

I attended the Garrett Planners Open House today and provide input for the Ten Year Plan to address cell tower standards, regulations, ordinances, etc. Cheryl DeBerry said “we don’t have them or zoning in the county outside of municipalities” and I stated we need them because without them there is no oversight. (“Shame on us for allowing this to continue.”) I told them the community does not have a voice in the decision making process and should. There needs to be a community notification process. Communities are not fully informed of what a cell tower will bring to the neighborhood. Better set backs are needed, the minimum I’ve seen in Maryland is 125% of planned or future tower height. We need pre and post radiation measurements by independent RF Engineers. Cell towers catch fire and there are increased noise and air pollution next to school grounds and neighbors. The hazardous materials, lead acid batteries, diesel fuel, vehicle exhausts, next to the school and neighbors make it a Haz Mat area that many communities require registration/inspection with and by the fire department.

We measured the distance from the tower base to Dennett Road School property line as 28 feet. So, when there is a Tower collapse, 97 feet of the tower crashes on to the in use playground and children that are in the fall zone. Falling and wind flung ice sheets, equipment, and tools have been determined to cause fatal injuries within cell tower’s fall zones. Children should not be witness to this. I don’t know the amount of U.S. Cellular’s insurance policy, a \$million? (seems to be a standard for towers), but each child on the playground when injuries occur are a \$million plus claim each, creating massive liabilities for the school system, local government, and ultimately the community when the policy won’t pay any more. Students and staff are subjected to additional cell tower microwave radiation transmitted because of the insufficient 28 feet of setback.

We are so very frustrated because we can’t understand how anyone in the present process can think this tower is OK when with a little oversight this tower could have been relocated, in the same plot, to allow for an adequate fall zone. If the tower will ultimately be 150 feet, the setback should have minimally been 187.5 feet, (150’ X 125% is the calculation many counties in Maryland use as a minimum), not 28 feet as present. This is unsafe as well as the medical helicopters flying right over the cell tower area, did so 2 days ago, and often.

Cell towers bring unscreened strangers close to the school playgrounds during school hours. Cell towers bring dangerous criminal activity to residential areas. Copper and component thefts can also cause the tower to not be grounded.

Sincerely,

Will Hebden