

WABASH COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION

*Wabash County Court House
One West Hill Street, Suite 205
Wabash, IN 46992
Telephone 260-563-0661 EXT 1252, 1267
Fax 260-563-5895
plandirector@wabashcounty.IN.gov*

WABASH COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION BOARD MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 5, 2015

**Wabash County Plan Commission Board
Wabash County Court House
Wabash IN 46992**

PC Board Members: Curtis Campbell, Randy Curless, Scott Givens, Doug Rice, Sue Ridenour, Lowell Rosen, David Schuler, Cheri Slee, Joe Vogel, Attorney Larry Thrush

Members present: Curtis Campbell, Randy Curless, Scott Givens, Doug Rice, Cheri Slee, Joe Vogel and Attorney Larry Thrush.

Mr. Givens opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Vogel motioned to approve the January 8, 2015 minutes as written.
Mr. Curless second.

Mr. Howard explained that West Plains Mining was on the agenda for a special exception (rail siding) but Mr. Woodward called the office last week and said he probably would not be ready to proceed with the special exception at this time. He called again this week to confirm that he needs more time because of issues with the rail road and floodplain he needed to work out. It might be another month or two before he is ready to come before the Plan Commission.

First item of business:

Westchester Services, SE #3 / Variance -Cell Tower
Co Rd. 800 S and St Rd 15 South
Part of the North East ¼ of the North West ¼ of Section 17, Township 26N, Range 7E, Liberty Township. Wabash, IN. Approx. 9.9 Acres. Zoned Agriculture.

Mr. Howard told Board Members that Westchester Services would like to construct a 308 foot cell tower on property owned by Deardorff Farms (Mark and Loretta). The parcel actually consists of 170.3 acres but there is a small corner of the parcel (north east) that is separated by State Rd. 15 and the rail road and this will be the location of the tower.

This tower is identical to the one (Westchester Services, SE #1) in Manchester that was presented to the Board last month.

County Highway has been contacted regarding the culvert pipe for the drive.

The Tower would be about 233 feet from State Road 15 to the west (165 feet to rail road), 369 feet from the nearest residence (north east of tower) and approximately 143 feet from the County Road 800 S. (north). Property to the east is owned by Paperwork's.

Within the SE, a Variance is requested for the property lines to the west (rail road easement) and north (800 S) since they are less than 250 feet.

Corporate offices of Westchester Services are located in Rosemont, IL so a conference call was placed by Mr. Howard with representatives from Westchester Services. Barrett Alexander, Jack Auriema Jr., and James Grzenia were placed on speaker so Board Members could hear and discuss information regarding the tower.

Barrett Alexander stated that they requested a Special Exception and Variance (for property lines to the west and north) for a cell tower located near Lafontaine. The tower would be 308 feet and there will be a 75 foot by 75 foot fence surrounding the tower. The gravel drive will be 12 foot wide. Distance from the road is 143 feet from County Rd 800 S.

Mr. Howard added that to the east of the tower there is a county (open) ditch. The tower is more than 75 feet away from the ditch, correct?

Yes, stated Mr. Alexander.

Mr. Givens asked if the ground will be farmed.

Yes, anything outside of the guide wires will be farmed and the area within guide wires will be maintained by planting switch grass and mowing said Mr. Auriema, Jr.

Are you purchasing the ground?

No, it is an easement stated Mr. Alexander. Landowners prefer an easement rather than selling the land since a lot of ground has been in the family for many years and landowners don't want to sell. If in the future, the tower was no longer used, it would be torn down and then the ground would be restored back to how it was originally before the tower was built.

The tower is designed to hold up to four carriers. It will be built according to newer engineering standards developed by the State of Indiana, which are not yet currently required by the State. Mr. Deardorff has requested that the tower is engineered so it can hold an Omni directional antenna so farmers in the area with GPS capability on their farm equipment can access this technology via satellite.

There are four notifications regarding the tower that will be sent by certified letter to neighboring property owners.

Mr. Givens thought this was a good location for a tower because of the lack of service in the area.

Mr. Rice motioned for favorable recommendation of Special Exception #3.

Mr. Vogel second.

All approved 6-0.

Motion carried.

Barrett Alexander, Jack Auriema Jr., and James Grzenia were informed that the BZA meeting would be February 24, 2015. Certified letters and the legal ad would be administered through the Plan Commission Office.

Members were given a copy of an e-mail from Mr. Givens regarding Senate Bill SJR 12 which, if passed, would mandate it unconstitutional for local governments to limit rapidly expanding farms.

Members reviewed and discussed the information.

No action was taken but Members decided to monitor the situation.

Mr. Howard updated Members on the new ordinances.

Mrs. Ridenour had previously read through the definitions within the ordinance draft and highlighted any that she had a question or concern on.

Members reviewed and discussed those definitions that were in question.

No further business, Mr. Vogel motioned to adjourn.

Mr. Rice second.

Scott Givens