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Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, Public Hearing, Wednesday, November 13, 2024

Date Wednesday, November 13, 2024
Place Board Room, First Floor, Government Center, 1 Harrison Street SE, Leesburg, Virginia
Length 1h 19m (video)

- Official meeting video (county, Granicus): <https://loudoun.granicus.com/player/clip/7811>
- Agenda (Granicus): https://loudoun.granicus.com/AgendaViewer.php?view_id=73&clip_id=7811

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-18. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:10:03] Supervisors, anybody else having trouble getting into your iPads? Are you guys all in Granicus? Because my password seems to be. And if I do it any more times, it's going to lock me out.

[00:10:24] I don't want to get locked out.

[00:10:52] I want to get started. Ms. Bricksman, can you hear us? Wonderful. And Mr. Kirshner will not be joining us this evening. Is that correct? Staff, we've all heard that.

[00:11:08] He's not joining us. Mr. Kirshner, you haven't heard that. You have heard that. No, you have not heard that. Okay. I have was told that I'm going to shoot him a text real quick just to make sure since the item tonight is actually in his district. All right, let's get going. Well, good evening, supervisors.

[00:11:42] Good evening, Loudon, and good evening to the staff. I'm going to call the order to November 13th, 2024, Loudon County Board of Supervisors Business Meeting. This room has a hearing loop. If you need hearing assistance, please switch your hearing aid to the telecom mode. If you need a headset. We have those as well. As a reminder to all members of the public addressing the board this evening, you may only sign up to speak on the matters that have been advertised for this public hearing. Due to the broadcast delay, excuse me, any member of the public, if you are not in

[00:12:17] the boardroom wishing to address the board on items 1, 2, 3, and 5, which are on our consolidated agenda please see the number that will be scrolling across your screen right now if you are here you signed up to speak you will be a lot of two and a half minutes if you are in the boardroom your name is called please come to the podium nearest to you or you guys can switch to podiums i don't come to every podium you want to come to the timer on the podium will indicate your time when your time is expired please yield the floor to the next speaker if you're providing your

[00:12:54] comments via telephone, I'm going to ask that you time yourself. I do that because you might not be able to see the clock if you're on your phone, and you still have two and a half minutes, but when you get to two minutes, I don't want to stop you because it interrupts your flow when you're speaking, so I won't stop you, but when you get to your two and a half minutes, I will stop you, so go on and time yourself so you know when you're getting close. And when taking inputs for public items i will ask if there's anyone in the boardroom wishing to speak and then i then i will go to the moderator who this evening is amanda logan and ask if there's any speakers um via online please

[00:13:33] note that there is a slight delay between the broadcast and the boardroom before we get started i would like to have a point a personal privilege and say that today is supervisor turner's birthday I was going to have everyone tease him about being an old man, but I decided not to do that because, quite frankly, Mr. Turner could probably run faster, jump higher, and God knows ride his bike further than anybody else on this board.

[00:14:01] So we can't tease him if he's the best person up here in the best physical condition. However, Mr. Turner, take one minute and explain the really strange anomaly in your family's birthdays.

[00:14:19] Well, I was eight years old when I met my stepmother. I was born on November 13th. My stepmother was born on November 13th. A few years later, she got pregnant with my sister and had my half-sister, and she was born on November 13th. Her mother was born on November 13th.

[00:14:36] And I met my second wife, and on our first date, I went to pick her up at the house and she lived at 1313 Monte Lake Drive and while we're on the date she informed me that her son and my future stepson was born on November 13th. When I was 10 years all the girls were born 28 years apart and every one of us was born on Tuesday except for my son who was born on a Thursday. The Philadelphia Bulletin did a story on us when I was 10 years old, the odds of that happening in an immediate family are about 1 billion to 1. I have no idea what it means. I should buy a lottery ticket today, though.

[00:15:13] Wonderful. All right. I just heard from Mr. Kirshner, he is out of town, so he obviously won't be here. Okay. Wonderful. Okay. Pursuing to Virginia code section and the board's rules of order, Vice Chair Briggsman has requested to participate in this meeting by electronic communication. A quorum of the Board is in the Board of Supervisors room, where present, and the Board has made arrangements to hear Supervisor Brixman's voice to be heard by all persons in the Boardroom. Vice Chair Brixman made this request within the timeframe and the County Attorney determined that the voice, that she has met all the qualifications to

[00:15:51] participate remotely. The Board will record in this minutes that Vice Chair Brixman participated remotely from a private location within Loudoun County due to personal reasons. Okay, everyone, we're going to go to this consolidated agenda. The board will hear the following items as a consolidated agenda.

