

Meeting of Review Board

8-20-19

In attendance: Craig Modisher, Susan Pearce-Kelling, Bruce Murray, Don Barber, Ellen Harrison

Audience: Barry Goodrich, John Miller, Katherine Goldberg-Forrest, Jia Forrest, Wil Lawrence, Carol James, Mark Fuentes (AT&T contractor, AiroSmith).

Recording Secretary: Mark Witmer

8:04. Meeting called to order by Chair Modisher. Solicited points for discussion from Review Board members

Board members ultimately agreed that quantitative information is needed on coverage provided by towers of the three different heights. Current information does not provide a compelling case for the 195 ft tower. Board members asked the applicant to provide quantification (numbers, percentage, locales) for coverage at different heights shown by propagation maps.

Clarification that the coverage information (propagation maps) was for AT&T signal.

The board would like to know 1) will this tower resolve the local gap in coverage and 2) what is the variation in coverage at the different heights? Need details of engineering analysis done by Taitem.

Bruce - Does the height of the proposed tower affect other FirstNet towers nearby? Mr. Fuentes said that he's also working on an AT&T Cell Tower Project in Groton.

Craig clarified that a letter from the Tompkins County Department of Emergency Response about FirstNet alludes to two other towers. Mr. Fuentes is also working on a tower in Groton.

Ellen read from letter received after the Public Hearing asking the following questions; replies by Mr. Fuentes:

1. What will be the benefit in coverage in terms of increased cell service locally?
2. Can we clarify the difference in coverage by 135' versus 195' tower? Discussion of whether we want information on coverage by area or household. Don offered that the area of coverage in Caroline is not part of what our local law addresses.
3. How much lighting will there be? (no lighting of tower and no full-time lights)
4. Backup Generator - it is for outages only. Will run each week for short test periods (ca. 20 min.)
5. Vehicles on roads - Construction period will be about 5 weeks during daylight hours. After that there will be occasional maintenance visits by personnel in 3/4 ton pickup.

Ellen - might there be a better site available? Not part of our assessment (Craig, Don). Ellen not satisfied with handling of co-location issue. Specifically, 125' tower on East Miller Road - could AT&T co-locate there. Requests propagation map for this tower. Bruce and Sue in agreement. Bruce read from Caroline's Telecommunications Law of 1996 of the need for applicant to first pursue co-location. Who owns the land at E. Miller Rd. tower?

Don pointed out that the board is requesting correction of June 21 letter from applicant regarding shared use of towers.

Could we get information on what a 195 ft. tower would provide at E. Miller Rd? Craig-probably not under the co-location provision of the law.

Resolved, the Review Board sets a Public Hearing on the revised SEQR for September 10, 2019, at 7 pm at the Town Hall.

motion: Ellen second: Sue in favor: all

The board seeks additional information from AiroSmith and Taitem by September 3, 2019. Craig will provide board draft letters.

Next meeting of the Review Board will be Tuesday, September 17, 2019, 7 pm.

Privilege of the Floor:

Carol James: Question about priorities under section 7 of Telecommunications Law. Feels that it is not clear that propagation maps illustrate benefits to the community. Wanted to know power needs of tower with concern about local power supply.

John Miller requested expert consultant examine siting. Also concern about whether priorities were addressed by applicant - explanation of why higher priority sites were not chosen.

Katherine Goldberg-Forrest. Review Board's job is not to come up with a grand plan. The way it is working now is we're going with the chicken that will do. Advises that the town form a pro-active telecommunications committee.

Review Board members advocated for Town to rewrite our Telecommunications Law.

Wil Lawrence- asked whether we could find out from applicant or Tompkins County Dept. Emergency Response how close (all local AT&T towers?mw) come to 98% coverage as is sought by FirstNet.

10:00 Motion to adjourn. Craig. Second by Ellen. in favor: all