

**VILLAGE OF COXSACKIE  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES  
June 19, 2025**

Chairman Robert Van Valkenburg, Jr. called the Planning Board Meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. Present were Planning Board Members: Matthew Bennett and Patricia Maxwell. Debra Jung and Jarrett Lane were absent.

A motion to approve the minutes from the May 15, 2025 Planning Board Meeting was made by Matthew Bennett and seconded by Patricia Maxwell. Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. voted yes. Matthew Bennett voted yes. Patricia Maxwell voted yes. The motion carried.

**New Business**

**1. 46 Reed Street-State Telephone** – Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Planning Board will be entering into a Joint Public Hearing with the Historic Preservation Commission to discuss the Historic Preservation Commission, Site Plan, and Special Use Permit applications received from Young & Sommer, LLC, on behalf of Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems, LLC, DBA Verizon Wireless, for the purpose of installing a proposed public utility/personal wireless service facility on property located at 46 Reed Street (Verizon Wireless site: Coxsackie Waterfront).

Present from the Historic Preservation Commission were the following Board Members: Patricia Maxwell, Michael Rausch, David Dorpfeld, and Nancy Harm. Chris Fisher, Hannah Kastanos, and Wendy Warren were absent.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. opened the Public Hearing, and asked Julia Monahan, of Young & Sommer, LLC, if she would like to give a brief overview of the project for the public.

Julia Monahan, of Young & Sommer, LLC, stated that Verizon Wireless is looking to put a small antenna on the top of State Telephone's building at 46 Reed Street. This will provide Verizon cell service for those in the downtown area. Originally, the antenna was going to be placed towards the front of the roof of the building. However, because there was some push back on this, they reassessed the project, and found that they could move the tower towards the center of the roof of the building. This allows for less visibility from the street, without compromising the service.

Patricia Maxwell asked if they had to raise the height of the antenna due to moving it back further.

Tim Richmond, of Verizon, stated that there does not need to be a change in the height of the

tower. There should be no performance changes by moving it back further. They are moving it about 20 feet back.

Michael Rausch stated that he understands that from Mansion Street, coming down, you are going to see it no matter where it is on the roof, but the goal was to have less visibility of the tower while walking around downtown. So, he is glad that they were able to move it back. This will help.

Tim Richmond, of Verizon, stated that he agrees that this helps approve the aesthetics. He said that they have also included an alternative solution for a “Stovepipe” skirting on the antenna, vs. the tripod.

Michael Rausch stated that he feels that with the tripod, you can see through it, versus the stack, where you would be seeing the whole stack.

Tim Richmond stated that the stack would be covering the whole top to bottom. They also have to deal with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), but they think that SHPO will generally agree with whatever the Village agrees to.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that he agrees with the alternate location of being pushed back further on the roof. He doesn't have an opinion about the concealing of it. He feels that maybe concealing it actually makes it more noticeable in this case.

Michael Rausch stated that having the “Stovepipe” skirting effect makes it more visible, regardless of where it is on the roof. He would actually prefer the antenna without it.

Tim Richmond stated that other than the antenna being pushed back, the rest of the project will remain the same. There will still be co-ax run down the side of the building, to the equipment cabinet behind the brick wall. There will be fencing slats as well.

Julia Monahan stated that that was in the original application as well. They will be painted to make it blend in with the surroundings.

Michael Rausch asked if he understood correctly that the generator would be behind the slat fencing, which is behind the brick wall.

Tim Richmond stated that that is correct. The brick wall is pretty high.

Marshall McCormick, of 24 Ely Street, stated that he, and James Randle, are present tonight because they received the Public Hearing Notice, because they are within 500 feet of the project.

This is the first they have heard of the project, so they are just present to learn more information.

Michael Rausch stated that he would like to let the public know that this is just for Verizon service only. AT&T is also being proposed, but that will be mounted on a telephone pole. This project is part of the NY Forward DRI grant.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the only other thing that he knows that the Board was waiting on is a copy of the signed Lease Agreement with State Telephone. He knows that at a previous meeting, there was some language that needed to be cleaned up in the agreement. He asked if that was submitted.

