all the antennas that are on that tower to take away the liability that the City has with that tower.

Chairman Rothgery stated that he understood that.

Chief Building Official Fursdon stated that this tower will be at that height to accommodate the City services. They don't need to go up that high, however, they are doing that to accommodate the City.

Police Chief Freeman introduced himself and explained that the whole idea is to provide an umbrella affect. In other words from radio communications, the higher you get on the pole, the bigger the umbrella is. So, if he can go into Elyria and Lorain, the higher he is on the antenna, the bigger the umbrella falls whereas a digital carrier will bounce from tower to tower, that is not how it works with radio frequency. His concerns are the age of the existing tower, the lack of maintenance, and the lack of structure stability where obviously if there was a big windstorm, we don't know the structure integrity. That thing could be lying on its side and the services would have no way to communicate with those who are calling 9-1-1 and such. That is his concern. He believes that this is an opportunity of a life time. You get a structure that can be built for 40 years, we will know what its strength is for a long period of time and he can almost do a homerun from his dispatch center where he is not sending from one pipe to another pipe and not have to jump over trees. This would be a homerun (direct connection) from the top of the tower down to his dispatch so he is not jumping from antenna to antenna. He stated for example when he is down on Case Road in somebody's front yard, they are not able to communicate because the signal is skipping too much and the department loses the quality in communication.

Member Mollenkamp stated that his questions concern the tip-over ramifications of this tower. He stated that if this thing happens to topple over, the hit is going to be; depending upon the direction it falls could be City Hall or St. Peter's Church.

Jason Woodward stated that the way these towers are designed, they are actually designed to collapse within themselves. So they implode themselves as they fall. He believes an extremely important point to bring up is that the tower that they are going to construct at this location is going to be a heck of a lot stronger than most towers that are built. So, the towers that you are looking at down the turnpike are not going to be even close to what you are going to have in your back yard here. The reason for that is the F.B.I. is going on the tower and they have to meet federal regulations to make sure that the tower basically goes through an apocalypse and it doesn't fall. So there is some added security not only for you as a community, but it is also for the Federal Government as well. So there are these standards that they need to make sure are covered.

Member Mollenkamp stated basically, new engineering and new design has made this so we don't have to worry about this thing tipping over and crushing something as we used to.

Police Chief Freeman stated that if you look at the current tower, it is sitting on top of a trailer park. It is sitting on top of a grocery store and we don't know what the strength of that thing is and that is the problem.

Member Mollenkamp stated that was his concern. Here we are sitting with a tower that is over 40 to 50 years old and this thing tips over we are in big trouble. He asked what happens if this new one at 300 feet falls, where it is going to go, but if you are saying that the tower will implode in other words cave in on itself, then that will satisfy me.

Chief Building Official Fursdon stated that is what the Engineer is saying that over the last 20 years they have been designed that way where it doesn't fall like a tree, it comes down on itself.

Member Mollenkamp stated that they told us that at the Ford Plant and they watched it fall. It was supposed to implode and it didn't. It collapsed. It just went over like a tree.

Chief Building Official Fursdon asked if it was a monopole. This isn't going to be a monopole tower.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster stated that it will be a trellis tower.

Member Hurst stated that he is still lost as to where it is going to be physically located.

Police Chief Freeman stated that it will be just between the Police Department and the football field; in the old baseball field. Basically, the big burn mark where they had the bon fire for the school is where the center of the tower would be.

Chief Building Official Fursdon showed where the location of the tower will be on the drawing. He explained that there are stakes back there now showing the location.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster explained that if you look at the stakes, they are within the 100 foot perimeter. Those stakes were involved in the old survey. They can be moved. The school is flexible on that. They know that there is a 100 foot easement and he is not sure if when they finish Jason, if you could tell us, if it will be 30 by 30 or 40 by 40 or 50 by 50, but they have reserved the right to go to 100 feet.

Jason Woodward stated that the goal for TowerCo is to basically fence and encompass the current equipment shelters that would be on the site immediately. Then as additional companies came on board; if they needed to blow out the fence, they will blow out the fence as they grow with it. He stated that they want to condense it as much as possible even though they have rights to 100 by 100. If they can get away with fencing 50 by 50 with the base of the tower, the equipment shelters and then leave the rest open field, then they are going to do that. It keeps cost down and there really is no reason to take up that amount of room if it isn't necessary.

Member Mollenkamp asked if technology increases, will they have to look at increasing that size as some of the towers right now are adding equipment, which in turn requires them to enlarge their buildings. He asked if Mr. Woodward has looked further down the road of that potentially happening.

Jason Woodward stated that with all the provided carriers in the market place, he doesn't see them going passed 100 by 100 here.

Member Olesen addressed the Fire Chief and asked if he has had similar problems as the police in regard to loss of communications.

Fire Chief Reese stated that their problems haven't been quite as much, but he is trying to preserve their radio system because their radio system is so strong now and with the existing tower; where it is now, even his back up repeater is on that existing tower. So, if there is a catastrophe with that tower being as old as it is, his whole radio system is gone. If there is a tornado or something, he is a little worried about that tower. Another thing that has not been talked about is the security issues. He explained that there have been security issues at that tower. No one has broken in, but that is an issue that we have been worried about. Whereas if the tower was located at the Police Station, he didn't believe he would have anything to worry about, because the Police are right there. He stated that someone asked how tall the water tower is and the water tower is just over 200 feet, which that height will not serve them. He explained that their antenna is as low as it possibly can go right now and it is at about 240 feet. If it was any lower, he would start to losing signal. The Police are losing signal now and they are even higher than he is. He stated that they need to be up as high as

they can. He added that for esthetic purposes, the 200 foot water tower is a big white blob in the sky. He didn't believe that the tower would even be noticeable in comparison to the esthetics of the water tower.