[00:16:09] As a reminder, these items are consolidated because there is no outstanding issues. Staff has recommended approval. The applicant has waived the presentation time, and no public speakers have registered in advance to sign up for the items. So I'm going to read the items, and if there's anyone in the room wants to speak on these items, or anyone on the on the phone that wants to speak on these items let me know mr letourne i'm going to keep item number two on the consolidated you can just vote how you vote even on the consolidated agenda how's that sound all right so item one amendment to the codified ordinance of

[00:16:42] louden county chapter 860 dash uh point oh six exemption for for farm animals certain grains agriculture products farm machinery farm implements and equipment that's a county wide item. I will make that motion. Item two, the non-profit organization's request for property tax exemption by designation. Also a county-wide item. I will make that motion. Item three, as led you, item A24-0004, interim additions to agriculture and forestal districts. That's in the Catoctin and Little River districts, as Mr. Kirshner is not here. I will go to Professor

[00:17:21] the crony if you don't mind making that motion and then item five is led you 2023-0017 the town of percivale waterworks cpmt 2023-0004 special exception 2023-00116 nspmi 2023-0010 that is also in the catoctin district as mr kirchner is not here and i am the chair at large so i represent the entire county I will be happy to make that motion as well so knowing those items are there any people any members of the public either on the phone or in the room would like to speak on

[00:17:59] any of those items all right seeing none um I'm going to um close the consolidated agenda and and and do them uh take them quickly one by one uh motion I mean item one um motions sorry um yeah

[00:18:30] that's not that's not okay i think thank you mr crony thank you i moved the board of supervisors she took my seat i moved the board of supervisors approve motion 2b for the approval of the amendments to chapter 860.06 as provided on november 13 2020 24 2020 24 public hearing item one staff report is there a second on that motion motion's made and seconded it's a discussion on that motion

[00:19:05] seeing none all people say aye aye any opposed that motion mr vixman signaled she's an eye that motion will pass 801 mr kirchner being not on the dais this evening item two i move the board supervisors approve the motion two for the adoption of an ordinance exempting named non-profits provided in the November 13, 2024 public hearing item number two, staff report.

[00:19:33] Is there a second on that motion? Motion seconded by Supervisor Glass. Discussion on that motion. Madam Chair. Yes. Can you clarify, are you forwarding it to the December 3rd meeting or are you just forwarding it to the December 3rd meeting?

[00:19:48] No, we're approving it right now. Okay, so 2B, so suspending the rules. I guess it's fine. No, you're right. I'm sorry. And the PAC motion says to suspend the rules first but you're fine thank you all right um that motion was seconded by miss glass discussion on the motion anybody all right so anybody no okay so what i'll say on this

[00:20:20] one is um i i i believe it is appropriate um and right for for the board of supervisors thus the county to assist nonprofits with with help helping fund nonprofits I believe that because I believe that there was work nonprofits do that the county wouldn't do and if we did it would cost us much more money if we if we did it ourselves I think that nonprofits are a force multiplier for for for county

[00:21:00] government and in some times and in some ways we've literally used our nonprofits as an extension and arm of county government and that we've called and said you know we have an issue we've called we've called laws we've called other nonprofits and we've said can you do this or can you take this so we don't have any we need this assistance so I believe if we're going to rely on our nonprofits and we do and if our nonprofits are going to be helping with with things that Loudoun County government may not do and and they do we

[00:21:34] We don't, for instance, do feeding, right, but we have the Loudoun Hunger Relief and the Loudoun Hunger nonprofits together that help feed people. If we did that on our own, it would cost us so much more money than what we give to nonprofits.

[00:21:53] So I do respect and appreciate my colleagues who do not believe this should happen, and I really respect and appreciate the continuity of those opinions. I respectfully disagree.

[00:22:09] I believe we should give assistance to our nonprofits. So that's what I'll say of that. So I made the motion. It was seconded by Ms. Glass. All the people who say aye. Aye. Opposed? Abstain. Abstain. So that motion will pass 7-1-1 with one abstention.

