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Best Wishes DADS & GRADS



Cellular One hangs up in Fanwood

The Borough of Fanwood was notified on Monday afternoon that Cellular One was withdrawing its pending application for a variance to construct a communications monopole on South Ave. This faxed communication was sent by Cellular One attorney, Robert Garofalo. The original variance application called for a 100 foot monopole to be constructed at 277 South Ave. on property adjacent to the post office and the Mansion Hotel. The property is owned by The Boyle Company of Union who also own the Mansion Hotel. In May, Cellular One amended its original application. The new proposal called for the monopole to be 70 ft. in height.

Mr. Garofalo referred calls to the public relations department of Cellular One. Efforts to contact Cellular One were unsuccessful. This is speculation that The Boyle Company withdrew approval for Cellular One to use the property thus squelching any plans that the cellular phone company had to construct a monopole at this location.

Cellular One is owned by Lynn Broadcasting who in turn is owned by McCall Communications. McCall is the largest cellular communications company in the country. The original proposal included permission to construct a one-story 14x28 foot unmanned modular telecommunications building at the base of the property. A 12x12 foot triangular antenna platform would have been

located at the top of the pole.

According to Charles Brandt, attorney for the Zoning Board of Adjustment, Cellular One originally requested four specific variances. The first was a 'use variance'. The area in question is designated as a 'professional office' zone. The monopole and building do not meet 'professional office' zone criteria. The company asked for a 'limited industrial use' variance. The second variance dealt with the exact location of the monopole and building.

A 'setback' of 30 feet from the rear of the property line is required in Fanwood. Cellular One's proposal requested a 'setback' of 15 feet. The third variance dealt with height. The Fanwood zoning ordinance dealing with height prohibits structures over 35 feet high. The original proposal called for a 100 foot monopole which was later amended to 75 feet. The fourth variance requested dual use on the same lot referring to the monopole/building proposal and the home that is currently on the property.

Cellular One presented an array of expert testimony at the January 16 Zoning Board meeting. The February 20 meeting gave residents an opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions. The March 19 meeting had to be held in the Park Middle School due to the size of the crowd.

It was at the March meeting that former Fanwood Councilman Bruce Walsh cross-examined witnesses representing

Cellular One. Mr. Walsh represented the Citizens Against Non-Essential Towers (C.A.N.T.) group on a pro-bono (no fee) basis. Prior to serving as councilman, Walsh served on the Planning Board. The nucleus of the C.A.N.T. group consisted of Ann and George Mederer, Peggy Groskinski and Greg Cummings.

Contacted for his reaction to this unexpected turn of events, Walsh stated that "perhaps Cellular One was intimidated by the strength of the opposition". Walsh conjectured that Cellular One probably thought that they would "weather the initial storm of opposition" and continue the variance process. Walsh also praised the civic concern and determination of the members of C.A.N.T.

An ordinance passed several years ago established the procedure for an applicant to place funds in an escrow account to be used to hire an independent, outside consultant. Projects of this magnitude generally require the expertise of such consultants. The Zoning Board of Adjustment selected the Denville planning firm of Robert Catlin & Associates.

One of the main arguments used by Cellular One was that their service was a 'public utility'. Quoting extensively from the planner's report, Walsh stated "it is not clear that the proposed use is a public utility...the use does not seem to fit the state statutory definition of a public utility. Part of the report also addressed the

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They'll graduate on Tuesday, June 23



Michael Barcellona and Tanaisha Fisher sport graduation attire they'll wear during commencement ceremonies at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School on Tuesday, June 23rd at 6:30 P.M. For a complete list of the graduates names and congratulatory messages see pages 9-11.

Council voices cable TV opinion; patrolmen promoted at council meeting

A council resolution supporting Assembly bill 1283 was sharply criticized by Councilman Andrew MacDonald at the June 10th monthly public Fanwood Borough Council meeting.

This bill limits TV cable company contracts with individual municipalities to five years. Previously, such contracts could be for 10 years. The intent of this bill is to allow municipalities to have input into the quality and delivery of services and to make cable providers more 'answerable.' Councilman MacDonald was the only 'no' vote on this resolution.

Councilman MacDonald cited several reasons for his opposition. He stated that "Government should not be treating cable like a utility," since in Mr. MacDonald's opinion, it is not. The Councilman also said that "when government intervenes, prices inevitably go up. Look what has happened with the de-regulation of other industries," said Mr. MacDonald. Councilman Chester Lindsey criticized Suburban Cable for raising its prices "one dollar per year since they came into Fanwood."

Contacted after the meeting, Councilman

MacDonald further explained his stance. "This bill says that governments have the right to review services. What can government bring to the table? The right to review belongs to the viewing public." MacDonald said that while he "respects the cable industries' First Amendment rights, they should not be treated like a utility. They should be treated like any other form of communication --like newspapers and television."

Councilman MacDonald stressed the need for more competition within the industry.

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