

**To:** Distribution

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

A meeting of the Transmission Facility Coordinating Group (TFCG) was held on November 5, 2008. The following people were in attendance:

MEMBERS

Mary Pat Wilson	MCPS	(240) 314-4707
Marjorie Williams	OCCS	(240) 777-3762
Steve Batterden	DGS, ORE	(240) 777-6063
Jennifer Bryant	OMB	(240) 777-2761
Dave Niblock	DPS	(240) 777-6252

STAFF

Bob Hunnicutt	CTC	(301) 933-1488
Shivani Gandhi	CTC	(301) 933-1488
David Doulong	CTC	(301) 933-1488

OTHER ATTENDEES

John Cuff	OMB
Amy Bird	NB&C/T-Mobile
Adam Knubel	NB&C/Sprint/Xohm
Sean Hughes	Cricket
M.G. Diamond	Verizon
Harold Bernadzikowski	Verizon
Jonathan Jeffers	Sprint/ XOhm
Bryan Cline	ACOPA/AT&T

**Discussion Item:** Jennifer Bryant introduced John Cuff from OMB who would be replacing her on the TFCG.

**Action Item – Meeting Minutes:** Mary Pat Wilson moved the minutes be approved as written. Steve Batterden seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

**Action Item – Consent Agenda Applications:**

1. Cricket application to attach three antennas at the 130' level on a 130' monopole on WSSC Potomac Water Filtration Plant property at 12200 River Road in Potomac (Application #200809-07)
2. Cricket application to attach three antennas at the 130' level on a 130' monopole on Bethesda Country Club property at 7601 Bradley Boulevard in Bethesda (Application #200809-11).
3. Verizon Wireless application to attach twelve antennas at the 139' level on a 140' monopole on MDOT property at I-270 & Montrose Road in Rockville (Application #200811-04).
4. Cricket application to attach three antennas at the 115' level on a 140' monopole on MDOT property at I-270 & Montrose Road in Rockville (Application #200811-05).
5. Cricket application to attach four antennas at the 149' on a 345' lattice tower on Carver Wheaton Real Property at 2647 University Boulevard in Wheaton (Application #200811-07).

6. Cricket application to attach four antennas at the 260' level on the Washingtonian Condominium building at 9701 Fields Road in Gaithersburg (Application #200811-08).
7. Cricket application to attach two antennas at the 113' level and one panel antenna at the 125' level on the Renaissance Plaza apartment building at 14000 Castle Boulevard in Silver Spring (Application #200811-09).
8. Cricket application to attach three antennas at the 130' level on the Takoma Tower building at 7051 Carroll Street in Takoma Park (Application #200811-12).
9. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 116' level atop the Renaissance Plaza apartment building at 14000 Castle Blvd in Silver Spring (Application #200811-15).
10. Sprint/Xohm application to attach two dish antennas at the 191' level on the roof of the Berkshire Towers apartment building at 11235 Oak Leaf Drive in Silver Spring (Application #200811-17).
11. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 117' level on an existing 125' PEPCO transmission tower #59-N at 17125 Germantown Road in Germantown (Application #200811-21).
12. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 132' level on a 135' PEPCO transmission tower #6278 at 14201 Quince Orchard Road in Gaithersburg (Application #200811-22).
13. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 148' level on a 143' PEPCO transmission tower #681-W at 18000 Wickham Road in Brookeville (Application #200811-23).
14. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 130' level on a 136' PEPCO transmission tower #54-N at 14800 Schaeffer Road in Germantown (Application #200811-24).
15. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 100' level on an existing 100' monopole on Storage USA property at 19500 Frederick Road in Germantown (Application #200811-25).
16. Sprint/Xohm application to attach two dish antennas at the 103' level on a 95' high Columbia Towers apartment building at 12001 Old Columbia Pike in Silver Spring (Application #200811-26).
17. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 170' level and two dish antennas at the 156' level on a 180' monopole on Old Burtonsville VFD property at 15430 Old Columbia Pike in Burtonsville (Application #200811-28).
18. Sprint/Xohm application to attach two dish antennas at the 142' and two dish antennas at the 143' level on a 150' monopole at Colesville Center located at 49 Randolph Road in Silver Spring (Application #200811-29).
19. Sprint/Xohm application to attach two dish antennas at the 88' level on a 140' monopole on Charles Linthicum property at 13100 West Old Baltimore Road in Boyds (Application #200811-30).
20. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 75' level on an existing 150' monopole on Milestone Industrial property at 12450 Milestone Center Court in Germantown (Application #200811-31).
21. Sprint/Xohm application to attach four dish antennas at the 125' level and one dish antenna at the 121' level on the AT&T Long Line lattice tower at 12419 Middlebrook Road in Germantown (Application #200811-32).
22. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 67' level on the 60' Century 21 office building at 20010 Century Boulevard in Germantown (Application #200811-33).
23. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 70' level on the roof of a 68' Sunrise Village apartment building at 19310 Club House Road in Gaithersburg (Application #200811-34).

