

Minutes of the  
Community Development Board  
City of Geneseo, Henry County, Illinois  
January 4, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Larry Meyer.

Roll Call:

The following board members were present: Eberhardt, Koustas, Meyer, Schmid, Simon, Talbott, and Wachtel. Kennett and Lobaito were absent. Also in attendance were City Administrator Teresa Savage, Building Inspector Kent Anderson, Aldermen Ed Deener and Karen West, City Attorney Virgil Thurman, Dick Stone, Andy Anderson, and Sean Boylan. Alderman Linda Van Der Leest arrived later.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Eberhardt, second by Simon to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2009 meeting, as presented.

Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried

Approval of Bills/Budget:

Motion by Schmid, second by Wachtel to approve the bills for October-December, 2009 as presented.

Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried

Motion by Simon, second by Schmid to open the Public Hearing at 7:05 p.m.

Public Hearing regarding Amendment to Section 9-9-15 Wireless Communication Facility Sites to the City of Geneseo's Zoning Ordinance:

Chairman Meyer recognized Sean Boylan, representing Tower Sites, Inc., who are requesting the amendment to the zoning ordinance to include a privately owned site at 504 East Exchange Street in Overlay District 1. Mr. Boylan introduced Andy Anderson, representing I-Wireless. Previously, I-Wireless had investigated locating a tower on the Geneseo Municipal Property just across the railroad tracks from the Exchange Street site under consideration. The GMU site had failed the Phase 2 environmental test, and the cost of remediation made continued consideration of that site unacceptable. Simon asked if the proposed tower would be 150 feet or 190 feet high. Meyer asked why they felt they had to place the tower on private property. Boylan replied that the owner of the property is a partner in the firm and it would be more cost effective to locate where no monthly rental payment would be required. Schmid asked if there was sufficient space around the property in question. Boylan explained that when the same situation arose in Bettendorf, they had requested a change in the ordinance rather than a zoning variance. City Attorney Thurman stated that the board should make its recommendation based on a land use issue, not that it is the City's place to have exclusive right to rent revenue. Koustas asked why it had to be located within city limits. Anderson responded that with more cell phones in use, the current antenna are getting maxed out, and they need improved coverage due to call volume. Many buildings in central Geneseo are constructed of stone or brick and signal strength requires closer proximity to tower. I-Wireless had checked every site in the Overlay District 1 of the existing ordinance, but only the GMU site provided the coverage needed. Eberhardt offered that the Electric Board had approved having a tower at that site, so there should be no issue with simply approving it on the other side of the railroad tracks. Koustas expressed an interest in how many I-wireless customers there actually were in Geneseo. Anderson stated that although the

City would not be receiving rental income, there would be additional taxable property in the City and utility charges. Talbott asked why none of the other sites included in the ordinance would work. Anderson said the engineers had checked every site, and the only one that met their coverage needs was the electric department site. Boylan said it is an issue of coverage vs. capacity—more people using cell phones for games, downloads, etc., not just phone calls. Deener asked Thurman if the City could charge a licensing fee in place of the rent? Thurman responded “Possibly,” but he would have to check the regulatory statutes. Deener asked if he could have an answer before the next council meeting, and Thurman replied that he could. Talbott wanted to be sure that if the amendment was approved, it would apply only to this single site, and if so, what criteria are we using to OK now, that would not set precedent to have to approve subsequent requests. Koustas asked how high the McDonald’s sign is for comparison—Kent Anderson replied, “80 feet.” Meyer felt that all such facilities should remain on public property, not set a precedent by approving on private property. Boylan replied that it is a single request, no precedent. Talbott asked A. Anderson why no other sites were workable, to which Anderson replied that I-Wireless engineers would only rank the one site, there was no second place option. Talbott asked if the board could have access to site surveys and modeling reports, that the Board needed more information than just being told there were no other sites. Anderson replied that he had no authority to give that information, but he would be happy to identify current antenna sites. He also stated that other carriers would be likely to seek an in-town location in the future, and the City needed to identify additional available sites. He has read hundreds of ordinances, and while having a list of available sites is a good idea, it is short-sighted to eliminate all private property sites. Meyer asked if we will have to make the same accommodation for all cellular providers or could they share, and did I-Wireless look at the Police Station where they already have a radio tower?

Motion by Schmid, second by Wachtel to return to regular session at 7:40 p.m.  
Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Consideration of an Ordinance amending Section 9-9-15 Wireless Communication Facility Sites to the City of Geneseo’s Zoning Ordinance:

Schmid inquired about the original list of sites in Overlay District 1—he did not feel that Millikin School or the High School should be on the list. Meyer reiterated that what the Board was doing was making a recommendation to City Council on whether or not to add the 504 E. Exchange property to the list. Schmid asked Boylan if 150 feet is a standard height for similar structures. Boylan said they build 300 foot towers in Indiana, and have a 195 foot structure in Kankakee. The I-Wireless tower which had been proposed on the Electric Dept site was to have been 130 feet. Talbott asked if the intent in the original list was to give the city revenue or control over the location of towers. Thurman replied that it was not money, but to retain control over the siting. Wachtel said that in this case the City is lucky because the proposed site is OK, but that he thinks the ordinance needs work and should include specific criteria for future requests.

Motion by Wachtel, second by Schmid to recommend to City Council amending Section 9-9-15 Wireless Communication Facility Sites to the City of Geneseo’s Zoning Ordinance by adding 504 E. Exchange to the list of available sites in Overlay District 1.  
Voice vote, 5 ayes, 2 nays, motion carried.

Consideration of acceptance of subdivision 1.5 miles within the perimeter of City limits:

Attorney Dick Stone explained that the County’s zoning rules require the City’s zoning officer to sign off on a subdivision within a certain proximity to City limits. Schmid asked why the property owner did not request to annex to the City. Stone responded that it was not financially worth the expense to pay to

run city services for four 1-acre lots. Kent Anderson explained that the nearest sewer is north of Rt. 6, and this site is a fair distance south of Rt. 6. Thurman explained that the action the Board is taking is authorizing Kent Anderson to sign off on the subdivision as the City's zoning officer.

Motion by Schmid, second by Talbott to authorize the City's zoning officer to sign for the City's acceptance of the Bluff Road Estate Subdivision.

Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Consideration to waive the Concordia Evangelical Lutheran Church building permit fee(roof) in the amount of \$336.50

Motion by Schmid, second by Koustas to waive the building permit fee for a roof for Concordia Lutheran Church.

Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Adjournment:

Motion by Schmid, second by Koustas to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa C. Savage, Board Secretary