Julia Monahan stated that she can check and get back to the Board on that.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that it was mentioned at a previous meeting, but it is possible that it got sent to Delaware Engineering, who could not be here tonight. They will just need that as part of the application.

Tim Richmond stated that Scott Olson may have sent that to Delaware Engineering.

Michael Rausch asked what the lead time for the build out of the project looks like, once approved.

Tim Richmond stated that because they still have to go through SHPO, and then order the equipment, he would think that it would be in the Fall.

John Decarlo stated that there is a bit of a delay with ordering antennas right now.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. asked if it would create a hardship if the project was not voted on tonight, and waited until the July meeting.

Tim Richmond stated that unfortunately, it is a bit of a process, where they don't order equipment until there is full approval. So, it does cause a bit of a delay, but he doesn't think it will impact their construction schedule.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Board can discuss this after the Public Hearing is closed. They could potentially approve it pending the submission of any missing documents. The Lease Agreement is the only other thing that the Board was looking for as part of the application package.

Marshall McCormick asked if any information has been presented on the health concerns that

this tower could bring up for the village residents. There have been studies done about this. When they got the letter, and in speaking with some of their neighbors, that was the one concern that kept coming up.

Julia Monahan stated that it is their opinion that the Radio Frequency (RF) reports have been submitted, and this is a federally regulated area. The federal government does not feel that there are health concerns associated with 5G equipment. This is something that is constantly monitored. If, in the future, more information comes out regarding health concerns, than it will be re-evaluated, but at this point, they have not found any studies that would support that there are health concerns.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. asked if this antenna would be for 5G service, or the millimeter wave as well.

John Decarlo stated that it is both 4G and 5G, but not the millimeter wave.

Marshall McCormick stated that there have been studies done in different countries outside of the U.S. that show that it could affect negative health impacts such as cancer and tumors. He wants cell phone coverage like everyone else downtown, but he just wants to make sure that everyone is safe. He asked if he could receive a copy of what was presented to the Board.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that he did review the document, which was part of the project submittal, and feels comfortable that the frequency levels are within the threshold set forth by the government.

Tim Richmond stated that there is third party report within their application, that essentially shows that it is non-ionizing radiation, which studies show that it does not cause cancer. The report basically says that they will be using a fraction of what the FCC allows. They are well within their limits for power and usage. In the report, they are essentially certifying that it is safe.

Marshall McCormick asked if he could have access to the report that they are referencing.

Tim Richmond stated that they could make the report available.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that it is part of the project documents.

Michael Rausch stated that he wants to make the public clear that this is not a full power site, like a regular cell tower antenna. This is on a much smaller scale, meant to cover the downtown area only.

Marshall McCormick stated that he just wanted to do the research and his due diligence for the community.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that they are comfortable knowing that this is not a full on antenna that you would see for large scale coverage. This is a lower powered device. The coverage area is pretty small. It is really just the downtown area. Since it is just using a fraction of the allowable use, they did not have big concerns about it.

No further public comments were offered.

A motion to close the Planning Board Public Hearing and return to the regular meeting at 6:21 p.m. was made by Patricia Maxwell and seconded by Matthew Bennett. Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. voted yes. Matthew Bennett voted yes. Patricia Maxwell voted yes. The motion carried.

A motion to close the Historic Preservation Commission Public Hearing at 6:21 p.m. was made by Michael Rausch and seconded by Nancy Harm. Chairperson Maxwell voted yes. Michael Rausch voted yes. David Dorpfeld voted yes. Nancy Harm voted yes. The motion carried.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Planning Board still has to follow the SEQR process in terms of going through the Short Environmental Assessment Forms (SEAF). He stated that he is assuming that the Historic Preservation Commission will hold off on voting on the project until their next meeting in July.

