

**W. T. PLANNING BOARD MEETING, APRIL 27, 2009, 7:30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Ginny Jones, Susan Silva, Eileen Maley, Jim Powell

**ABSENT:** David Douglas, Leah Smith

**ALSO PRESENT FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING:** Larry Schubert, Toni Cohen, Bob Schwier, Eric Whitman, Tony Higgins, Tucker Hubbell, Ernie Mendenhall, Julie Keefe, Simone DeSorcy

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Discussion: Distributed Antenna System (DAS):** Julie Keefe said that Richard Knabel said there would be a public hearing under the zoning bylaw for the proposed DAS system on June 8. She said that typically the ZBA has more lead time for pre-application discussions, etc.

Ginny said that this project has been percolating since 2005, and it needs to be done carefully, in a thoughtful manner. The Town shouldn't rush into this just because of American Tower Company's business costs. The system still needs to be designed. We don't even have an application yet. Susan said there are signs along the road indicating where poles may go. Ginny said that residents put them there to indicate to the rest of the community where the poles will be – otherwise, no one would know. Chuck Hodgkinson told her that the poles would be 40 feet, wooden, with an 8-foot whip antenna on top. Tucker asked whether existing poles could be used. Ginny said that is to be determined, and that the proposal seems to be changing hourly. She said she felt the Town's cell tower bylaw applies to DAS.

Tucker said that he had recently re-read the cell tower bylaw. It has worked for the Town for 10 years. The ZBA has received 8 applications over the years. There was a discussion of which companies were co-located on which towers. Tucker noted that several companies have merged and/or changed names over the years. He said that section 8.8-5 requires an applicant to justify the need. He said he agreed with Ginny that DAS requires a special permit. Tony Higgins said he felt there was more need for DAS in Chilmark and Aquinnah than in West Tisbury. Ginny noted that the coverage map presented by the applicant shows that service isn't improved in all of the currently un-served areas.

Larry Schubert said that cell tower bylaw might need to be updated to apply to new types of technology. He suggested hiring an expert. Ginny said she had been in touch with a firm in California that specializes in this.

Tucker said that the ZBA would take up the question of whether DAS requires a special permit at its next meeting. The Board should not feel bulldozed. This needs to be done legally. Susan cautioned against rushing to accommodate the applicant. Jim Powell said boards cannot make legally informed decisions when they are rushing. Bob Schwier noted that there isn't even an application in front of the Town yet. Ginny said the Town needs to sit down with the applicant to talk, but not rush, and the public meetings need to be widely advertised. She said DAS should be referred to the MVC under checklist item 3.801.

**Wind Turbine Bylaw:** Tucker suggested that a committee be created to re-draft the wind turbine bylaw. He suggested 2 members each from the ZBA, Planning Board, Energy Committee and Vineyard Energy, and one representative from the community at large.

**Jampel, Special Way:** Ginny said that Michael Jampel has done extensive excavating near the newly-voted Special Way. She said the zoning inspector should look into it

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Simone DeSorcy, administrator