

TOWN OF KEEDYSVILLE, MARYLAND

"Where Northern Thrift and Personality Blend with Southern Charm and Hospitality"

P.O. Box 359
19 South Main Street
Keedysville, MD 21756
301-432-5795
townhall@keedysvillemd.com
www.keedysvillemd.com



Ken Lord, Mayor
Brandon Sweeney, Assistant Mayor
Judy Kerns, Council
Matthew Hull, Council
Sarah Baker, Council

Approved

Public Information Session – Verizon Cell Antennas Minutes March 1, 2023

The public information session of the Keedysville Mayor and Town Council was called to order at 6:00 pm with the following present: Mayor Ken Lord, Assistant Mayor Brandon Sweeney, Council Members Matt Hull, Sarah Baker, Town Administrator Lisa Riner, and Administrative Assistant Teresa Pangle.

Call to Order 6pm

Mayor Lord called the session to order and stated this is a listening session, not a hearing. There was a notice posted on the door, the website, Facebook, and everyone should have received a letter in the mail. No decision has been made and no decision will be made tonight. Written comments can also be submitted after the meeting.

Council Member Hull gave some background on a past situation when Verizon wanted to put cell antennas on the water tower. Mr. French questioned about the water tank being constructed of used parts. Mr. Hull assured him everything about the tank was brand new and it was built in place.

Mayor Lord mentioned Verizon does want to expand in this area. If done on Town property we can control it, but not if done on private property. Council member Baker mentioned the Town benefits if the cell antennas are put on the water tower, but no benefit to the Town if done on private property. Mr. Gue questioned how it benefits him as a tax-paying citizen. Ms. Baker mentioned it can help offset water bills and the maintenance of the water tank.

Mr. Kerns mentioned concerns about the appearance and the long-term capacity of the tower to handle the extra weight and health concerns that may or may not be true. He asked about the money of \$28k per year and if it increases each year. Town Administrator Riner reported it increases by 10% every 5 years. Assistant Mayor Sweeney mentioned it is \$2,400 per month. Town Administrator Riner reported none of this is set in stone, this is Verizon's first offer. Mr. Kerns said he wanted to hear from a Verizon representative and Town Administrator Riner reported the Verizon representative wanted to be here but had surgery today. Town Administrator Riner addressed Mr. Kerns's question about the capacity of the tower and said a structural engineer will provide a report. Assistant Mayor Sweeney confirmed a structural analysis will be done prior to any approval or installation if this moves forward.

Ms. Matson asked if the Town has consulted the designer of the water tower regarding structural maintenance and safety deficiencies. Town Administrator Riner confirmed they will be an integral part of the process if it goes through. Ms. Matson asked if the Town is going to have plans, designs, and drawings reviewed by an independent third party that specializes in water towers and antenna installations. Council Member Hull said yes, it will be Southern Corrosion who maintains the tank and the engineer that built the tank (KCI Engineering) will be involved. Mayor Lord pointed out that Southern Corrosion is our tank maintenance company and they are responsible for keeping it in good shape. They happen to have a working relationship with Verizon contractors. They approach water towers first because it's a tall infrastructure. It's not a matter of if the tower can hold the antennas, but more do we want the antennas visually, health-wise, and everything else. Ms. Matson asked if the Town is going to have an independent third

party whose only interest is in the water tower owner (the Town) and who understands the tank maintenance. Council Member Hall said yes, Southern Corrosion. Ms. Matson asked if the Town is going to paint the tower a color that is similar to the cell antennas. Council member Hull said we are painting the tank the color it is currently and it may be possible to have the antennas painted to match the tower. Ms. Matson asked if the Town is going to have an independent third-party inspection during the phase of the installation. Council Member Hull answered yes. Ms. Matson asked if the Town is going to ensure the interior coating is not compromised when you weld because welding causes heat. Council Member Hull said yes, they originally designed the corral to handle the load and will check to make sure the engineering is still good.

Mr. Gue said much of his concerns were already touched on but wanted to confirm what used to be on the ground will be up in the air. Council member Hull said yes. Mr. Gue is concerned about the safety of the antennas being up in the air and the potential of them falling off. Council Member Sweeney mentioned the engineering is in place to make sure that doesn't happen. Assistant Mayor Sweeney also mentioned as far as aesthetics, as of right now we don't have a design. Mr. Gue asked about other companies coming in and Council Member Hull mentioned in the agreement any other antennas coming in can't interfere with any current antennas. The radio read antennas the Town plans to put up are the most important, everything else is secondary.

Ms. Gemeny mentioned she had been to previous meetings and wanted to make sure some of the basics from those meetings were made clear. She asked about the Verizon contract discussed at last month's meeting and if we met with the Town Attorney to go over the edits. Town Administrator Riner reported the edits were made to the first lease agreement proposal and sent back to Verizon and has not heard back as of now. If they don't like the edits/conditions made this may not move forward, but the Town wanted to have this Public Information Session to get some feedback from residents. Town Administrator Riner mentioned there will be some equipment at the bottom of the water tower. It could be contained inside the current fence or just outside the fence, but either way, it will have its own access separate from the access to the tower. We won't know until we have the designs. Also, when Verizon wants to come out to the tower they would need to contact someone from the Council or someone from the Boonsboro water dept would have to come out to meet them. They would not have free access.

