

To: Distribution

From: Bob Hunnicutt, Tower Coordinator, Columbia Telecommunications

A meeting of the Transmission Facility Coordinating Group (TF CG) was held on February 4, 2009. The following people were in attendance:

MEMBERS

Mitsuko Herrera	OCCS	(240) 777-2928
Marjorie Williams	OCCS	(240) 777-3762
Dave Niblock	DPS	(240) 777-6252
Mary Pat Wilson	MCPS	(240) 314-4707
John Cuff (via phone)	OMB	
Helen Mu (via phone)	DTS	(240) 777-2804

STAFF

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

OTHER ATTENDEES

Sean Hughes	Cricket	(703) 906 0184
Michael Kelly	Cricket	(240) 274-7774
Carmen Charalambous	T-Mobile	(301) 775-5826
John Luke	Montgomery County Airpark	(301) 963-7100
Thomas Davy	ATC/Cricket	

Action Item Meeting Minutes: Dave Niblock moved the minutes be approved as written. Mary Pat Wilson seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Action Item Consent Agenda Applications:

1. Sprint/Xohm application to attach one dish antenna at the 130 level of a monopole on Blair High School property located at 51 University Boulevard in Silver Spring (Application #200812-10).
2. Cricket application to attach antennas at the 132' level of an existing monopole on Sandy Spring VFD property located at 16911 Georgia Avenue in Olney. (Application #200902-01).
3. Cricket application to attach antennas at the 95' level of an existing American Finnmark condominium building located at 9900 Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring (Application #200902-04).

Motion: Mary Pat Wilson noted that the actual property owner for Item #1 is Montgomery County and moved the Consent Agenda be approved. Helen Mu seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Action Item: Cricket application to attach antennas at the 124' level of an existing PEPCO transmission line tower #100-S located at the 2000 Block of Goshen Road & Rothbury Drive in Gaithersburg (Application #200812-18).

Bob Hunnicutt summarized the application noting that his recommendation is conditioned on Cricket meeting the request of the Montgomery Village Foundation to design their equipment to match the other equipment already at that location.

Mitsuko Herrera asked if Cricket agreed to meet the Foundations request. Michael Kelly stated that they did.

Motion: Dave Niblock moved the application be recommended conditioned on Cricket meeting the request of the Montgomery Village Foundation to design their equipment to match the other equipment already at that location. Mary Pat Wilson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Action Item: Cricket application to attach antennas at the 106' level of an existing monopole at Tri-State Quarry located at 8200 Seven Locks Road in Bethesda (Application #200902-02).

Mr. Hunnicutt summarized the application noting that the special exception for this monopole contained a provision that the owner of the monopole notify the Board of Appeals when subsequent carriers wished to attach antennas to the structure. He said he recalled that the provision was added to address community interest in changes to the appearance of the monopole.

Mary Pat Wilson asked who was responsible for maintaining the retaining wall. Thomas Davy of American Tower replied that as the owner of the monopole, American Tower was responsible for maintaining the site.

Mitsi Herrera asked if America Tower intended to notify the Board of Appeals about the Cricket antennas. Mr. Davy replied that they would do so.

Motion: Dave Niblock moved that the application be recommended conditioned on the tower owner notifying the Board of Appeals that Cricket wishes to attach antennas to the monopole. Mary Pat Wilson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Action Item: T-Mobile application to construct a new 100' monopole at the Extra Space Storage facility property located at 18920 Earhart Court in Gaithersburg (Application #200901-04).

Mr. Hunnicutt summarized the application. He reminded the group that the WSSC had submitted an application to construct a monopole very close to this site in 2007 (TFCG #200704-03). Though the TFCG did not take action on that application, the WSSC was in the process of proceeding with approval for its construction. Consequently, he asked Jim Krause with the WSSC if their monopole, once constructed, could accommodate T-Mobiles antennas. Mr. Krause replied that their monopole would be at its capacity with the WSSC, Sprint, and Nextel antennas that were to be attached to it. He added that the WSSC did not want to use any additional ground space for additional equipment other than that which was already planned.

