



DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY & ENTERPRISE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

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County Executive

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August 2, 2023

MINUTES OF TFCG MEETING

To: Distribution

From: TFCG Staff (CTC Technology & Energy)

A meeting of the Transmission Facility Coordinating Group (TFCG) was held on August 2, 2023. The following people were in attendance:

MEMBERS

Table with 3 columns: Name, Participation Method, and Organization. Includes Marjorie Williams (TFCG Chair), Amy Zou (DPS), Daryl Braithwaite (City of Takoma Park), Wayne Anderson (WSSC), Benjamin Berbert (M-NCPPC), Thomas Williamson (DGS), Carina Gonzales (MCPS), and Seamus McNamara (OMB).

STAFF

Table with 3 columns: Name, Participation Method, and Organization. Includes Shawn Thompson (CTC), James Crane (CTC), Lisa Lewis (DTS), InSoon Oh (DTS), and Heather Elliot (DTS).

Other Attendees.

Table with 3 columns: Name, Participation Method, and Organization. Includes Javad Shayan (DPS) and Debbie Spielberg (Office of the County Executive).



**Action Item: Meeting Minutes July 5, 2023**

**Motion:** Ben Berbert made a motion that the July minutes be approved. Amy Zou seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

**Regular Agenda**

1. **Application Number:** 2021081528 **Type:** New Received **(date):** 8/13/2021

**Revised:** 12/6/2021

**Revised:** 2/3/2022

**Revised:** 3/29/2022

**Applicant:** Telecom Capital Group on behalf of Verizon Wireless

**Site Name/Location:** Old Hundred Monopole/22900 Old Hundred Rd, Barnesville

**Zoning Standard:** AR **Property Owner:** Juanita Breland

**Description:** Telecom Capital Group to build new 160' monopole (with 4' lightning rod) at proposed site location. Verizon Wireless is adding (6) new antennas and (6) new RRHs on a new 160' monopole structure. Verizon will also be adding (1) new equipment cabinet and associated cabinets in a new 12.5'x21' Verizon Wireless lease area on the ground.

**Tower Coordinator Recommendation:** Recommended on the condition that applications 2021081528 and 2021081533 were reviewed and recommended jointly to demonstrate the need for the tower to be built. The colocation application (2021081533) was the basis for justifying the need for the tower in this application (2021081528). Without the colocation application, the need for this new tower has not been demonstrated.

<https://montgomerycountytfcg.s3.amazonaws.com/Applications/MC2021081528+Application+and+Report.pdf>

2. **Application Number:** 2021081533 **Type:** Colocation Received **(date):** 8/13/2021

**Revised:** 12/6/2021

**Revised:** 2/3/2022

**Revised:** 3/29/2022

**Applicant:** Telecom Capital Group on behalf of Verizon Wireless

**Site Name/Location:** Old Hundred Monopole/22900 Old Hundred Rd, Barnesville

**Zoning Standard:** AR **Property Owner:** Juanita Breland

**Description:** Telecom Capital Group to build 160' monopole (with 4' lightning rod) at the proposed location. Verizon Wireless will co-locate on the tower at a 136' rad center. Verizon's tower equipment will include 6 new antennas and 6 new RRUs, along with cable(s). Verizon's ground equipment will include 2 cabinets (+1 future cabinet) and a diesel generator.

**Tower Coordinator Recommendation:** Recommended on the condition that application 2021081528 and 2021081533 were reviewed and recommended jointly to demonstrate the need for the tower to be built. This colocation application (2021081533) was the basis for justifying the need for the tower in the new tower application (2021081528). Without this colocation application, the need for the new tower has not been demonstrated. If the new tower application is not approved, the colocation application will be withdrawn.

<https://montgomerycountytfcg.s3.amazonaws.com/Applications/MC2021081533+Application+and+Report.pdf>

Margie Willimas noted that Items 1 and 2 on the agenda had been reviewed and recommended previously. Due to the upcoming expiration of the TFCG recommendation, the applicant was requesting an updated TFCG recommendation in order to continue with the permitting process.

There have been no changes in the scope work for the respective applications.