Michael Rausch stated that he does not see any problems with it. His main concern was with the visibility, but that has since been addressed.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. asked if it is safe to assume that the Historic Preservation Commission prefers that alternative location of the antenna being moved towards the center of the roof.

The Historic Preservation Commission unanimously agreed.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Planning Board is in agreement with that as well.

Patricia Maxwell stated that just to make the public aware, she is a Planning Board member, but she is also the Chairperson of the Historic Preservation Commission. It is really just a formality for the Historic Preservation Commission to wait until their next meeting in July to vote on the project. Their main concerns were moving the antenna back if possible, making sure that the equipment will be placed behind the brick wall, and that State Telephone will take down the old

antennas that are no longer being used.

Michael Rausch stated that they have made State Telephone aware of removing the old antennas and they agreed.

Tim Richmond asked when the approval will occur.

Patricia Maxwell stated that their next meeting is the second Tuesday in July, (July 8<sup>th</sup>), at 6:00 p.m.

Michael Rausch stated that he only inquired about the timeframe earlier, because the public has been asking. However, he can start telling people inquiring that it will likely be in the fall. He will also make sure that people understand that it is for Verizon service only at this point.

Nancy Harm, Michael Rausch, and David Dorpfeld left the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

A motion to declare the Planning Board “Lead Agency” for the purposes of conducting State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) for this project was made by Matthew Bennett and seconded by Patricia Maxwell. Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. voted yes. Matthew Bennett voted yes. Patricia Maxwell voted yes. The motion carried.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the next step is to make a SEQR classification for this project. He stated that this would be considered an Unlisted Action for SEQR purposes. This means that a Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF) is needed. The applicant did fill out a SEAF Part 1 and supplied it as part of their application.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. read the SEAF Part 1 answers, that were supplied from the applicant, aloud.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Planning Board needed to read the SEAF Part 2 questions aloud pertaining to the project. The Board responded with the answers which declared that there were no significant adverse environmental impacts.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. read the Negative Declaration aloud which stated the reasons for supporting the determination.

A motion to approve a Negative Declaration SEQR determination for this project was made by Matthew Bennett and seconded by Patricia Maxwell. Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. voted yes. Matthew Bennett voted yes. Patricia Maxwell voted yes. The motion carried.

A motion to approve the Site Plan and Special Use Permit applications received from Young & Sommer, LLC, on behalf of Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems, LLC, DBA Verizon Wireless, for the purpose of installing a proposed public utility/personal wireless service facility on property located at 46 Reed Street (Verizon Wireless site: Cocksackie Waterfront), with the alternate proposed location towards the center of the roof, and without the “Stove Pipe” covering, and pending the submission of the updated Lease Agreement with State Telephone, was made by Matthew Bennett and seconded by Patricia Maxwell. Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. voted yes. Matthew Bennett voted yes. Patricia Maxwell voted yes. The motion carried.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. asked the applicant to submit the redacted Lease Agreement to the Board at their earliest convenience. Once it is on file, he will approve the Site Plan, and let the Building Inspector know that he is able to issue a permit for this project. It is very possible that Delaware Engineering has already received the Lease Agreement, and it was not forwarded in time for tonight’s meeting.

Tim Richmond stated that he will make sure that the Village receives it, and will get the Certificate of Insurance submitted as well. He still hopes that the construction schedule will allow for this project to be done in the fall.

### **Old Business**

**1. Cocksackie Brick, LLC** – Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Board needs to continue their review of the Site Plan application received from Aaron Flach for 13-17 Reed Street.

Aaron Flach stated that he had his Engineer, Andrew Millsbaugh, of Sterling Environmental, provide a Site Plan to Delaware Engineering. He believes that the next step is to get referred to the Zoning Board of Appeals, so that they can review the fact that he doesn’t have the required parking per Village Code of 2 spaces per apartment. He thinks that the building plans are all good otherwise.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the only thing that the Board needs is the updated Site Plan application. They did discuss this at prior meetings, and there are no architectural changes happening to the exterior. Basically, Mr. Flach just needs to work on getting a variance for the parking requirement. That being said, the Board will review the Site Plan at their next meeting in July, make sure it is complete, and if it is, accept it, and then make the referral to the Zoning Board.