Mr. Doulong explained that based on his review of the RF contour maps submitted with the application, it appeared that the height proposed for the antennas was needed to meet T-Mobiles desired in-building coverage to the residential areas near the sites.

Mr. Hunnicutt added that it appeared that the monopole may be somewhat screened from the nearby residential areas by the trees in the vicinity of those homes. Passersby along Snouffers School Road would likely be able to see the monopole. He noted that the location proposed for the monopole on the property appears to meet the zoning requirements.

Mitsi Herrera, noting the remarks in the Tower Coordinators recommendation, asked for an explanation of the Airport Managers objections to the monopole.

John Luke replied that his concern was that since the monopole is in a transitional zone alongside the airport runway, he thought it may have impact on future instrument approach landing at the airport. He stated that based on a Maryland Aviation Authority report, he believed that the monopole as proposed would likely be found not to be an obstruction as it was approximately 12' below the maximum height according to the FAAs standards. He added that even if the FAA does not require that the structure be lit, he preferred that it be lit for aircraft safety reasons to alert pilots to the presence of the structure, despite community objections to proposals to light the WSSCs monopole. He said he did not oppose objections to lighting the WSSCs monopole because it was on lower ground than this monopole proposed by T-Mobile.

Ms. Herrera asked if there had been other options that T-Mobile considered for locations for their antennas. T-Mobiles representative Carmen Charalambous replied that this location appeared to be an option where a new monopole would meet zoning standards.

Mr. Hunnicutt stated that in the Tower Coordinators review, they only look at other existing structures to which the carriers could attach their antennas to meet their stated coverage objections. Ms. Herrera asked if perhaps a second monopole on the WSSC property may be an option to address Mr. Lukes concerns. Mr. Hunnicutt stated that he would ask WSSC but noted that since this monopole was not one for WSSC purposes it would need to be approved by the Board of Appeals through the special exception process since it would not meet the setback requirements if located on the WSSC property.

Ms. Herrera asked if the FAA determination was an obstruction would T-Mobile decide not to build the monopole. Mr. Hunnicutt stated that it was his understanding that if FAA determined that it is an obstruction they may simply require that it be lit but not deny it being built. John Luke added that his understanding was that the FAA looked to local zoning regulations to define whether or not a structure could be built. Mr. Hunnicutt said that based on his review it appears that the proposed location and height of the monopole meets the County's zoning standards. He added that there was a provision in the Code that addressed the height of structures near an airport but that it was related to the plans for the airport as part of a special exception file. He said that the airport is permitted by a special exception but to the best of his knowledge there are no plans available that were a part of the record. He noted that it was a very old special exception proceeding from the 1950's. He said that he had reviewed the special exception and recalled that there was a reference to an area within 500' from the property line where it appeared there may not be any obstructions permitted but this tower appears to be beyond that distance.

Sean Hughes commented that based on his experience, carriers typically look to the guidance from the FAA and may not build a structure if it is an obstruction because of liability related concerns.

John Cuff, noting that T-Mobile already has antennas on a monopole on the other side of the airport, asked why they needed this site. David Doulong replied that based on the RF maps submitted with the application, it did not appear that the antennas from that location were providing the desired in-building coverage to the residential areas as they were too far away.

Ms. Herrera stated that she was interested in investigating options for placement of these antennas that met with all interested parties approval to the extent possible. She noted that in this case the missing information that she thought important to their decision was the FAA determination. She asked if T-Mobile would object to waiting until the FAA determination was in hand before the TFCG acted on the application. Ms. Charalambous indicated that she would not object.

Motion: Mary Pat Wilson moved the application be tabled until the FAA determination was obtained and the Tower Coordinator checked with the WSSC to see if use of their land was an option. John Cuff seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

The next meeting of the TFCG is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, 2009 at 2 p.m. in the second floor conference room #225 of the COB.