Chairman Rothgery noted that his comment about the water tower was not to locate on top of the water tower. He stated that he just wanted a height comparison.

Fire Chief Reese explained just so the Planning Commission is aware, the Fire Department did look into placing their radio equipment on top of the water tower. They have looked into other considerations as well and have done their due diligence in researching this, but it just wasn't going to work because they weren't high enough. He stated that this makes the most sense out of everything that they did research on.

Member Mollenkamp asked if this tower would be located on leased property and are they going to lease this land from the School Board.

Jason Woodward stated that they have a fully executed lease with the School currently.

Chairman Rothgery addressed Member Anderson and asked if he had any comments or questions.

Member Anderson stated that he did have a question regarding how much this tower would cost the City.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster stated that TowerCo is going to physically place the antennas on the tower as they build it. He stated that the City's participation is to have the coax cables and if the City is going to change antennas that would be part of the cost. We now know that we have to have a license to move it. We will move it with a Federal FCC transfer license. We also now recognize that the existing pole is not placed in the appropriate place where it should be as it is several hundred yards away from where it was originally sited for and so, that was another issue.

Member Mollenkamp addressed the Fire Chief and Police Chief and restated that sometimes on Case Road, you lose signal. He asked what happens when you are at the far south west corner of town. He asked if they lose the signal more in that direction.

Police Chief Freeman stated that it depends on the atmosphere such as the wind blowing. It, it really is a variable. He believes that really it comes down to the age of the current tower, the old wires going up the pole, their repeater system, etc. Those are all things that are going to be replaced regardless of installing this new tower, but, in this instance for the City to have its own tower built without the cost is a dream that normally doesn't come true. This is an opportunity that obviously would not have presented itself without monies coming from the

City.

Fire Chief Reese stated that the other bonus to this too is our mobile data terminals work off of 4G, which is the Verizon 4G. They have amplifiers right now in both fire stations trying pick up dead spots for 4G for Verizon. He stated that this will make 4G throughout the community a lot better along with helping out the Fire Department. Besides picking up calls from 9-1-1 on that, they also send 12-Lead EKG's to the hospital using that 4G so it is pretty important to the Fire Department to get that better service and he believes that it will provide a better service.

Jason Woodward stated that it will because Verizon doesn't have the full coverage capability here right now. That is why. He stated that if the community is bouncing off of Verizon's 700 megahertz, which that is what that is, the level of performance will increase tenfold for the emergency systems.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster added in an effort to answer Member Anderson's question again regarding the cost; with the way that this is coming forward now, they will be planning in March of next year for next year's budget and will know more as that comes closer. They are still in research right now. However, it is far less than what we anticipate giving the fact of potential liability issues with the existing tower. He stated that the City was going to put money into the old tower by adding electronic locks, a new fence, new cameras, new heating and air conditioning system in there. He stated that they stopped all of that to move forward on this project. He stated that the City didn't expend those monies for repairs and replacements.

Member Mollenkamp asked if there was a projected date to have this tower up and running.

Jason Woodward stated six to nine months before they dig dirt and that is mainly due to regulatory approvals from FCC/FAA/ NEPA/SHPO, Phase 1, and Environmental, etc. Once those approvals are received they can proceed with construction.

Chairman Rothgery reminded the Planning Commission members that this is just an easement that is here for discussion. When the tower comes back to Planning, they will have specific drawings for that.

Member Mollenkamp stated that they are trying to give a little heads up ahead of time.

Chairman Rothgery asked if anyone else on the Commission has any other questions or comments.

Member Olesen stated that what he is hearing here tonight, he believes that it is a win/win situation for the City. We have a communication system, he said, that could fail at any time

and we will get this one free of charge. It will be a great benefit to our safety forces no matter where they are located in the City. He believes that this is a great idea.

Jason Woodward stated he had one final comment. He stated to reward the City on receiving the approval to the right to the easement, they allocated \$18,000 to hang the Police, Fire, Municipal, school and meter reading system onto the tower. So, they are funding that for the passage of the easement.

Safety-Service Director Armbruster added that Kevin Fougerousse, Park and Recreation Director is here tonight as well. There have been some discussions regarding the new pathway in terms of whether or not this tower would have an impact on its location. It does not. They looked at the area of where the shot-put will be as it goes through over here by the football stadium. Kevin gave a drawing that shows how there will be little or no impact to the area in how the school will use it. However, they haven't used the baseball backstop for years and years and years. That won't be able to be used. He stated that he assumes that will be taken down and used someplace else.

Chairman Rothgery asked Mr. Greene if he wanted to address the Commission and give any feedback as it relates to the schools.

Assistant Superintendent Bill Greene stated that he wanted to address the issue with the Corn Festival and the use of the space back there. He continued to explain that the schools have 13.1 acres at that site and only five of those acres are used for the schools and the parking lot, which means 8.1 of those acres are for the football complex, the practice fields and the property in the back that the Corn Festival uses. So, they don't anticipate any problem with the 100 by 100 foot section of that property being taken for the cell tower.

Chairman Rothgery addressed the Commission and asked for a recommendation to Council in regard to the easement agreement legislation.

It was moved by Mollenkamp and seconded by Hurst to recommend that Council approval T102 with a positive affirmative.

Yes, 5 No, 0

Motion was approved by a vote of five to zero.

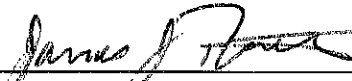
ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Rothgery stated since there is no other business, this meeting is adjourned.

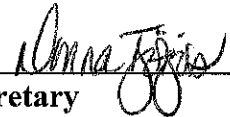
Meeting adjourned at 7:32 P.M.

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING - SEPTEMBER 10, 2013**

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Chairman



Secretary

October 08, 2013
Date Approved