

**Latah County Planning Commission**  
Minutes, 16 January 2001

Planning Commission [PC] Members: Skyler Schlueter [SS], John Hunt [JDH], Suvia Judd [SJ],  
Kathleen Warnick [KW], James Hagedorn [JH], Janet Hohle [JanH], Louise Barber [LB];  
Planning Director, Gerard Billington [GB]

**Present/Absent:** SS, KW, SJ, JDH, JH, LB present; JanH, absent. Staff: GB, S. Moberly, Michelle Fuson (newly with the Planning Department). Present in the audience: Don Morse

**Packet materials:** agenda; minutes from 12/13/00; draft of wireless telecommunications ordinance.

**Additional handouts:** copy of email from Donn Morse re: cell phones and cancer

**Meeting:**

SS opened the meeting; minutes of 12/13/00 passed with one correction. GB introduced to the public in attendance the situation regarding the cell tower moratorium and draft ordinance under discussion. The public was invited to comment.

Questions and/or responses follow. Liens would apply to the piece of property that tower equipment occupies. Is the maximum output of the towers known?/no, but county cannot base siting approval on radiation. FCC language about homes on same "beam" as antennas?/nothing in writing. Why did PC change from 2000 to 1000 foot setback?/FCC representative suggested that setbacks greater for towers than for other buildings would be "unreasonable," and 2000 foot setback cannot be assigned based on radiation. Setbacks from towers apply to commercial and residential buildings. Through ZC public hearing, 2000 feet might be required in certain instances. Setbacks should be considered carefully; they may force a tower out of a more preferred location. Property value is a rationale for permission. Is perfect coverage of area necessary?/companies mandated by FCC to provide 2/3s coverage within five years to keep license. If co-location is the aim of the ordinance, having to constantly go through conditional use permit [CUP] process for changes, etc., could be a "disenhancement" and thus create more towers. Are waivers in the ordinance language for property owner who wants a tower and the choice or where to place it?/PC needs to consider waivers. What about future property owner of that property?/waiver would be similar to an easement and be recorded with the deed. Has the highway's move been considered?/industry knows where it needs to put their equipment. Can additional towers that become necessary be located next to each other?/ordinance does not address this, but ZC can decide this. Is the FCC driving the pace of coverage?/actually the technology is driving it, and industries are already behind in "servicing" the momentum of (being totally) wireless technology. Industry always must compromise, and only gets what it wants ca. 10-15% of the time. The engineering is easy to figure, but the capacity problem is the thorn. In Latah County, cellular capacity is not and won't be the problem; the problem here will be additional appliances that are wireless and data capacity. Is the cost in constructing or in running the towers?/the technology is the greatest cost. Is dismantlement much of an issue?/no, there are few unused sites. Are towers able to be modified?/AT&T is currently adding capacity to all of its equipment. What are preferred distances from highway corridors?/in this area a quarter mile would put you out of your objective. Are towers inspected?/not unless the county hires someone, and then it has to have the facility's compliance; FCC supposed to monitor, but seems to be anywhere from one to five years. Will the equipment be expanded within five years?/industry has leased as much space as it needs; if anything, equipment will shrink in size. Are tower farms expected?/there are mandatory distances for separation, both vertically and horizontally; ZC could determine this on case by case basis. How many providers use towers at this time?/emergency services, wireless, radio, etc., currently. To encourage co-location, leave flexibility in ordinances; let ZC decide.

Motion for the ZC to handle tower farms; passed. GB wanted the PC input on draft language “reasonable fee not to exceed fair market value”; appraisers that two companies would agree on? Arbitration? Appraisers? Should be commercial MAI appraisers, not merely licensed appraisers. Motion moved for there to be a “specified group of appraisers” passed; contending parties agree or county chooses appraiser. GB further requested PC input on changing the language of the zoning ordinance (now only radio and ?) to reflect these new transmissions. Further, GB wanted clarification regarding the waiver for location within 1000 feet; problem for neighbors?/suggested that the zoning ordinances regarding CUPs be amended to require notification of neighbors within 1000 feet (not the state mandated 300 feet ). The waiver might allow someone to locate a tower in a less obtrusive place than the 1000 foot mandate would allow. Motion for notification of neighbors within 1000 feet regarding a waiver for setbacks passed.

Public meeting was closed. Motion for adoption of amendment to ordinance; passed. GB said that the CC will receive the draft, and in February a public meeting will follow. The moratorium will end on February 23.

Election of officers followed; current officers elected.

Next meeting, 13 February 2001 at 5:30pm, County Courthouse, 2-B.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ 23 January 2001  
Louise D. Barber