

**To:** Distribution

**From:** Bob Hunnicutt, Tower Coordinator, Columbia Telecommunications

A meeting of the Transmission Facility Coordinating Group (TF CG) was held on June 4, 2008. The following people were in attendance:

**MEMBERS**

Carlton Gilbert	M-NCPPC	(301) 495-4577
Helen Mu	DTS	(240) 777-2804
Marjorie Williams	OCCS	(240) 777-3762
Mary Pat Wilson	MCPS	(240) 314-1071
Steve Batterden	DPWT	(240) 777-6063
Martin Rookard	WSSC	(301) 206-8979

**STAFF**

Bob Hunnicutt	CTC	(301) 933-1488
Shivani Gandhi	CTC	(301) 933-1488
Lee Afflerbach	CTC	(301) 933-1488

**OTHER ATTENDEES**

Sean Hughes	Donohue & Blue	
Charles Ryan	Cricket	(301) 526-7342
Amy Bird	T-Mobile	
Jim Michal	Jackson & Campbell	
Tom Moyer	WAVA Radio	(301) 370 4748
Tom Ringer	WAVA Radio	(703) 807 2257
John Reinhard	WAVA Radio	(240) 506 4603

**Action Item Meeting Minutes:** Carlton Gilbert moved the minutes be approved as written. Steve Batterden seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

**Action Item - Consent Agenda Applications:**

1. Verizon Wireless application to replace nine existing antennas with 12 new antennas (six 47", four 71", and two 48") at the same 138' level of a 190' lattice tower on the Kruhm Farm property located at 15701 Kruhm Road in Burtonsville (Application #200804-12).
2. T-Mobile application to install three 59" antennas at the 73' level of an 80' steeple cupola of the Covenant of Life Church located at 7503 Muncaster Mill Road in Gaithersburg (Application #200804-18).
3. Sprint-Nextel application to replace an existing panel antenna with four new 48" antennas atop an 80' wooden pole located at 11900 Bournefield Way in Silver Spring (Application #200805-03).
4. AT&T Wireless application to attach up to nine 55" panel antennas and one 24" dish antenna at the 146' level atop a 151' PEPCO transmission line tower #659-S located at 11405 Georgetowne Drive in Potomac (Application #200805-07).
5. AT&T Wireless application to attach six 55" panel antennas (three at the 60' level and three at the 65' level) in a faux chimney to be constructed atop a 33' office building located at 4701 Sangamore Road in Bethesda (Application #200805-08).

**Motion:** Carlton Gilbert moved the consent agenda items be recommended. Steve Batterden seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:** WAVA application to attach a 31' high four-bay FM antenna at the 220' level and an AM folded unipole antenna at the 218' level of a 230' lattice tower located on Kenwood Country Club property located at 5601 River Road in Bethesda (Application #200803-16).

Bob Hunnicutt summarized the application, noting that there were several aspects of the application that he wanted to bring to the groups attention. He briefly explained that the energy field radiating from the AM antenna limited how safe it was for people to be near the tower. Based on the engineering calculations for this tower submitted with the application, that limit is no closer than 15' when the antenna is transmitting. He noted that the entire equipment area around the tower was enclosed by a locked chain link fence which the applicant reports would have a notice posted of the hazard to alert people that need access to the area. He said that the applicant states that the sign would list a 24-hour WAVA phone number to call if there is a need to reduce or shut down the transmitter so workers could safely enter the compound. He added that the Countys equipment shelter was approximately 30' away from the tower.

He also explained that because the nature of an AM transmitter could cause interference with residential phone service, and possibly other electronics in residences near the tower, WAVA is obligated by FCC rules to mitigate any such interference within a certain distance from the tower. WAVA stated in their TFCG application that they would be sending notice to nearby residents to alert them of possible interference and would provide WAVA contact numbers for them to call to report any problems.

Mr. Hunnicutt stated that there was also a concern about the potential for interference with the Countys public safety radio services at this location. He said that WAVA had provided the results of an engineering study which showed that, theoretically, it does not appear there will be any conflict of their transmissions with the services presently operated at the tower. However, given the importance of the public safety radio services, he conditioned his recommendation on WAVA immediately responding to notice of any interference problems, and if they cannot be resolved, that WAVA turn off the transmitter until the problems can be resolved. He added that he understood that yesterday the County engineers and WAVA staff had a discussion about the Countys concerns and that WAVA agreed to do whatever it may take to address any interference issues. Mr. Hunnicutt conditioned his recommendation on WAVA working with the County to address any interference issues.

Mr. Hunnicutt noted that the tower was permitted by Special Exception and that his recommendation was also conditioned on any modifications that may be needed to the Special Exception.