Ms. Burton is most concerned about what people have found out about health concerns. Council Member Baker said in researching it's like the more you read the less you know. At first glance it seems safe, it's allowed in Towns and around houses, but there is other info that disputes the safety. Everyone needs to do research for themselves. Mayor Lord said that the Council members really don't have an answer to that question. He said it's inconclusive. He went to the FCC website they don't take a position but mention potential health concerns. Council Member Baker mentioned the American Cancer Society doesn't have concerns, but like with many things if you are looking to find if it is safe or unsafe you will find both. Council Member Hull mentioned those who service these antennas want to be at least 6-8ft away from the antennas if they are turned on.

Mr. Burton's main concern is safety. It's ok until it's not ok. He's concerned if there's a storm how safe is it? Is the money the Town will get worth it? His other concern is aesthetics. He would like to see what it's going to look like. He feels if the Town goes through with this we should be justly awarded. Council Member Hull asked what he feels is an appropriate amount. He just feels \$28k is pocket-change to Verizon considering we really don't know the answers to the concerns of safety.

Mr. Li spoke in detail about the differences between radiation from microwaves and rf waves from cell towers. He said distance does matter. He does not have trust in the corporations to give accurate information. He feels it's best to be cautious. He would prefer it be outside of Town because he feels the distance matters.

Ms. O'Connor would like to know what it will look like and how many antennas. Assistant Mayor Sweeney said we know there will be 9 antennas ranging from 3ft to 8ft in height. Ms. O'Connor is concerned about the Town being in a wind tunnel and what effects that will have on the tower with the extra weight of antennas. She wants to be sure the Council lets the engineers know the Town is in a wind tunnel.

Mr. Lawrence said Verizon will get what they want whether it's in Town or outside of Town. His main concern is safety and feels that should be the number one concern.

There was some discussion about the footprint of the cell antennas if they weren't installed on the water tower. There is a possibility it could be built on private property inside or outside of Town and the pros and cons of that. Mr. French asked about additional antennas being added later. Assistant Mayor Sweeney said any kind of change, addition, or upgrade would have to come to the Council for approval. Mr. French asked about Verizon leasing out to other companies. Assistant Mayor Sweeney said that leasing it out would also have to come before the Council and the Town would get a portion of that money. Town Administrator Riner pointed out the Town can't say we are keeping other companies from putting their antennas up. We are not allowed to give Verizon exclusive rights to the tower, but those other companies would have to meet the Town's requirements.

Attorney Kuczynski arrived at 6:50 pm.

Attorney Kuczynski mentioned the zoning ordinance requires a public hearing in order for it to be located any place in Town. A special exception will be required.

The question was asked if the public can have a vote. Attorney Kuczynski said there are two ways it can be done. The Council can put the question to the citizens for a referendum vote and negotiate any agreement contingent upon the voter's approval. The other option is in order for the agreement to be approved an ordinance would have to be passed.

Mayor Lord wrapped things up by saying we have no control if they do something outside of Town, we have some mechanisms if they decide to do it in Town elsewhere from the tower but no assurances it will improve our cell service. We haven't heard anything from Verizon regarding the changes made to the lease agreement. This will be discussed at the April meeting if the lease negotiation is still alive.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Teresa Pangle
Administrative Assistant

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The sign in sheets for
both meetings were
accidently mingled

Public Information Session – Verizon Cell Antennas

March 1, 2023

All attendees must sign in. Attendee comments will only be heard during the appropriate time in the agenda. Those wishing to be heard must check the appropriate box. Comments will be limited to three minutes each.

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	WISH TO BE HEARD
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JAMES KERNS	7 MT. Vernon Ln. Keedysville, MD 21756	301-432-5342	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Karen Matson	Coffman Turn Rd	240-818-4010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Charles Gue	28 Sumter Dr	301-660-9087	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Eileen Lacey	32 Skyline Ct.		<input type="checkbox"/>
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Sally Yemay	50 South Main		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Sandy Burton	38 S Main		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Beth Burton	38 S Main		<input type="checkbox"/>
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John Puffy	23 Sumter Dr		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Mayor & Council and Water Commission Meeting March 1, 2023

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JAMES KERNS	7 Mt. Vernon Ln. Keedysville, MD 21756		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Karen Matson	Coffman Farms Rd		<input type="checkbox"/>
Robin Leggere	9 Mallard Ln		<input type="checkbox"/>
Paul French	49 S. Main		<input type="checkbox"/>
JONATHAN PUFFENBERGER	23 Sumter Dr		<input type="checkbox"/>
Jason Knobill	5 Mallard Ln.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Martha Gane	34 N. MAIN		<input type="checkbox"/>

Mengyang Li 12 Turkey Tract Pl.
Keedysville, MD 21756



Lorraine O'Connor 30 Yankee Dr



Doug Lawrence 30 Yankee Dr



Sandy Lord & Kate Lord 17 Appomattox Ct



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Agenda

March 1, 2023

Call to Order

Verizon Cell Antennas Proposal

Resident Comments

Council Comments

Adjournment