

Town of Hope
Planning Board Meeting
June 7, 2011

Present: Mary Cooper, Dick Brodis, Tug Kellough, Juanita Hunt, Nancy Dowling, John Fowles

Also Present: Jon Duke, CEO & Town Manager

Meeting called to order @ 7:10 p.m.

Minutes of May read and accepted.

Old Business: Review of Completion of Application for Jim Laurita concerning his proposal for bringing an elephant to Hope and housing it on his property.

Meeting was opened from the outset for public input, including e-mails and letters received in the interim. Jim Laurita was asked if he wished to review the contents of the letters or if he preferred to review the Site Plan Review ordinance.

Discussion focused on those communications with an eye towards verifying the bona fides of all parties concerned.

Jim Laurita asked what the expectations of the board were regarding his response to those communications. He was advised to review his application with regard to the town zoning ordinances and the American Zoo Association guidelines, paying particular attention to security concerns, area available for the well being of the elephant and appropriate construction of his facility.

He was told the board needed more than his say so since any testimony from him would have to be considered in his own self interest.

It was also determined that the AZA guidelines were just that and not requirements.

The possibility of getting names and contacts of other single elephant keepers was mentioned as a possibility so that the board could determine on its own what effect such operation have on local communities, as well as the possibility of getting an outside consultant as allowed by the town ordinance, which would have to be at Jim Laurita's expense.

At this point Jim Laurita agreed that he would like to have more time to review his application before submitting it for completion determination. Motion was made, seconded and approved.

The earliest that the meeting could be held would be June 21, 2011, which would still just be within Jim Laurita's timetable for construction if this is all to occur this year.

New Business: Proponents of the wind power moratorium asked for and were given the floor to speak on its behalf. They stressed that there is much clarification of the economics and effects of the current surge in construction of such wind farms. They also stressed that there was a clear separation between wind power that was primarily for onsite use with occasional excess to feed into and bough by the grid and wind farms which exist sole to produce power for off site consumption.

Final Item: Cell tower update: Lease is still not finalized but should be by July 5th.

Setbacks are still an issue which is being worked on for clarification.

Height was clarified as well as the engineering /construction details.

Formal finding will be presented at the meeting in July, but the ordinance allows the board some latitude of discretion in applying rules of fall.

With no further business, motion to adjourn was made, seconded and passed at 8:48 p.m.