[00:22:25] Mr. Letourneau and then Mr. Kirsner, of course, is not here. Item three, Mr. Crony. you chair randall i move that the board of supervisors approve motion 2b for the approval of the interim additions as provided in the november 13 2024 public hearing item number three staff report motion made zero second to that seconded by supervisor um sayings discussion on that motion seeing none i'm happy to say aye aye any opposed that motion will pass 801 and item five and will the board supervisors approve motion 2b for the ratification of the commission permit and

[00:23:05] the approval of the special exception and minor special exception as provided in the november 13 2024 public hearing item number five staff report that is the motions there a second second by supervisor the crony discussion on that seeing uh long people say aye any opposed that motion will pass and by the way uh uh uh 801 by the way miss brixman is signaling her eye on all these motions okay um we do have one motion that is not consolidated and we have lots of people in the room to speak or at least some people in the room like to speak on this it is the milestone

[00:23:45] clark's gap um cpmt 2023-001-0010 and special exception 2023-0027 it is in the catoctin district i will ask both staff to come to the table but i also ask the applicant to come to the table as well if you are here and you'd like to speak on this issue and you have not signed up yet um i will ask you now to see the clerk and and sign up for them i do have five people signed up

[00:24:22] to speak unless you have more and some more over there but if you have not if you've not if you do want to speak and you haven't seen her yet or signed up in advance you can do that now um because you will you will obviously do speak before we make any decisions so okay to staff we are ready

[00:25:08] when you are freezing good evening good evening good evening my name is darby metcalf with the department of planning and zoning i'm here tonight to present the application for milestone clark's gap the subject property is approximately 0.13 acres located north of the route 7 travel lanes south of the exit ramp to route nine the site will be accessed by a gravel driveway from the route seven exit ramp in the catoctin election district property zone agricultural rural one under the loud and the little the little rectangle is exactly where the property is

[00:25:45] that's correct okay property zone agricultural rural one under the loudon county zoning ordinance as are all adjacent properties the property is located in the rural policy area and the rural north place type and the site is currently undeveloped the applicant is requesting a commission permit to permit a 152 foot tall telecommunications facility and a special exception to permit the proposal in the ar1 present on screen is an annotated excerpt of the specs plat to the facility outlined in the black dashed line and a depiction of the proposed facility height

[00:26:23] the proposed facility will provide a 10-foot fence and a type c buffer yard on all sides indicated by green the buffer yard and red for the fence the 2019 general plan anticipates wireless connectivity to support the rural economy and residential within the policy area. The strategic land use plan for telecommunications facilities establishes a preference for locating on existing public facilities, such as the Virginia Department of Transportation right of way. Conditions have been recommended by staff to mitigate the impacts of the development.

[00:27:02] Staff supports board ratification of the commission permit application. Additionally, staff supports board approval of the specs application subject to the conditions of approval. are available for questions um and the planning commission passed this 6-3 correct yes that's correct combs jaspers and meyers opposed can um can you tell us really quickly the opposition what was do you remember the rationale for the opposition commissioners had a number of questions related to nearby facilities and potential for co-locating on high voltage lines

[00:27:41] to the 1500 feet to the west and additional facilities that were outside of the bounds of the applicants target for improvement of service i don't understand what you just said to me my apologies so sorry can you say it again commissioners had questions about the potential for other locations okay okay all right cool i got that okay all right all right questions

[00:28:12] Ms. Umstead. Thank you, Madam Chair. So a question I had emailed to you guys, and thank you for getting back to me. Is this going to cause any kind of traffic disruption? The location within the interchange does not impede traffic, and the trip generation is nominal, with two to four trips generated per month. VDOT, as well as DTCL, did not identify a transportation issue.

[00:28:43] okay even during the construction phase they did not identify construction as an outstanding issue okay thank you mr crony thank you chair Randall so what all alternative locations were looked at and why were they ruled out I would defer to the applicant for that question okay and is this is there a service issue like areas that need service that this is helping cover could you repeat

[00:29:23] the question please so the service just just what what how would this enhance the coverage the cell coverage uh i would defer to the applicant on that question okay i'll wait for the applicant mr saints well thank you madam chair my apologies i was speaking with no no go ahead with your could you repeat the question please i've been asked my question i was waiting i was waiting for you so no if you if you're we're getting some feedback a lot of feedback and it's really distracting but we can't tell where it's coming from yes that's what we were trying to hear myself two or three times. We don't hear it at all. You guys hear it out there? It's localized, but I'm very anxious

[00:30:03] that you don't hear it. I don't hear anything. Okay, okay. We'll do our best. That's interesting. Maybe you're like an alternate universe. You just don't know. Mr. Sainz, did you ask a question? Not yet, but I will now. Thank you. And I don't know if this is a question for you or do I need to ask it for the applicant, so just let me know. If this tower was to happen, will there be multiple seller your companies on the on the

tower the applicant is indicated as as part of tonight's application AT&T as the service that they will be provided initially they will have three additional co-location opportunities on