Mary Pat Wilson asked why WAVA needed to move their station transmitters to Montgomery County. Tom Riger of WAVA explained that the tower in Arlington had to be removed, which forced them to seek a new location for their antennas. He added that they were presently operating on a temporary FCC license at a location in Arlington that was not suitable for the long term.

Helen Mu asked how long the FM transmitter would be operating in Arlington. Mr. Ringer said that the lease for the FM transmitter had a 70-year term and that the transmitter at this tower in Montgomery County was a back-up only and that they had no plans to make the Montgomery County site the primary antenna. Ms. Mu stated that her concern was for potential interference with the Countys receive antennas and noted that they will likely have to install a filter to protect against interference.

Mary Pat Wilson asked how large the blanketing area was within which WAVA had to notify residents of potential for interference. Lee Afflerbach displayed the blanketing contour map from the WAVA FCC permit application and described the area near the station that may be impacted. He added that there could be a need to install a filter on the phone lines that are within the compound at the tower as well. Mr. Ringer explained that WAVAs policy was to address any interference and, if necessary, install the filters for residents who were experiencing problems.

Ms. Mu said that she also wanted to make sure that the warning signs were clearly posted at the site to alert workers of the potential hazard on entering the facility. Mr. Ringer replied that not only would there be a sign at the single gate to enter the compound, but he planned to install a panel of red, yellow, and green lights that would indicate whether the antennas were on or off.

Ms. Mu asked what would be the response time to reduce or turn off power once a call was placed to the

station notifying them of someone needing to enter the equipment area. Mr. Ringer said that it would likely be in the range of three to four minutes, noting that the power could be remotely controlled.

Steve Batterden asked about the impact of the FM transmitter already on the tower. Mr. Hunnicutt explained that the tower at this site already had an FM transmitter at the top of the tower which had caused some interference problems in the past and that the County had already contacted Motorola to obtain a filter to address the occasional problems to the County services when that transmitter is activated.

Ms. Mu remarked that some of the County engineers have a history of working at the Kenwood site and have expressed concern about the status of the ground radials there. Tom Ringer replied that the radials are one of the first things that WAVA investigated when considering using the tower. He assured the group that the radial wires all have been measured and tested and are in good operating condition. He added that he would be willing to provide a copy of a certification from WAVA's engineers to that affect, if needed. Mr. Hunnicutt said that would be good to have on file and asked Mr. Ringer to send the document to him and he would distribute to the interested parties with the County.

Ms. Mu also wanted to know what procedures WAVA would be taking to notify the other carriers on the tower of their activation of the antennas. Mr. Ringer replied that letters will be sent to the owners of the other antennas on the tower as soon as the antenna is ready to be activated to alert them to the entry procedures, and the meaning of the warning lights to be installed (red - the AM antenna is transmitting; yellow - the FM antenna is transmitting, and; green - no WAVA antennas are energized) and how to contact WAVA if there are any problems.

**Motion:** Martin Rookard moved the application be recommended conditioned on 1) mitigating any WAVA interference problems that may arise for the County's public safety radio systems at that location, 2) upon notice of an interference problem, WAVA immediately begin to correct any interference or cease operation until the problems can be cured, 3) WAVA working to address the County's interest in precluding any interference issues, and 4) any modifications that may be necessary to the Special Exception. Carlton Gilbert seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:** T-Mobile application to install six 59" antennas at the 50' level inside a proposed 15' extension to a 41' clock tower at the Flower Hill Shopping Center located at 18200 Flower Hill Way in Gaithersburg (Application #200804-19).

Mr. Hunnicutt summarized the application noting that he had discussed the modification to the clock tower with Dave Niblock who said that if the tower were 50' high he would likely approve the modification and antenna placement. Mr. Hunnicutt noted that with the extension to the tower it would be over 50' high and the antennas and equipment would be concealed within the tower. He added that Mr. Niblock said that the shopping center was most likely subject to a site plan review for this change. Consequently, Mr. Hunnicutt conditioned his recommendation on any modification that may be necessary to the site plan.

Mary Pat Wilson asked if there was a height limit for the tower. Mr. Hunnicutt replied that if there was, it would probably be stated in the site plan for the shopping center.

Carlton Gilbert commented that Robert Kronenberg would probably be the person at the Planning Commission to review the site plan.

**Motion:** Carlton Gilbert moved the application be recommended conditioned on any modification that may be necessary to the site plan. Mary Pat Wilson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**The next meeting of the TFCG is scheduled for Wednesday, July 9, 2008 at 2 p.m. in the second floor conference room #225 of the COB.**