

Town of Bowdoin
Planning Board Minutes
April 11, 2023

Members Present:

Michaeline Mulvey, Chair M 9 May 2023
Jim Moulton
Lauren Leclerc JJ

Helen Watts, Vice-Chair HW
Gwen Thomas

Absent:

Dennis Douglas, Code Enforcement Officer

Members of the public attending: Barbara Finlayson, Gideon Wheeler, Reuben Wheeler, Bosh Gashlin, Bob Ballew, Wanda Ballew

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm.

Consideration of Minutes: Watts moved to accept the minutes of March 28, 2023, as amended. Moulton seconded. Four votes in favor, one abstention. The minutes will be signed at the next meeting.

Old Business:

Reuben & Gideon Wheeler in about proposed storage units on Russel and Timothy Wing's property

The Wheelers brought in some additional information about the project, including an updated map. A gate will be put up if necessary. Mulvey indicated that information on the sign (size etc.) is still needed. Wheeler indicated it will not be lit. An onsite wetland delineation was completed in January of 2023. Leclerc indicated that the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) may require a growing season verification of the delineation. Wheeler stated that that a Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA) Tier 1 application is being filed with the MDEP. Leclerc indicated that a copy of the application should be sent to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as well. Mulvey stated that the Planning Board will not be able to act on a Site Plan Review application until MDEP and USACE approvals are received.

US Cellular Tower Site Plan Review Application, Tax Map 6-01-0, owned by Richard and Susan Morgan

The public hearing was called to order at 7:30 pm.

Bob Gashlin, US Cellular representative, gave an overview of the Project location and description of the Project.

Mr. Ballew commented that the proposed tower is approximately 1,000 feet at a 20-degree angle to his residence, and probably won't be visible from his house.

Ms. Finlayson asked how the tower will affect property values. Bob stated that while studies have shown that towers themselves don't affect property values, telecommunications infrastructure can increase property values (allow people to more easily work from home).

Reuben Wheeler asked Mr. Gashlin what will happen when we switch to satellite for cell phone (i.e., what does US Cellular plan to do with existing towers at that point). Mr. Gashlin indicated that each tower costs between \$400,000-\$700,000 and he doesn't think that satellite technology will be coming around in the near future. Mr. Gashlin stated that every lease option, for all carriers, has a clause obligating the lessee to remove the tower infrastructure when it is no longer in use. Mr. Wheeler asked if there is another tower in the area and Mr. Gashlin indicated there is another one roughly 1,200 feet away on the same hill.

The public hearing was closed at 7:52 pm.

§7: PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:

Watts moved that this application meets A1: Preserve and Enhance the Landscape Performance Standard. The landscape will be preserved in its natural state to the largest extent practicable by limiting tree removal and other disturbances to only what is required to accommodate the compound, parking area and access easement as shown in the landscaping plan, site plan page C-1. Retained, existing mature foliage will buffer the facility. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A2: Relationship of the Proposed Building to Environment Performance Standard. The facility will be located in existing dense mature trees at the rear of a 15.6-acre parcel as shown on site plan page C-1 and will assimilate with the surroundings that include a similar tower located approximately 1,200 feet to the northeast. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A3: Vehicular Access Performance Standard. Not applicable because the access road will be in Bowdoinham as shown on site plan page C-2. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A4: Parking and Circulation Performance Standard. The 1,000 s.f. parking area will be adequate for the unmanned facility. See site plan page C-5. After construction, US Cellular anticipates 1 vehicular trip to the site per month on average for maintenance. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A5: Surface Water Drainage Performance Standard. Drainage and runoff will not be significant considering the compound and parking area being developed has a net slope of only 4 feet as shown on site plan page C-3. US Cellular's erosion and sedimentation plan is included on site plan page G-1. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A6: Existing Utilities Performance Standard. The facility will have no impact on sewers, drains, water lines or other public utilities. US Cellular will install its own 800-amp service to the facility. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A7: Advertising Features Performance Standard. No advertising is proposed. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A8: Special Features of the Development Performance Standard. The facility and all associated equipment will be set back a minimum of 60 feet from the closest property line and will be screened from view to the largest extent practicable by existing mature

vegetation. The communication facility will be completely enclosed by fencing except for the pad-mounted transformer. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A9: Exterior Lighting Performance Standard. The only lighting at the facility will be a single 100W downward directional motion detector operated service light located at the equipment cabinets at the base of the tower for use in the event technicians need to perform work after dark. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A10: Emergency Vehicle Access Performance Standard. The access road will adequately accommodate emergency vehicles considering it is designed for much larger equipment including cranes, flat-bed trucks, etc. to construct the site. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A11: Municipal Services Performance Standard. No significant impact on community services is anticipated considering the facility will be unmanned and maintained by US Cellular. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A12: Will Not Result in Undue Water Pollution Performance Standard. The unmanned facility will not require water or produce water pollution. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A13: Will Not Result in Undue Air Pollution Performance Standard. The electronically operated, unmanned facility will create no air pollution. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A14: Sufficient Water Available Performance Standard. The unmanned facility will not require water or produce water pollution. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A15: Water Supply Performance Standard. The unmanned facility will not require water or produce water pollution. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A16: Erosion Performance Standard. Erosion will not be significant considering the compound and parking area being developed has a net slope of only 4 feet as shown on site plan page C-3. US Cellular's erosion and sedimentation plan is included on site plan page G-1. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A17: Sewage Waste Disposal Performance Standard. The unmanned facility will not produce sewage during operation. During construction, a porta-potty will be located on-site. Moulton seconded. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A18: Aesthetics Performance Standard. The facility will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, open space, aesthetics, historic sites or rare and irreplaceable natural areas considering it will be located in existing dense mature trees at the rear of a 15.6-acre parcel as shown on site plan page C-1 and will assimilate with the surroundings that include a similar tower located approximately 1,200 feet to the northeast. See the response letters from Maine Natural Areas Program and Maine Historic Preservation Commission which

found no impact on rare, threatened or endangered plants or historic sites. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that this application meets A19: Financial and Technical Capacity Performance Standard. US Cellular has the financial capacity to construct and operate the facility based on its \$7.25 billion capitalization as shown in the submitted financials. US Cellular has the technical capacity to construct and operate the facility considering it is a national telecommunications company licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to operate in 26 states including Maine, where it operates over 600 sites. Moulton seconded the motion. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

Watts moved that that the Board approve the Project as submitted. Moulton seconded. Four votes to approve. One abstention.

§8: GENERAL PROVISIONS:

- a. Waivers. US Cellular did not request any waivers.
- b. Performance Bond. There is no practical need for a performance bond considering US Cellular's financials discussed above and as provided in the application.
- c. Permitted construction. US Cellular agrees to perform work in conformance with the approved site plan.

Watts moved that the Board waive the performance bond and accept US Cellular's statement that they will perform work in conformance with the approved site plan. Moulton seconded. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

§9: TRUST ACCOUNT:

Watts moved that this should be waived because there doesn't appear to be any risk to the Town because of this Project. Moulton seconded. Four votes to approve, one abstention.

New Business:

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Leclerc, Secretary

Cc: Selectmen, Webmaster, Code Enforcement, Planning Board Files