Coote Hill Correspondence Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 22, 2021 7:00 pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT: (Ad Hoc Committee Members) R. Peburn, M. Lee, N. Volkmar, J. Burrano, and R. Lenihan

ALSO PRESENT: ZEO, R. Cooper and Administrative Clerk C. Branson

CALL TO ORDER: R. Peburn Called the Ad Hoc Committee Meeting to Order at 7:01 pm.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Meeting shall be for the members of the Ad Hoc Committee to meet and draft a letter to the CT Siting Council regarding a possible cell tower facility proposed at 16 Coot Hill Road, Sherman, CT 06784.

Chair, R. Peburn opened the Ad Hoc Meeting. ZEO R. Cooper sent the Committee a report of observations and recommendations as well as a marked up map to discuss at this Meeting. Last week, the full Commission was sent the Sherman Conservation Commission Assessment presentation which was submitted to the CT Siting Council, dated March 10, 2021 as well as excerpts from Homeland Towers, LLC and New Singular Wireless’ proposal to the CT Siting Council highlighting areas of concern. The Committee members discussed details of the report submitted from Mr. Cooper. Topics of discussion were; the number of proposed trees to be removed, the potential erosion impact caused by the removal of trees, proper management of storm water flow during weather events, impact, safety and welfare of the property owners who live on Coote Hill Road. The Committee asked Mr. Cooper if there was any input from the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission regarding the proposed tower plans. Mr. Cooper stated there was no feedback from the IWWC regarding the proposed cell tower site. The Committee requested Mr. Cooper ask the IWWC to weigh in on an opinion of the proposed cell tower application. Discussion followed regarding potential impacts sited by the Conservation Commission. The Committee discussed requesting an assessment of an independent Engineer and details involved with requesting the support of the Board of Selectman to seek funding for an impact report. The Committee discussed details on becoming an intervener. Also discussed was the proximity from the proposed site to abutting neighbor’s homes. The Committee thanked Mr. Cooper for his report stating it was very well put together and based on his knowledge and expertise. Chair, Peburn stated he would like to see more data to feel comfortable with this proposal from Homeland Towers, LLC and New Singular Wireless. The Committee agreed to request of the Board of Selectman’s support the request of an independent assessment from a third party Engineer. Chairman Peburn reiterated the Commission owes it to the town taxpayers to assure their safety and welfare during the installation of this tower. First Selectman D. Lowe was invited to join this meeting briefly at approximately 8:00 pm, (he was in the Town Hall). Chair Peburn went over the details of concern to get First Selectman Lowe up to speed about their discussion to request a third party engineer report. Mr. Lowe recommended waiting to come before the CT Siting Council to present the letter of concerns from P&Z. Chair Peburn stated he was not opposed to the cell tower itself, he was concerned about the safety and welfare of the people who live on Coote Hill Road during the installation. Mr. Lowe stated he feels the Citing Council will request what is needed regarding the potential environmental impact during installation of the tower. Mr. Lowe reminded the Committee there was a vehicle roll over earlier today, where the driver had to walk quite a distance to the nearest home to ask to call for help. Mr. Lowe stated his concerns being the health and safety of the whole town by providing improved cell service to that area for emergency purposes. Mr. Lowe recommended the Committee reach out to the applicant Ray Vergatti of Homeland Towers and, Executive Director of the Siting Council, Melanie Bachman to communicate their concerns as well attend the Siting Council Meeting to speak in person. Chair, Peburn reiterated his concern and requested the support of Mr. Lowe to ask the BoS for funding for an impact report from an independent Engineer. First Selectman Lowe stated, if this Commission wishes to proceed, the process is to petition the BoS with the request of a third party engineer assessment of the Coote Hill proposed site, the BoS will have to consider it, and possibly move it to a Town vote if supported. Chair Peburn thanked Mr. Lowe for his input this evening. Discussion followed.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair, R. Peburn Adjourned the Ad Hoc Committee Meeting at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Christine Branson, Administrative Clerk
April 29, 2021