Aaron Flach stated that at the prior meeting, there was a question about the access, and he will forward to the Board the letter he received from the National Bank of Cocksackie, stating that he

has access off of the Village Right of Way, that will remain open to utilize.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that they will need a copy of that, and the updated Site Plan, then once the Board reviews, they can likely approve it pending the approval for the Variance from the Zoning Board.

Aaron Flach stated that the updated Site Plan was sent via email on May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Board did receive the updated Site Plan showing the details that were asked. Really, the main thing is showing the parking on the Site Plan. The other thing they will need is a copy of that letter showing that he has access to the property. However, for the purposes of referring this project to the Zoning Board, they can accept this Site Plan as complete, pending the inclusion of that letter, and the approved Variance from the Zoning Board.

A motion to refer this project to the Zoning Board of Appeals to obtain a Variance for parking dimensions was made by Patricia Maxwell and seconded by Matthew Bennett. Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. voted yes. Matthew Bennett voted yes. Patricia Maxwell voted yes. The motion carried.

**2. McQuade Building** – Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Board needs to continue their review of the Site Plan application received from Aaron Flach/Joan Tailleur for 2-6 Mansion Street.

Aaron Flach stated that the Village Board had adopted the Zoning Map Amendment at their Board Meeting on June 9<sup>th</sup>, which allowed for the entirety of the building to be under one zoning, as apposed to being split into two separate zoning districts. Aside from that, he thinks that his Engineer, Andrew Millspaugh, has included everything on the Site Plan that Delaware Engineering had requested.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that he is not sure that they received the latest Site Plan. He asked if Mr. Flach knew if Delaware Engineering had received it.

Aaron Flach stated that he is pretty sure that it was sent to Delaware Engineering. Whatever questions Delaware Engineering had at the previous meeting, he asked Mr. Millspaugh to address, and send back to Delaware Engineering to review.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that he knew that some of the things to be addressed where the correction of some typos of it stating “Town” instead of “Village”, some information regarding the dumpster enclosure, and information regarding the lighting. They did not receive

anything from Delaware Engineering in time for tonight's meeting. He thinks that the Board could probably accept it as complete pending the submission of the additional details. He asked Mr. Flach if he happened to have the updated Site Plan digitally, and if so, if he wouldn't mind forwarding it to the Board.

Aaron Flach stated that he thinks that he has it digitally, and can forward it.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that while he is waiting for the email, he would like to go over the February memo from Delaware Engineering to refresh everyone's memory.

Aaron Flach stated that on April 16<sup>th</sup> he sent an email with attachments showing the Site Plan with details including the dumpster enclosure, fencing, and lighting. He asked if the Board would like him to forward that email to them again.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that he found it in his email and has it pulled up right now. He will forward the email to the other Board members also.

Aaron Flach stated that he also re-sent the email.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that he just wants to make sure that everything that the Board asked for at previous meetings is included on the Site Plan. He is just reviewing the memo received from Delaware Engineering outlining the items. So, the Zoning Map Amendment has been completed, and the parking spaces for the employees have been addressed.

Aaron Flach stated that by changing the use of the property to an Inn, versus, apartments, they now have more than enough designated parking spots.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that he sees the landscaping detail on the Site Plan.

Patricia Maxwell asked Mr. Flach what type of fence he would be putting around the dumpster.

Aaron Flach stated that the plans include a typical dumpster enclosure.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Board was looking for what type of screening would be used.

Patricia Maxwell stated that it just states "screen dumpster enclosure type: fence".

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that it just says "typical", it doesn't say anything about the type.

Patricia Maxwell stated that it says that there will be a “vegetative buffer between dumpster enclosure and neighboring parcel”.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that they will just need that fence detail. He asked Mr. Flach if he is proposing a stockade vinyl fence, chain link fence, etc.