Seamus McNamara made a motion to recommend both applications. Amy Zou seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

3. ***Application Number:*** 2023052156 ***Type:*** Colocation ***Received (date):*** 5/15/2023

***Revised:*** 7/12/2023

***Revised:*** 7/21/2023

***Applicant:*** Crown Castle Fiber LLC on behalf of T-Mobile

***Site Name/Location:*** PEPCO 799412-8177/Near 6300 New Hampshire Ave, Takoma Park

***Zoning Standard:*** CRT-1, C-1.5, R-0.5, H-50 ***Property Owner:*** MD SHA

***Description:*** MNG-167

Install New

-Ericsson 4435 Radio (1)

-Ericsson 4402 Radio (2)

-TBC B66A+B25+B41 Triplexer (1)

-Kathrein 84010602 Antenna (1)

-Charles Shroud SHRD52-991 (1)

***Tower Coordinator Recommendation:*** Recommended. Recommendation is subject to compliance with all applicable laws.

<https://montgomerycountytfcg.s3.amazonaws.com/Applications/MC2023052156+Application+and+Report.pdf>

Margie Willimas noted that the three remaining applications were for colocations on Pepco structures.

Shawn Thompson advised Item 3 on the agenda was proposed for a Pepco utility pole. He presented the location.

While the recommendation report noted the property owner was Montgomery County, the correct owner is the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) and this was correctly reflected on the agenda and in the application and other supporting documentation.

Shawn Thompson described the scope of work to the committee, indicating the antennas would be attached to the top of the pole and an equipment cabinet would also be installed.

From a Radio Frequency (RF) perspective the antenna is categorically excluded from requiring further environmental analysis.

Shawn Thomas noted a citizen concern had been forwarded prior to the meeting that this application and Item 4 on the agenda appeared to proposed RF that would exceed the limits allowed for human exposure. The would be true if a person was directly in front of the antenna. However, the ground level exposure is below the limit. Per the FCC OET 65 Bulletin, the antenna is radiating at an energy that is low enough to be categorically excluded from further reporting. In these cases, the County does not require a report regarding the RF exposure.

Debbie Spielberg asked for clarification on categorical exclusion related to radiation

Shawn Thompson replied that in the late 1990's, the FCC published the OET 65 bulletin. It outlines rules on deployment of equipment such as what is being considered in this application. This includes when an applicant is required to do further reporting. If an area will be over the limit due to a proposal, the applicant must bring the site into compliance by preventing the general public from accessing the relevant areas. This can also include signage for workers, including telecom workers working on the poles.

The FCC also set guidelines for further reporting. The Bulletin includes a table outlining when this is required. As this site was under 1000 Watts, it is not required for reporting.

Debbie Spielberg asked if the wattage was reflected in the application.

Shawn Thompson advised that the wattage is a required question, and this proposal was 455 Watts.

Debbie Spielberg asked if RF Emissions emitted by the full installation would exceed federal limits as the citizen concern noted earlier had also mentioned that this application would not fall below the maximum permissible level set by the FCC. The citizen referenced caution signs to be installed by the carrier, including noting that a distance of less than four feet would exceed the public and occupational limit. It appears that the citizen feels that the application misstates the maximum permissible limits.

Shawn Thompson advised his interpretation was that the citizen was pointing out an area that is over the limit. That area was within four feet of the antennas which is placed on a 40 foot pole and not subject to public access.

Debbie Spielberg responded that there may be a concern about wording in which the application is being considered categorically excluded and falling below the maximum permissible limits.

Shawn Thompson advised there were two different issues. The first was the limit which is going to be exceeded in the areas noted as four feet from the antenna. The second was the

categorical exclusion. This is defined by the FCC. There are occasions when the items are conflated as in a situation where an area is over the limited, but the public would then expect it to not be categorically excluded.

Debbie Spielberg read from the report for this item:

*The maximum effective radiated power (Max ERP) for this installation (455 Watts) falls below the maximum permissible exposure limits set forth by the FCC and, as a result, is categorically excluded from a detailed environmental analysis.*

Per Debbie Spielberg, this sentence ties exposure to categorical exclusion and it falls below the maximum permissible exposure limits. However, this should be maximum permissible exposure limits for the general public in reference to the pole height. There is a concern that it categorizes this in a way that is not accurate.

Shwan Thompson advised that the wording of the reports could be changed, but the analysis stands that the general public is not going to be in an area that is over the limit and the proposal is categorically excluded.

Debbie Spielberg requested that the minutes reflect the intention of the reports regarding maximum permissible exposure limits and categorical exclusion.

There was no further discussion and Margie Williams asked if there was a motion.

Amy Zou made a motion to recommend. Seamus McNamara seconded the motion was unanimously approved.

