

**PLANNING BOARD
TOWN OF KNOX
ALBANY COUNTY
Established 1822**

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 13, 2008

Present: Dan Driscoll, Bob Gwin, Bob Price, Brett Pulliam, Tom Wolfe

Meeting called to order at 1930.

Minutes of the October meeting were approved as written.

The Board began with a discussion of the Town fee schedule. At their most recent meeting, the Town Board discussed application and building permit fees for cellular towers. Chairman Price contacted several towns to find out fees being charged and discovered that fees range from \$250 to over \$5,000. He also discovered that several towns, including Guilderland, Wilton and Duanesburg all establish escrow accounts that are used to pay for outside engineering firms to review the application, while one town (New Scotland) charges a flat fee to be used toward paying for engineering review. After discussion, the Town Board agreed to make a change to the Town Fee Schedule and add a \$2,500 application fee, a \$1,000 co-location fee and a Building Permit fee based on the size of the area to be used for the facility to apply to applications for a construction of a Cellular Tower.

Chairman Price was approached by a member of the Knox Fire Department to discuss the issue of **installation and use of alternative energy sources in Town.** The Fire Department is curious to know if there is any way to collect information about alternative energy usage in the Town so that the Fire Department is aware of the existence of, for example, battery storage systems in use in case of a fire. The Board discussed several options for obtaining that information including permits granted by the Planning Board for the installation of personal windmills, or permits issued by the Building Inspector for photovoltaic systems (when people approach the Town to obtain one, which is not always done). Tom Wolfe also suggested contacting NYSERDA to see if they maintain a database of people who have obtained a grant for alternative energy system installation. Brett Pulliam suggested that the Fire Department take the step of educating the public as to possible risks to emergency personnel when alternative energy is in use and possibly coming up with signage that could be displayed to alert the Fire Department in the event of an emergency. Dan Driscoll also mentioned that there is a current trend

toward only allowing licensed photovoltaic installers. The organization that licenses installers may have some additional information available; Mr. Driscoll suggested that Russ Pokorny, as a licensed installer, might have contact information that could be used.

Finally, the Board discussed **the possibility of a Commercial Wind Turbine Ordinance**. Chairman Price pointed out that Shell has officially abandoned Albany County as a possible location for wind turbines and, given that and the current financial climate, putting a commercial wind turbine ordinance in place is not as urgent as it has been. However, Chairman Price still feels the Board should research the issue and try to come to some agreement. Chairman Price obtained draft ordinances from the Towns of Duanesburg and Jefferson. Dan Driscoll also did some research and found that some studies suggest a minimum distance of at least 1-2 miles between a Commercial Wind Turbine Farm and the nearest houses, although existing wind turbine farms in New York State clearly do not follow this guidance.

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 2005.

The next meeting will be on December 11th, 2008 @ 1930.