24. Sprint/Xohm applications to one dish antenna at the 79' level and one dish antenna at the 90' level atop a 64' Walkers House apartment building at 18700 Walkers Choice Road in Gaithersburg (Application #200811-35).
25. Verizon Wireless application to change out twelve antennas at the 123' level on a 130' tree pole on Cabin John VFW Post #5633 property at 11511 MacArthur Boulevard in Potomac (Application #200811-38).

**Discussion:** Mary Pat Wilson asked if there were antennas already on the monopole that had to be removed to accommodate the new antennas for item #2 on the agenda. Bob Hunnicutt explained that there were abandoned antennas at the top of the monopole that would be removed prior to Cricket attaching their antennas. He said he believed the antennas belonged to AT&T.

**Motion:** Dave Niblock moved the Consent agenda be recommended. Steve Batterden seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:** AT&T application to attach six panel antennas at the 140' level on a 145' Chateau Apartments building at 9727 Mount Pisgah Road in Silver Spring (Application #200810-06).

David Doulong summarized the application noting that AT&T had submitted a report that stated the RF emissions on the rooftop were within FCC limits.

Marjorie Williams asked why there was mention in the Recommendation about a conflict with placement of AT&T's equipment with Cricket's equipment. Mr. Doulong explained that Cricket had an application still under review for this site which showed their equipment in the same location on the roof as the proposed AT&T equipment. Consequently, the Tower Coordinator's recommendation was conditioned on AT&T, Cricket and the landlord resolving that conflict so the permitting documents would show the correct location of each carrier's equipment.

**Motion:** Mary Pat Wilson moved the application be recommended as conditioned. Steve Batterden seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:** Verizon Wireless application to change out twelve antennas at the 127' level on a 130' monopole at Avenel Golf Course located at 10010 Oaklyn Drive in Potomac (Application #200811-36).

David Doulong summarized the application noting that the monopole was at capacity and, based on the structural analysis submitted by the applicant, would require structural modifications to support the additional antennas. Consequently, the Tower Coordinator's recommendation was conditioned on those modifications being made prior to attachment of Verizon's antennas.

**Motion:** Dave Niblock moved the application be recommended as conditioned. Jennifer Bryant seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:** Cricket application to attach three antennas at the 96' level on a 157' monopole on Fire Station #33 property at 11430 Falls Road in Potomac (Application #200810-03).

Bob Hunnicutt summarized the application noting that because Cricket was expanding the equipment area, it appeared that a special exception would be required since the land is private property and zoned residential. He added that this case is similar to the equipment shelter proposed to be placed at the Potomac fire station, which is also on private property. Dave Niblock concurred. Sean Hughes asked if the Cricket representative was aware that this work required a special exception. Mr. Hunnicutt stated he had advised the applicant, Chip Ryan, who had stated that Cricket would pursue a special exception for this site.

**Motion:** Steve Batterden moved the application be recommended conditioned on obtaining a special exception from the Board of Appeals to place equipment on the ground. Dave Niblock seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:** T-Mobile application to construct a new 140' monopole on Public Storage property at 12355 Prosperity Drive in Silver Spring (Application #200809-08).

Bob Hunnicutt summarized this application noting that it would be quite visible from along Route 29, but based on his site visit it appeared that residents in the neighborhoods may not see the structure from their homes.

