

Town of Hubbardston  
Planning Board & Zoning Board of Appeals

Meeting Minutes

**Location:** 7 Main Street, Slade Building, Hubbardston, MA 01452

**Date:** July 21, 2022

**Members Present:** Kristofer Munroe, Alice Livdahl, Francois Steiger, John DeMalia and Erica Dack. **ZBA present:** Albert Afonso, Andrew Baum, Scott Janssens and, Gail Orciuch

**Members Absent:** Bill Homans

**Other Attendees:** Francis Parisi, Tom Johnson, Bill Murray and Heather Munroe.

Mr. Munroe called to order: (6:30 pm) "This meeting is being broadcast live and digitally recorded."

Ms. Orciuch, for the ZBA made a motion to called their meeting to order.

**Public Comments** - None

**Minutes Approval** - None

**New Business**

a. **Town of Hubbardston Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals -PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE** is hereby given that the Hubbardston Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) will hold a Joint public hearing on Thursday July 21, 2022 at 6:30 pm to consider the application for a Special Permit for Planning Board to construct a cell tower in Hubbardston MA, and the application for Zoning Board of Appeals for requested variance from Hubbardston Zoning ByLaw 5.3 e.2 Access Drive. Applicant is Vertex Towers, LLC. The Proposed Cell Tower is to be located at address 14 Main St Hubbardston map and parcel number 08-A-041, with access to that parcel via 7 Brigham St 08-A-051 and 9 Brigham St 08-A-049. The hearing will be held at Town Hall, 7 Main St., Hubbardston MA 01452 Slade Building.

Mr. Munroe opened the Public Hearing and read the notice into the minutes.

Ms. Orciuch, for the ZBA made a motion to open their Public Hearing.

Francis Parisi, representing the applicant, Vertex Towers, LLC explained he is here tonight seeking a Special Permit from the Planning Board and a Variance from the ZBA.

- 14 Main Street, set back approximately 1200 feet from the road.
- Access is from 7 and 9 Brigham Street.
- The variance is for the driveway that is not in the wireless overlay district.
- The tower is a lattice style. Lattice and monopole towers are allowed per the bylaws.
- The tower is 150 feet.
- The parcel is 13 acres.

Mr. Parisi noted Vertex is not a cell tower but a telecommunications tower that leases space to multiple communications companies.

Mr. Parisi indicated Places Associates had reviewed the application and noted some deficiencies. Mr. Parisi stated the plan has been changed to reflect the deficiencies noted.

Mr. Parisi stated the visual test has been done. Drainage calculations have been submitted.

Mr Parisi explained the maps with the existing and the expanded coverage areas. Mr Parisi indicated the tower will not completely cover Hubbardston entirely.

Mr Parisi indicated the curb cut and driveway are existing at 9 Brigham Street.

The compound is a 50 x 50' area and 75 x 75' has been cleared around it for construction purposes. The compound is fenced.

Mr Parisi noted no FAA lighting is required, also antennas are mounted with a 10 foot separation.

Mr. Parisi discussed the pictures that were taken during the balloon test and have visibility of the balloon. The locations discussed are as follows:

1. Entrance to driveway.
2. Main Street between #10 & #12.
3. Williamsville Road and Main Street split.
4. The park on Gardner Road.
5. Old Princeton Road

There were other random locations in town but the photos have no visibility of the balloon.

Mr. Parisi indicated the hardship for the driveway Variance is defined by the topography and the wording in the bylaw regarding the siting to be in the overlay district.

Mr. Parisi indicated he would like to have the tower built this year.

Mr. Murray stated the funds for the second technical review have not reached the account, and is not sure Mr. Parisi received the email. Mr. Parisi questioned the need for the review as a 90 page analysis was submitted showing the de minimis increase in impervious surface and impact on stormwater run-off.

Mr. Munroe suggests the review and Mr. Murrays professional services are necessary. The bill will be emailed to Mr. Parisi.

Mr. Parisi asked if the monopole requirement could be waived. Mr. Murray stated the Board can waive the requirement.

### *ZBA questions*

Ms. Orciuch asked if the owners of 7 & 9 Brigham Street submitted letters reflecting authorization. Mr. Parisi indicated they have structured easements and letters of authorization with the owners, they are with the application.

---- asked if the applicant has looked at any other parcels. Mr. Parisi stated the focus was on the Town Center District. -- asked if they had considered the church steeple across the street as an option. Mr. Parisi stated it is not designed for telecommunications and could only support one carrier.

---- asked if the pictures presented were a reasonable representations of the balloon test. Mr. Parisi stated yes.

-- indicated the application states it is being designed in accordance with the town's bylaws "as much as possible". What is in the zoning besides what was discussed? Mr. Parisi stated the provision in the zoning states the driveway has to be in the same zoning district as the use. Mr. Parisi noted he had discussions with the Building Inspector.

Mr. Parisi stated the access off Main Street would have to go across wetlands, therefore they chose the Brigham Street access for the 200 foot length as opposed to the 1200 feet from Main Street.

---- asked what the applicant meant by the statement "the monopole or lattice would be camouflaged to the greatest extent possible using artificial screening. Mr. Parisi stated that was a typo and the tower will be blocked by the existing vegetation.

---asked if they had considered the Center School clock tower as a location. Mr. Parisi stated he has never seen the clock tower.

--- asked which Building Inspector Mr. Parisi spoke with. Mr. Parisi stated Roland.

