



City of Gahanna

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Meeting Minutes Planning Commission Workshop

Donald R. Shepherd, Chair

Bobbie Burba, Vice Chair

David K. Andrews

Kristin E. Rosan

Thomas J. Wester

Jennifer Price

Joe Keehner

Kayla Holbrook, Deputy Clerk of Council

Wednesday, June 1, 2016

6:30 PM

City Hall

OPEN MEETING

Chair Shepherd opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES: Michael Blackford, Kayla Holbrook, Dottie Franey, Rob Priestas, Bonnie Gard, Shane Ewald.

ITEMS

[CC-0001-2016](#)

To recommend to Council, changes to Part Eleven - Planning and Zoning Code, Chapter 1181, Personal Wireless Service Facilities, of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Gahanna.

(Advertised in the Dispatch on 6/2/2016)

Ewald said we have an overhaul of Chapter 1181; last update was in 2007; technology is constantly changing and there are new opportunities; other communities have updated their code in the last five years; purpose of bringing this tonight is to start to process and review the code and make any changes or recommendations before it moves to Council; here to answer any questions; we want to make sure our neighborhoods are not indulged with giant towers; want these towers in places that make sense; want people to have access to wireless communications; understand people do not want them in their backyard; we also see a trend where people are moving from landlines to cell phones; have to be a common denominator, technology-wise, to allow people to have access to this; need to look at things we can do and opportunities; could be on a building; first part has an extensive definition section; a lot of this is from Dublin; we used their code as a starting process; brings the process to a conditional review; there is a classification table in the code that helps break things down; each section has a breakdown of the setbacks and requirements; we can take questions or go into detail of each section;

Andrews asked if the last time we went through this, we had pictures of what looked like trees; cell companies said that was too expensive and we do not do that; asked what the pictures were for; they were not willing to do those things; California was where they were taken, could be different; cannot put these towers just anywhere; asked how we will address this; Ewald said they cannot be prohibited but can prohibit where they go; this code embraces the process; believes it will work and be better for our community; has a height limitation of 120 feet; will not see large towers; encourage co-location; if you already have a tower, you are grandfathered; goal is to embrace towers but in a different fashion; want to control how it looks and where it goes; Andrews asked if limiting the location protects us; Ewald said there is a range; Verizon was very descriptive of how the technology functions; we have the ability to offer fiber connectivity in certain areas; no reason we cannot place on top of certain taller buildings; other communities have done it; knows it is possible; there are a lot of options; have to have a willing partner; heard from Verizon; they are willing to work with us; they have received this code; technology changes daily; Shepherd said we are being accommodating but that may not be a large cell tower; ask that they use an alternative structure; we had two complaints from the last two; would this code allow those to go up as proposed; Ewald said they would be allowed to apply but it would require a variance; at least for New Life; it would be somewhat similar; Shepherd confirmed this has been vetted through other communities; Andrews asked if there are any changes from the dangers of the cell phone towers; noted we were not allowed to ask any questions about radiation; Ewald said you cannot; asking about the fall zone is relevant and you can ask; Andrews said the new towers do not supposedly fall, they collapse; Franey said the safety factor for districts, the RID zoned that abuts residential districts, they are limited to 100 feet and have a triple setback; Andrews confirmed that would apply to New Life; Rosan asked what variance they would need; Ewald said the setback requirement; Gard said it has to be setback from principle structures; Rosan said the administrative review for alternative structures; would look at the pole, looks like a tree and also the base; Ewald confirmed; looks at the entire WCF; Rosan said all the design is done administratively as long as the alternative structure is proposed; Ewald said that is his understanding; Wester asked who connects the carrier; if someone wanted to put an antenna on top of Creekside; who brings those people together; Ewald said up to the carrier; vet whether or not they meet the requirements; that takes anywhere from 18 months to three years; they come with multiple reviews; they know exactly where it needs to go; would then bring to the City; Blackford said with New Life, Stinchcomb suggested numerous properties as an alternative, like Creekside and that was not met by the applicants needs; Wester said Verizon can always say it does not fit my needs; Burba asked about the proximity to the airport;

