

# Village of Germantown Hills

## Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2022 6:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call/Minutes Approval**-Jim Willerton called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and roll call was taken.

Commissioner	Roll Call	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jim Willerton - Chair	Present	Y	Y	Y			
John Taylor	Present	Y	Y	Y			
Steve Rudolph	Present	Y	Y	Y			
Scott Kramer	Present	Y	Y	Y			
Kyle Perry	Present	Y	Y	Y			
Marc Wright	Present	Y	Y	Y			
Paige Patel	Absent	-	-	-			

Also in attendance:

Fred Low, Representative for Chaille Tower Consultants, LLC

Jeff DeGroot, Village President (Electronic)

Nathan Henricks, Village Trustee, Planning Commission Liaison

Tamra Watts, Liquor Shoppe Owner

2. **Minutes Approval**

- a. **November 15, 2021 Minutes**-A motion was made by Scott Kramer to approve the November 15, 2021 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Steve Rudolph. **Motion passed #1.**

3. **Discussion and recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding a proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding personal wireless service facilities and antennas**

Ann Sasso noted the process of any Zoning Ordinance revisions require the Planning Commission to make a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals with a recommendation to the Village Board.

Jeff DeGroot, Village President stated the village has received numerous complaints about cell coverage in the area. Jeff noted a cell tower in Germantown Hills will not only give better reception for the residents in our community but also will help with support for emergency services by providing wireless communications to our public works, fire and police agencies.

Fred Low explained they are proposing to build a personal wireless services facility in a commercial district within the Village of Germantown Hills. The carrier recognized a problem in the area so they looked to find a suitable area. In this case the search area was centered in the community but there were no existing tower structures to utilize. The proposed site that the engineers located is a great location with a decent space from residential properties. Because of the location and topography of the land they didn't propose any extensive landscaping since there is already existing vegetation.

Fred explained they weren't going to be able to meet the setbacks but towers are now designed to fold in half if there would be any failure. He noted they have included a letter from the engineering company supporting that. The increased height was also needed in order to meet the technical criteria based on a computerized engineering study. Fred noted currently there are two carriers proposed for the tower, which include Verizon and Dish Network. The tower is currently designed for three carriers. The FAA doesn't require the tower to be lit. The site location was discussed.

A motion was made by John Taylor to recommend approval to the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding a proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding personal wireless service facilities and antennas. The motion was seconded by Steve Rudolph. **Motion passed #2.**

#### **4. Discussion and recommendation to the Village Board on feather flags**

Tamra Watts arrived at the meeting at 6:27 p.m. to discuss the feather flags. Tamra is requesting the feather flags to be allowed up 365 days a year. Currently the village code allows for six feather flags a year for 20 days each time. This includes six feather flag permits for any building that has two or more businesses in the building.

Tamra shared and explained her video gaming numbers for the past few months. She stated December was great with college kids and family's home for the holidays. Tamra stated the flags have been up since October with the gaming machines there since May.

John Taylor noted there could be other factors affecting the increased gaming numbers such as the remodel, time of year, expansion, etc.

Tamra stated she is doing a radio ad but would like the flags up all year long as she can't afford to do radio ads all of the time and she thinks the flags work. The gaming company does pay for half of the marketing costs.

Steve Rudolph noted the Planning Commission has a challenge with trying to listen to the community and the balancing of promoting businesses within the community. Some of the residents wouldn't want too much signage but we may be able to meet somewhere in the middle. Currently 6-20 day permits are allowed per year. The Planning Commission could consider 6-30 day permits per year.

Kyle Perry agreed there are several variables that could be affecting the numbers and there's not enough evidence that it is the feather flags.

John Taylor stated his concern is that if we change the permit to 365 days, we could have feather flags up all over the village. The purpose of the ordinance is to limit the number so they aren't all over the village. The Planning Commission put a lot of time and effort into the sign ordinance years ago and looked at what would be best for the community.

Steve Rudolph noted if Tamra would have already limited the permits to gather more data, we might have had an answer on the impact already. The ordinances are in place for what's best for the community and even though we would like to be able to satisfy Tamra's request, there's not enough evidence to make a change. Even if there was, the Planning Commission still has to look at what's best for the whole community.

Tamra indicated a possibility of allowing the feather flags only in the Business District or only allow certain types of flags.

Nathan Henricks stated he feels the feather flags don't stand out when they are up all of the time and tend to blend in overtime. He noted having a time gap in having them up would make them more noticeable in his opinion.

Ann Sasso noted she had received a complaint about the feather flags close to a residential subdivision and with us being a small community it would be hard to allow some business to have them up and not others. If they were allowed up all of the time then there would be businesses that would leave them up, which could potentially create more complaints. Ann reminded the Planning Commission when the ordinance was put together, they also wanted to make sure there was a break between banners and feather flags so that we wouldn't have banners and flags up all of the time.

John Taylor stated he would be comfortable in increasing it to 30 days for each permit but not 365 days. He noted a lot of time and effort went into the ordinance, along with input from the community.

Marc Wright stated he doesn't know much of the history but knows the board could create a permit specific to the need in regards to only allowing certain types of feather flags.

Scott Kramer noted his concern has been to not allow feather flags along Woodland Knolls Road due to limiting distractions and not creating a safety concern.

A motion was made by John Taylor to recommend to the village board to increase the number of days for the feather flag permits from 20 to 30 days. The motion was seconded by Steve Rudolph. **Motion passed #3.**

Ann Sasso explained to Tamra that she could add to or change her existing sign and request a Business Community Improvement Grant to pay for half of the cost. Ann noted the EDC would make a recommendation to the village board on a potential grant. This would allow a sign to be up all of the time.

Tamra Watts stated she would check on a potential sign change and cost.

#### **5. Public Comments/Village Updates and Discussion**

Village updates were discussed. Ann Sasso noted the village is currently looking for an Assistant Bookkeeper/Treasurer.

#### **6. Adjournment-**A motion was made by Jim Willerton to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. The motion was seconded by John Taylor. **Motion passed #4.**

Ann Sasso, Village Clerk