He said the applicant reported that T-Mobile had considered use of the tower at the Gannet building behind the storage facility and the tower atop a building across Route 29 from the site, but the owners of those towers would not agree to lease space for additional antennas on those structures. He referred the group to the photos of the site and the other structures attached to the Recommendation Form. He noted that there was one other existing structure, a nearby church steeple, which was ruled out because it was not high enough for antennas to meet the coverage objective.

Shivani Gandhi summarized review of the RF maps submitted by the applicant. She stated that, based on those maps, antennas at lower elevations did not appear to meet the stated coverage objective of providing in-building coverage to the residential areas near the site. She said that antennas at the proposed 140' level appeared to meet the coverage objective, based on the RF maps provided.

Mr. Hunnicutt remarked that based on the plans submitted with the application, it appeared that the monopole met the zoning standards for placement on this industrially-zoned property. Dave Niblock added that he thought there may be an overlay zone for this area that may impact this application. However, upon checking the zoning code during the meeting he concluded that there is no overlay issue.

**Motion:** Steve Batterden moved the application be recommended. Mary Pat Wilson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:** T-Mobile application to construct a new 125' monopole on Twin Farms Swim Club property at 1200 Fairland Road in Silver Spring (Application #200809-20).

Bob Hunnicutt summarized the application. He commented that based on the site visit, the area around the swim club was wooded and hilly which may help screen the monopole from view from most residents except those nearest the monopole, who would clearly see the top of the structure. He noted that the flagpole design proposed for the monopole may make it more visible in the community, especially if the flag will be flown at night which requires the structure to be illuminated. He suggested that a tree pole design may better blend the structure in with the environment, given the wooded nature of the swim club property and surrounding area.

Mr. Hunnicutt stated that, based on their site visit, there were no other existing structures to which T-Mobile could attach antennas to meet their coverage objective. He added that this site was in lieu of two other locations T-Mobile had proposed to place antennas. The location at Fairland Elementary School had been denied by the Board of Appeals, and the PEPCO pole attachment would have required a County Telecommunications Franchise to place facilities in the public right-of-way, which evidently T-Mobile does not intend to pursue.

Shivani Gandhi reviewed her analysis of the RF maps provided by T-Mobile for this application. She said it appeared that with antennas at the 85' level, the contour maps showed that some residences in the target coverage area may not receive signal levels strong enough to permit reliable indoor coverage. However, based on her review of the maps illustrating coverage with antennas at the 105' level, it appeared that the coverage objective may be met except for some apparently uninhabited areas covered with antennas at the proposed 125' level. She added that those areas not covered with the target signal levels appeared to be heavily wooded parkland areas where there are no residences.

Marjorie Williams asked if other carriers could effectively attach their antennas on a lower structure. Mr. Hunnicutt replied that it depended upon the carrier's coverage objective. Ms. Gandhi added that the lowest bay for antennas may be at or below the tree height, which could diminish signal transmissions. Mr. Hunnicutt explained that the design of the monopole permitted four bays atop the monopole, each of which could contain three antennas. T-Mobile planned on using the top two bays for their antennas, leaving two bays for use by others. In that case, the fourth bay may not be attractive for a third co-locator on this structure. He noted that the trees in this area appeared to be approximately 70' high and noted that a monopole disguised as a tree could avoid that problem because a tree design would allow T-Mobile to place all of their antennas at the top level, leaving room for additional antennas at lower elevations but still above the tree tops.

Mary Pat Wilson remarked that it appeared there may be an overlay issue with this location. Amy Bird of T-

Mobile responded that the design plans had listed the impervious areas to address the overlay issue.

Mr. Hunnicutt explained that the location proposed for the monopole did not meet the zoning requirement to be at least 300' from the nearest off-site dwelling; consequently, the Tower Coordinator did not recommend this application.

There was discussion among the TFCG members about the impact of approving a motion to not recommend the application. Mr. Hunnicutt stated that in the past, in cases where the proposed siting of a new monopole did not meet the zoning standards, the group had not recommended the application. He suggested that the group continue to be consistent in its actions, leaving decisions about waivers or variances from setback requirements to the Board of Appeals. Ms. Williams added that the Board of Appeals and the Planning Commission are provided with copies of the application reviewed by the TFCG, the Tower Coordinator's recommendation and excerpts from the minutes for each application that needs go through special exception review, so there is a record of why the group voted as reported.