4. ***Application Number:*** 2023052169 ***Type:*** Colocation ***Received (date):*** 5/31/2023  
***Revised:*** 7/12/2023

***Applicant:*** Crown Castle Fiber LLC on behalf of T-Mobile

***Site Name/Location:*** PEPCO 787424-540730/ Corner of Leonard Dr & Porter Rd, Silver Spring

***Zoning Standard:*** R-60 ***Property Owner:*** Montgomery County

***Description:*** MNG-409 Install on existing wood utility pole

-Ericsson 6523 semi-integrated panel antenna (1)

-Ericsson 6525 semi-integrated panel antenna (1)

-Ericsson Diplex Filter B2+B66/B30 (4-2) Diplexer (2)

-Ericsson 4402 Radio (2)

-Ericsson 4435 Radio (1)

-Strand Cable

***Tower Coordinator Recommendation:*** Recommended. Recommendation is subject to compliance with all applicable laws.

<https://montgomerycountytfcg.s3.amazonaws.com/Applications/MC2023052169+Application+and+Report.pdf>

Shawn Thompson reported that this application was a strand mount proposal and presented the location and scope of work to the committee.

The construction plans indicate that the pole is 30' 7" from the nearest residence. Google Earth indicates a distance of 32'. It is approximately 800' from the nearest commercial property.

The citizen concerns noted earlier had also been received for this application. The review indicated the general public would not be in an area above the maximum permissible limit and the proposed work was categorically excluded from requiring further environmental analysis.

Debbie Spielberg inquired about the recent zoning regulations on setbacks for residences.

Amy Zou replied the minimum requirement is 30' measured from the pole to the closest building corner. Based on the site plan provided in the construction drawings, signed, and sealed by a professional engineer, it meets the setback requirement of 30'7".

Debbie Spielberg asked if something was already included in the application that is signed by the engineer or did that occur with the permit.

Amy Zou noted that the provided site plan was prepared, signed, and sealed by a professional engineer. That is a required document.

Debbie Spielberg asked if that was currently in the application or when the applicant received a permit.

Shawn Thompson replied that construction drawings were part of the current application.

Debbie Spielberg asked if those were the documents signed by an engineer.

Amy Zou replied they were signed by an engineer.

Debbie Spielberg is there was more than one house involved and from what point is the pole measured.

Amy Zou replied that it was always measured from the pole. In this case, it is measured to the closest building corner.

Seamus McNamara asked if that was always measured from the pole, is it possible for the strand mount measurement to cause a difference.

Amy Zou replied that the applications always measure from the pole.

Seamus McNamara asked about the ZTA text for clarification.

Amy Zou reviewed the ZTA text and advised it referenced the existing structure. This was due to the antennas being more difficult to measure than from the existing structures such as poles.

Shawn Thompson shared the construction plans.

Debbie Spielberg asked if they were required to measure from the closest part of the house.

Amy Zou confirmed that was the procedure.

Debbie Spielberg asked if the engineers had an obligation to confirm this is accurate.

Margie Williams advised that the engineers are required to stamp the plans with their license that they concur with the measurements.

Debbie Spielberg asked if the comments for RF EME concerning maximum exposure and categorical exclusion would also be elaborated and incorporated upon as per the citizen's concerns.

Debbie Spielberg requested follow up on categorical exclusion and how it is used in reviewing applications.

There was no further discussion and Margie Williams asked if there was a motion.

Amy Zou made a motion to recommend. Thomas Williamson seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. ***Application Number:*** 2023062172 ***Type:*** Colocation ***Received (date):*** 6/5/2023

***Revised:*** 7/18/2023

***Revised:*** 7/21/2023

***Applicant:*** NB+C on behalf of T-Mobile

***Site Name/Location:*** PEPCO 21-S/2000 Beallsville Rd, Beallsville

***Zoning Standard:*** Agricultural ***Property Owner:*** POTOMAC ELECTRIC POWER CO

***Description:*** T-Mobile proposes to install 9 antennas, 6 RRH's, 12 antenna mounts, 1 equipment pad and 2 cabinets, per plans.

***Tower Coordinator Recommendation:*** Recommended. Recommendation is subject to compliance with all applicable laws.

<https://montgomerycountytfcg.s3.amazonaws.com/Applications/MC2023062172+Application+and+Report.pdf>

Shawn Thompson noted that this proposal was for a transmission tower and described the scope of work.

The applicant submitted an RF compliance report and found that neither the occupational or general population limit would be exceeded at the ground level.

Debbie Spielberg asked if any notice was required for this type of installation.

Margie Williams advised that no notice was required.

Margie Williams inquired as to the setback on residential and commercial properties.

Shawn Thompson advised the nearest residence was 700 feet and the nearest commercial property was 1200 feet.

Margie Williams asked if there was a motion for this item.

Wayne Anderson made a motion to recommend. Seamus McNamara seconded and it unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next TFCG meeting is scheduled for September 6, 2023, at 2 p.m.