### *Planning Board questions*

Mr. Steiger asked if the overall height of the tower was 150 feet with the lightning rod. Mr. Parisi stated the foundation is one foot so it is 150 feet to the top. Mr. Steiger asked if it is required to be 150 feet. Mr. Parisi indicated 150 feet is the minimum to receive a signal.

Mr. Steiger asked why there was no FAA light required. Mr. Parisi stated there is no impact and the tower is far enough from an airport that it does not trigger a light.

Mr. Steiger asked about the utility hook-up. Mr. Parisi stated the utilities would come in from Brigham Road. Mr. Johnson added the utilities will be run underground from the street, this is not feasible from Main Street.

Mr. Steiger stated there was a third waiver requested for fencing. Mr. Parisi they are seeking a waiver from the stockade fence and use chainlink fencing. Ms. Livdahl asked the height of the fence. Mr. Johnson stated the fence is 6 feet with 3 strands of barbed wire at the top.

Ms. Livdahl asked about the security. Mr. Parisi stated the fence will be locked and the cabinets are monitored remotely.

Mr. Steiger asked what was meant by the term Broadband. Mr. Parisi noted that is a generic term, it is referring to data service.

Mr. Munroe asked how long the tower would operate in the event of a power outage. Mr. Parisi stated there are three sources of power; the Grid is the primary, battery back-ups in the cabinets which supply power for 12-15 hours and also temporary or on-site generators for a long-term outage.

Mr. Munroe called a recess until 8:30 pm.  
The meeting reconvened.

### *Public Comment and Questions*

1. Ms. Zuppa expressed concerns about what the tower will do to her property value.
2. Roger Ford asked about the potential to expand the height of the tower. Ms. Livdahl stated they would need another Special Permit. Mr. Steiger stated the height limit in the bylaw is 150 feet.
3. Rosemary asked what happens when the tower becomes obsolete, who pays for the removal. Mr. Parisi anticipates it will be in place for a while, and stated the bylaw provides for abandonment or discontinuance also the applicant will post a bond that is annually renewable.
4. Ed Blanchard asked how much time was spent with town personnel to determine if there may have been town owned land to locate the tower on. Mr. Parisi did not see any parcels in the Town Center District that were viable options. Mr. Blanchard asked if the lot the new Public Safety tower will be erected on could be used. Mr. Parisi stated they are two different towers.
5. Sara May Plourd asked why 21 Gardner Road was not considered. Mr. Steiger explained the Board's function is to make sure the bylaws are met, and if met the Board cannot say no.
6. Michelle expressed her dislike for the tower in her backyard.
7. Anita & Luigi expressed the loss of their property value.
8. Bill Mayrose stated he is in favor of the tower.
9. Philip Churchill feels the location selection is right and is in favor.
10. Steve Goldsmith asked how far the tower is from Brigham Street. Mr. Parisi stated the tower is approximately 1500 - 2000 feet from Brigham Street.
11. Mr. Goldsmith asked if there would be communication trucks in and out of the tower installing equipment. Mr. Parisi stated there will be construction activity for roughly 6 weeks, once that ends, there will be a 4-wheel drive vehicle once a month to maybe tweak equipment and check on things.
12. Mr. Goldsmith asked if the tower will be operational by the end of the year. Mr. Parisi stated that's the goal, however it is weather dependent.
13. Katie Young voiced her concerns with the lack of cell service in town.
14. Todd Luukko stated he is in favor of this project for the town.
15. Mr. Blanchard suggested using a gravel pit in town for another location.
16. Ms. Munroe read the online comments;

- a. Debbie Lindsey is in favor of having enhanced cell phone service as a resident and a business owner in town.
- b. Christa asked if the town gets revenue from leasing the tower or will the company get the money from the use of the tower. Mr. Parisi stated they pay the landowner rent to be on their property and they rent space on the tower to the telecommunications company. Mr. Parisi stated if the Assessor taxes the tower differently and the property taxes increase, the tower company would pay the increases.

Mr. Steiger asked if the height of the tower including the lightning needs a variance. Mr. Murray stated the rod is not a structural component but that is a determination to be made by the Zoning Officer. Mr. Munroe asked Mr. Parisi to follow-up on this.

Mr. Steiger made a motion to continue the public hearing to August 25, 2022 at 6:30 pm. Ms. Livdahl seconded, all in favor, motion carried (5-0).

Ms. Orciuch made a motion to continue the public hearing to August 16, 2022 at 6:30 pm, at the Town Hall. --- seconded, all in favor (4-0).

Ms. Orciuch made a motion to close the ZBA meeting.. --- seconded, all in favor (4-0).

#### **b. Housing Authority**

Mr. Munroe reviewed an email from Mr. McLane regarding relinquishing the Affordable Housing duties and giving it to the Housing Authority. Ms. Livdahl stated the position consists of a 5 member board each for a term of 5 years, 4 members elected and 1 appointed as a State appointee. The Board discussed the potential of making these positions appointed instead of elected.

#### **c. MRPC-Solar Grant**

Mr. Munroe indicated they received the grant and the document was signed.

#### **Next item on the agenda, Matters Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair**

Ms. Livdahl made a motion to approve Places Associates proposal for the review of the Vertex project as presented in the letter from July 7, 2022, subject to Mr. Parisi's approval. Mr. Steiger seconded. Roll call vote.

Ms. Livdahl - yes

Mr. Munroe - yes

Mr. Steiger - yes

Mr. DeMalia - yes

Ms. Dack - yes

Adjourned: 9:45 pm