Dave Niblock asked if any applications had been denied special exception because the TFCG had not recommended it. Mr. Hunnicutt replied that he could not recall that every having happened, but that he would check the records to the extent he could to be sure. He said that in the past, the Board and the Planning Commission had asked that the Tower Coordinator and the TFCG address all pertinent issues related to each application so there would be a record upon which they could base their decisions. He added that the TFCG had no approval authority per se, but could recommend, not recommend, or recommend with conditions.

One of the members suggested that they could recommend this application conditioned on approval of a waiver by the Board. Mr. Hunnicutt said that the position of the past TFCG Chairperson, Jane Lawton was that the group was interested in having the applications meet the zoning standards and it was up to the Board to decide on matters of granting waivers. He said the members had agreed with that position. He noted that if an application was not recommended only because it did not meet zoning requirements such as setback, for instance, that discussion would be a matter of record for the Board to consider. Mr. Hunnicutt read the Code section that described the basis on which the Board may reduce the 300' distance from a residence to a 1:1 setback and noted that a 125' high monopole could meet the 1:1 setback reduction in this case.

M.G. Diamond remarked that he believed that the TFCG recommendation carried weight with the Board of Appeals and the Planning Commission, so the group's action was important.

Marjorie Williams stated that she would check with the County Attorney on what action may be appropriate in cases like these for future applications.

**Motion:** Dave Niblock moved that the group not recommend the application, and asked that the minutes clearly reflect the group's discussion as to the reason why they do not recommend it for the record. Jennifer Bryant seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:** T-Mobile application to construct a new 115' monopole on the Gibson property at 2815 Cabin Creek Drive in Burtonsville (Application #200810-07).

Bob Hunnicutt summarized the application noting that the monopole is to be placed in a wooded area in the rear of a large piece of property and would require a special exception for this residential zone. He said that although there are a number of large homes around the wooded land, based on his site visit, it appeared that views of the structure may be well screened by the trees.

Mr. Hunnicutt said the applicant reported that T-Mobile had considered attaching antennas to a steeple on a church near the Gibson property but had ruled out that option because the church was too far from Briggs Chaney Road. He noted that that the church is farther to the northeast than the Gibson property, and based on the Tower Coordinator's review of that option, it appeared that antennas at the church may likely result in signals below the target level to a large residential area that is part of the proposed coverage area.

Mr. Hunnicutt noted that the monopole was a "unipole" design with three bays and that T-Mobile would place four flush-mounted antennas in the top bay, leaving the bottom two bays for potential future co-locators. He said that it appeared that the siting also met the zoning standards for setback and adequate ground space to accommodate the equipment of other carriers, but did not meet the requirement for screening the equipment

area, which calls for a shelter with a brick façade and landscaping around the equipment area. He noted that there is natural screening around the area where the equipment will be placed; however, he recommended the application conditioned on meeting the screening standards.

Mary Pat Wilson asked if there was a structure on the property. Mr. Hunnicutt replied that there was a large residence at the front of the property but the site proposed for the monopole was in the rear of the land in an area that was presently used as a stable and grazing area for horses.

Mr. Hunnicutt added that he had asked if T-Mobile had considered a tree disguise for this structure. The applicant replied that since the monopole will be so well screened naturally, the slim unipole design should be sufficient to minimize the impact of the facility in the community. Based on his site visit, Mr. Hunnicutt thought that may be true in this case.

**Motion:** Dave Niblock moved the application be recommended conditioned on the applicant meeting the requirements of Zoning Code §59-G-2.58 and obtaining a Special Exception from the Board of Appeals. Steve Batterden seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**Discussion Item: December meeting date**

Marjorie Williams explained that she would not be available to chair the meeting on December 3rd and since there would be no one else in her office available to chair that meeting, she asked the group to agree to postpone the December meeting to the following Wednesday (December 10th). The group agreed to reschedule the meeting for December 10, 2008.

**The next meeting of the TFCG is scheduled for Wednesday, December 10, 2008 at 2 p.m. in the second floor conference room #225 of the COB.**