Aaron Flach stated that he is comfortable choosing whatever the Board feels is appropriate.

Patricia Maxwell stated that that decision will be more of a Historic Preservation Commission decision, rather than the Planning Board. Typically, it is metal or wood, that is allowed in the Historic District, but so long as the vinyl is panels, that should be fine.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the landscaping and stone walkway was previously discussed. The Board is ok with the stone walkway and grass.

Patricia Maxwell stated that she rather see that, than anything artificial.

Matthew Bennett asked about the signage.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. asked Mr. Flach if he has decided what he will be doing for the sign.

Aaron Flach stated that he has Derek Delardi, of 3Designs, working on a plan, but he never sent him anything in time for tonight’s meeting. They talked about just having a shingle sign out front, with just the name and address on it.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that they could always approve the sign separately if Mr. Flach does not have details tonight. He would be fine with following the Historic Preservation Commission’s recommendations on that. The other thing the Board was looking for were parking stall dimensions and setbacks. He does see that the spaces have labels on the Site Plan, showing employee parking and loading areas. So, he thinks that his preference would be, is to accept this as complete, pending any additional items that are listed in Delaware Engineering’s memo to be completed and added to the Site Plan, such as the dimensions for the parking stalls. That being said, he is comfortable with moving forward, since these are minor details.

A motion to approve the Site Plan application received from Aaron Flach for the “McQuade Building” at 2-6 Mansion Street as complete for the purpose of scheduling a Public Hearing, pending the submission of a Site Plan that addresses all of the details laid out in the February 19, 2025 memo received from Delaware Engineering, including a detail for the fencing around the

dumpster enclosure, and dimensions for the parking stalls, was made by Patricia Maxwell and seconded by Matthew Bennett. Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr voted yes. Matthew Bennett voted yes. Patricia Maxwell voted yes. The motion carried.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Public Hearing can be scheduled for the next Planning Board Meeting on July 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Flach will be responsible for notifying property owners within 500 feet. The Village Clerk will post the advertisement in the newspaper.

Patricia Maxwell stated that she will try to make it a Joint Public Hearing with the Historic Preservation Commission as well.

Aaron Flach asked when the next Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be.

Patricia Maxwell stated that the next Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be July 8<sup>th</sup>. That Board will only be concerned with exterior improvements only.

**3. Dolan Block** – Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that the Board needs to continue their review of the amended Site Plan application received from Aaron Flach for 22-34 South River Street.

Aaron Flach stated that he had his Engineer submit an updated Site Plan that addresses the 20 apartments vs. 10 apartments. So, he re-adjusted the parking calculations, which is what Delaware Engineering had asked for, in order for it to get referred to the Zoning Board of Appeals. He would love to get the ZBA referral for both the Cocksackie Brick, LLC for 13-17 Reed Street, and the Dolan Block at the same time.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. asked if Mr. Flach could forward him the email of the updated Site Plan. He just needs to see that the Site Plan includes the things that it needs to show in order for it to be referred to the Zoning Board.

Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. stated that he found the email he needed. It is dated May 15<sup>th</sup>. He fill forward the email to the other Board members. Mr. Flach will need to seek a Variance for parking dimension relief through the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Aaron Flach stated that his Engineer kept the Site Plan pretty much the same, but adjusted the parking.

A motion to refer the Site Plan application received from Aaron Flach for the Dolan Block to the Zoning Board of Appeals in order to obtain a Variance for parking requirements was made by

Patricia Maxwell and seconded by Matthew Bennett. Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. voted yes. Matthew Bennett voted yes. Patricia Maxwell voted yes. The motion carried.

**Public Comment Period**

No public comments were offered.

A motion to adjourn the Planning Board meeting was made by Matthew Bennett and seconded by Patricia Maxwell. Chairman Van Valkenburg, Jr. voted yes. Matthew Bennett voted yes. Patricia Maxwell voted yes. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nikki Berezna", written in a cursive style.

Nikki Berezna  
Clerk