

**CHARLESTON TOWNSHIP**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

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A regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held at the Township Hall on March 18, 2008.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Art Samson, Walter Kohnke, Joan Orman, Don Kramer, and Sue Balkema. **Absent:** Karen Wagar and Phil Larson. Also in attendance: Daniel Mondrella and Nate Meyer (both representing Fortune Wireless/Centennial Wireless) and Ernest Engelhardt (property owner of proposed tower site).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Samson called the meeting to order at 7:25 p.m. and led in the Pledge to the Flag. The meeting began late because of the lack of a quorum.

**ADOPTION OF PROPOSED AGENDA AND MINUTES:**

A motion was made by Balkema/Orman to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Kohnke/Kramer to accept the minutes of the January 18, 2008 meeting as written. Motion carried.

**APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE PERMIT AND SITE PLAN REVIEW:**

Nate Meyer, representing Centennial Wireless/Fortune Wireless, gave a brief presentation. The application for a special use permit is for the erection of a communications tower and equipment shelter at 13720 West M-96 on property owned by Ernest and Rebecca Englehardt. Mr. Meyer noted it was an extensive process to find a site that met all Centennial's criteria. He stated Centennial had complied with all pertinent parts of the Charleston Township ordinance. He also distributed a booklet titled "Centennial Wireless Compliance Statement".

Samson noted that a variance had been granted by the ZBA regarding setbacks for this property, but that variance does not mean that a special exception use permit needs to be granted. The township received no citizen calls and no neighbors were in attendance at this meeting. A letter from Brendon Ragotzy stating his opposition to a communications tower being erected near Augusta was received.

Samson distributed packets from AGS and stated all information submitted by Centennial is administratively complete. He noted the Planning Commission is given the authority to make an advisory recommendation to the Township Board with respect to special exception use applications in Article XXIII Section 23.2 of the ordinance. He then led the commission through a review of Article XXIII Section 23.7 Specific Standards Required of Particular Special Exception Uses, Subsection 4 Communication Tower/Antenna, Items d. - e. It was noted that the ZBA variance granted a setback of 227' from the R-1 District and less than 1000' from four buildings presumed to represent residential uses. Mr. Meyers asserted the tower is designed to be multi-carrier. A dual lighting system that is required by the FAA will be installed on the top. The lease between Centennial and the Engelhardts provides for removal of the tower in the case of abandonment by Centennial; a copy of that lease will be given to the Township. Mr. Mondrella, representing Fortune Wireless site development, stated the tower is visually inspected monthly (from the ground). Samson also led a review of Article XXIII Section 23.3 Criteria for Decision. After surveying commission members, it was determined that review by AGS and the Commission and submissions from the applicant indicate compliance to the ordinance. **A motion was made by Samson/Orman to recommend the Township Board grant a Special Exception Use Permit to Centennial Wireless/Fortune Wireless to locate a wireless telecommunication facility – tower and ground equipment - on a 75' x 75' parcel at 13740 West M-96, Augusta. Motion carried unanimously.**

The Commission then considered the application for Site Plan Review from Centennial Wireless/Fortune Wireless for a wireless telecommunications facility. Samson directed the commission's attention to Article XXIV Site Plan Review Section 24.2 Uses Subject to Site Plan Review and 24.6 2. Criteria for Site Plan Approval. Each criterion for site plan approval was discussed and the following noted: Additional screening was not deemed necessary due to existing brush and trees on the site and the facility's distance from M-96 (approximately 800'). Power and telephone lines will be buried. The total area to be cleared is 75' x 75' plus an 800' access drive and will contain a 10'x20'x10' concrete building that will be accessible to emergency vehicles. There will be no storage or use of hazardous materials on site. Mr. Meyer asserted Centennial Wireless is in compliance with all applicable provisions of the Township ordinance. **A motion was made by Samson/Balkema to approve the site plan for the Centennial Wireless/Fortune Wireless**

**telecommunications facility located at 13740 West M-96, Augusta contingent on the approval of the Special Exception Use Permit by the Township Board. Motion carried unanimously.**

ORDINANCE NO. 11

Charleston Township Ordinance No. 11 provides for a nine member Planning Commission. Consideration has been given to reducing the Commission membership to seven. It is felt the community can be adequately represented, the attendance needed for a quorum more easily achieved, and the smaller number will be more cost effective. **A motion was made by Samson/Orman to recommend to the Township Board that Ordinance No. 11 be amended to provide for a seven member Planning Commission. Motion carried unanimously.**

MEMBERS TIME:

Samson stated the Commission had been notified by Richland Township of an amendment to their Land Use Plan. The amendment applies to a section of land northwest of the Village of Richland and has no affect on Charleston Township. There was a brief discussion concerning the Citizen Planner Curriculum offered by MSU. Commissioner members will inform Samson of the sessions they are interested in attending.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm upon the motion of Balkema/Kramer.

Prepared 3-20-07  
S. Balkema, secretary