

A site walk was held May 2, 2018 for the proposed cell tower on 120 Brackett Rd and was well attended by members of the Planning Board, ZBA and Conservation Commission as well as the public.

Verizon representatives, their engineer and environmentalist described the proposed site and gravel driveway as it was staked out and answered numerous questions about its lay out, completeness of the submitted plan, impacts on the physical attributes of the land as well as on the aesthetics.

Topics discussed include the following:

1. Impacts to Trees:
 - The site plan indicates 28 trees greater than 6 inches will be cut down the engineer indicated all trees of any size within 5 feet of the installation and driveway would also need to be cut down. Those are not identified on the plans.
 - Ms. Losik indicated the plans show a disturbance boundary of 20 feet which suggests that trees up to 20 feet from the installation or driveway may be impacted. The engineer stated that 20 ft. distance was where machinery and workers would be working re the excavation and that did not necessarily mean all trees in that area would be cut down.
 - Bottom Line. Although the site plan indicates 28 trees will be cut down, more trees will be cut down however the true number of trees cut down is not documented by the site plan.
2. Assessment of land, soil geography and topography of the site:
 - Verizon indicated they had not tested the soil, and were unaware of the underlying topography upon which the equipment compound and tower were being built.
 - Verizon does not yet know what the foundation will be for the tower structure and compound as they have not performed a geo –technical analysis. It is unknown if it will be flat or tiered as both were discussed as options. At this point they suppose they will scrape off 1 foot of “organics” and build the grade back up using gravel and other materials.
 - Bottom Line: The design of the tower compound, the depth of excavation and fill is unknown and undocumented at this time.
3. Height of the tower structure and view from the road
 - Verizon indicated that the tower structure itself – 133ft. is approximately 53 feet taller than the surrounding trees however, Verizon is not clear as to the height of the tower platform or equipment compound relative to road level. It was noted the grade slopes quite a bit from the level of the road to where the stakes are. There is concern expressed that given the grade, the fencing may not hide any of the view into the compound. Verizon said they could install a taller fence if granted a variance to do so however given they have not analyzed the topography the placement of the tower and its ultimate height is not known. This was a concern relative to the floating of the balloon test on May 5-6. It was requested the balloon be raised to the tallest possible height which is ~140 feet from the staked out tower site to accommodate raising the base and adding 133 feet of tower.
 - Bottom Line: The actual height of the completed tower is unknown and undocumented by the site plans at this time.
4. Impact from trees: damage to compound and tower

- It was noted that large tree limbs and mature trees with shallow root systems had fallen within close proximity to the staked out site. Concern was raised as to safety and maintenance of the compound, whose liability and whether more trees will need to be felled in order to prevent damage from falling trees due to the wet ground. Verizon commented that the land on which the tower and compound was being built was “dry”. This statement was countered by neighbor testimony, the presence of uprooted trees surrounding the staked out land, and that this area is well within the wetlands buffer.
 - Bottom Line: There is concern regarding the documentation of liability and maintenance to the compound and further tree cutting that is not well documented at this time.
5. Efficacy of Radio frequency transmission proposed.
- It was noted that the tower location is very low/at ground level and that there is a significant elevation of land and very tall trees directly behind the proposed site that could potentially impede or block RF propagation to the beach areas. Verizon’s RF engineer admitted that they used “modeling” for their projections of RF, but that did not include the height of trees on that land.
 - Bottom line: there is concern expressed by the public that signals may be impeded by that higher ground land and tree. given elevation and tree interference.
6. Additional land and equipment requirements
- Verizon is required to have co-locators on this site and the question was raised as to whether that would require additional generators and any other additional equipment such as heating or cooling or propane tanks as support.
 - Verizon stated it was unclear as to whether additional generators would be required and therefore how that would if any increase the already 2400 sq. foot footprint of the compound area.
 - Verizon’s attorney clarified that Verizon has never let other carriers use their generators.
 - Bottom line: Consequently there was concern raised that inevitably additional generators would be added which would increase both the size and the sound of the footprints.
7. Blasting
- When it was pointed out by the public that the land under the tower and compound was likely bedrock, the question was asked, does that mean there will be blasting? Verizon responded absolutely, Verizon’s engineer said no, when asked to clarify Verizon said they were both accurate.
 - Bottom line: There are conflicting answers that must be documented by Verizon at a more detail level.

Balloon test May 5-6, 2018

The balloon test for Saturday May 5 was halted due to winds after balloons popped. The balloon was raised on Sunday May 6. Verizon will bring photoshopped pictures to the next board meeting replacing

balloons with super impositions of towers to give better perspective of the ultimate aesthetic impacts from the tower placement.