Ewald said they have tried to secure rights with the Atlas building; size of the tower on that side is larger than we would allow; does not appear that proximity would impact them in Gahanna; Rosan asked if you can walk through the administrative review; are you envisioning a hearing or is this an administrative review and someone reaches out to the applicant; not open to the public; how does the applicant know to make modifications; Ewald said the group would get together, review requirements and then make a determination and issue a finding; asked Gard if that sounds correct; Gard confirmed; Ewald said it would be a follow up process with a modification to the application; Rosan said it would seem the applicant would benefit from the feedback; asked if this could be less democratic; an opportunity for the applicant to attend the review; Gard said there is a pre-application meeting; Ewald said this is at the discretion of the City; would imagine any concerns they would then meet with the applicant; Rosan said that is at the option of the City; seems a little one-sided to the City; Wester said that is the way it should be; Rosan said yes and no, but could be an opportunity to gain some of the design features Andrews asked about; Wester said a cell operation, they will put as high as possible for the coverage; Verizon is intent on serving the customers on 270; will get additional coverage within the City; asked what Verizon's business model is; on the west coast you will see the disguise of the towers; it is in something like this; said this is based on Dublin; asked what Dublin's experience is; what does Dublin look like with towers; Andrews said they have a lot of them on the light posts; Rosan said they have had something like this longer; Ewald said we see an opportunity to work with carriers as much as possible but technology is constantly changing; we are seeing growth in different areas; put a code that has some teeth in it; from an administrative standpoint we want to work with the carrier and put in less intrusive towers; Shepherd said the equipment cabinets, we discussed that, hiding it, painting it, asked who would approve that; Gard said it will be approved by a team; Shepherd asked what we are asking for and if we have thought that through; said something about it growing within 3 years; we know people put in the bare minimum; Ewald said there are landscaping requirements; bringing in different departments, you have various viewpoints; will get a better product; Shepherd said that is where you are going to get citizen complaints; Priestas said is on a case-by-case basis; the underground equipment shelters will almost be mandated in those situations; as a team we would look to require that for these types of shelters; Ewald asked how we get this in there to match the other areas; used the word stealth heavily; administrative team will take that seriously; Wester said there are water departments with pump stations that look like homes; Andrews said barn on Morse Road that hides that; Ewald said public hearing next week; if you have changes, direct those to him; Rosan asked if we are looking for us to recommend this before the stakeholders have had a chance to look at

it; Ewald said no, it is your recommendation; ask that you take your time and work through this process and make sure it is a code you can get by; make sure this is the right thing for our community; legally we believe it is sound; there may be things you do not like; maybe the carrier having the right to a review is an option we add; we want the full support; Ewald said we built in enough time for another workshop and recommendation on the 22nd; up to the Commission; possibly discuss next week; one resident received this today and another resident will get it later tonight; is available on our website; if we can get public input and take our time we will have an excellent product to take to Council; Shepherd said does not like variances; asked if we can make this work and not deal with variances; Ewald said legally, no; stand in line and say no to variances; always will be that one exception; will be that one thing you cannot account for in legislation; the exception is not the rule; would keep the variance requirement in here; do not have to grant it; do not want to say never, that is when you legally get hit; Rosan said we would leave them no other choice other than to sue; Rosan said administrative review team would be allowed to vary in another fashion; what minor deviations means exactly, allows for flexibility; Gard said we discussed not allowing variances at all; that eliminates almost all of Gahanna; except estate residential; cannot shut them out; Rosan said are we expecting each application will need a variance; Gard said not necessarily; Andrews said adding to an existing structure does not come to us; Gard confirmed; for co-locations on previously approved towers, they can all be approved administratively; as long as they are changing out equipment; that is all pretty streamline; this process is much better; it is not just one person looking at this; is a group of folks; would take recommendations very strongly; is a complicated code; not easy reading; this team has spent countless hours doing this code; wants it to be right in our eyes; please read and understand it; Franey said during the New Life experience last year, group of residents put together an organized list of their concerns; thought it was important to acknowledge this; spent time reviewing it and put together a document that summarizes and spells out their concerns; where appropriate, have addressed how the new code addresses those concerns; can get that out to the Commission tomorrow; Rosan said it would be helpful to share with those folks; Gard said absolutely, will follow-up; Wester said for Verizon and the other carriers, this is not a new code to them; their legal counsel has seen this or something very similar; they know how to address it; Shepherd said we want them here; we all agree with that; how can we make it work for everyone; Wester asked their terms or your terms; Rosan asked if this is based on the land; on City land; what about stuff like Jefferson Township; adjacent to Gahanna homeowners; Ewald said nothing to prohibit; Rosan said it could fall on a Gahanna home; we have Hannah Farms; the township could add one; homes are in the fall zone; asked if saw any attempt to regulate

that; Ewald said outside of jurisdiction; carriers will only put their towers where they will make economic sense; will be in the heart of a heavier population; the township will be a rare placement; Gard said the township requires nothing the last she knew; Rosan asked if Gahanna Woods is Gahanna owned or township; Ewald said portion is City; we have a water tower there; Shepherd said send notes to Ewald and copy all members; Andrews said it seems really good; Rosan asked what New Albany does; they are usually at the forefront; Ewald said they are with the stealth; similar to Dublin.

ADJOURNMENT

7:16 p.m.