[00:30:40] the proposed facility okay so AT&T will be the primary and then there's potential for other cellular companies to come online down correct okay and I do actually hear the whatever I don't know what's coming from my feedback I hear it too thank you I thought I was going crazy anybody else? Um, okay. So I'm really interested in what this, what the citizens have to say, because I've been, it feels like this is a little bit of deja vu all over again when we've had a moment where citizens have said like no to a cell tower. And then five years later, like we really

[00:31:18] need to have a cell tower. We need to have better cell reception. And I'm concerned that we're going to, I don't want to walk down that path again. So I'm really, I'm really curious to see would be what what the objection is so how many different carriers can go on this on this site that's is that that's for the applicant to it can co-locate up to a total of four up to a total of four so what people are saying to us right now I have great cell phone service it might be that their service providers doing fine but another service provider somebody else who has another service provider may not have great service because because of whatever reason so

[00:31:54] but it can co-locate up to 4. Is there any way that this could be smaller, lower, not as high? Staff evaluated the application at the proposed facility height of 152 feet. For other heights, I would defer to the applicant.

[00:32:11] But you all didn't evaluate anything but this height? That's correct. Okay. Is there any, I'm assuming, looking at this picture, that there is no site out there that a micro tower can go on nothing else that can boost the cellular strength can go on out there either.

[00:32:29] Is that correct? Or is that a question for the applicant? So for other specific locations, I would defer to the applicant. Not other specific locations. Can something else be done at this location that can boost? So a micro tower, a monopole, something else that can boost cell reception in that area?

[00:32:49] Staff evaluated that the proposed height of 152 feet. A micro tower was not part of that. Was not part of that. Okay. This piece of land, it's sitting basically off the road, right? So it's not, you wouldn't put homes here, you wouldn't put anything here, is that correct?

[00:33:06] I mean, because it's sitting in the middle of a highway. It would not be, would it be appropriate, let me ask it like this, would it be appropriate to put any other structure in this location? No, that's correct. Yes, that's correct.

[00:33:26] Not for other uses. It would not be inappropriate to put any other structure in this location. That is correct. This or maybe some other similar type of infrastructure, but otherwise, no. No uses, no commercial uses. No commercial uses, exactly. Nothing else. Obviously, no home, but no commercial uses either.

[00:33:44] Nothing else should be there. Okay. And you have absolutely evaluated for traffic issues. There would be no issues with traffic being impeded in any way. That's correct. DTCI as well as VDOT did not identify impacts to traffic.

[00:34:01] But I will note, if the question is trying to ask if there will be momentary road closures while equipment's moved around, none of our reviewers look at things like that on an individual site basis. So if

that's what we're trying to get at, that's not something that we would be looking at.

[00:34:16] That wasn't, I just assumed that, I mean, that's always going to happen when you're building something. That wasn't my, but thank you. Hi, how are you? I'm well, thank you. You all have 10 minutes. You can sit right there or you can stand at the podium.

[00:34:43] either one is fine. Thank you. Good evening. Good evening. While staff is bringing up the presentation for introduction, my name is Aaron Frank. I'm a senior land use planner with Cooley.

[00:35:07] I'm joined here with Matt Penning. He's the director of development for Milestone Development. Hi, how are you? Doing well, thanks. So, Madam Chair, we don't have the applicant's presentation on the desktops. We're trying to pull it over now. Okay. I'm not sure why I sign it. Well, we have to have that. So, we will just take our time until you get it there.

[00:35:43] Thank you.

[00:36:21] We are, we are. Oh, you got, okay, they are ready, so we are ready. Wonderful, thank you, Chair. Thank you so much. I'm going to turn my back to you because I can see it better up there, but it's fine.

[00:36:38] Thank you. So we are here tonight to talk about improving cell service with a monopole located at Clark's Gap, and this is emblematic of actually several applications that Milestone has before the county right now that represent localized trends that are found nationally with increased wireless growth.

[00:37:02] Many of us, myself certainly included, have been using our cell phones more intensely, and we have more devices than we have in the past. And we see a number of different trends that are contributing to this increased need, such as more folks dropping landlines and using their cell phones for normal communication purposes, but also for emergency service communications, which is particularly important in this area, with now 77% of 911 calls being made on a wireless device.

[00:37:34] So how did we get to this site that we're discussing this evening? By some background, Milestone was actually before the Planning Commission a few years ago, discussing a proposed cell tower at the former animal shelter site just north of here. And during the conversation, several Planning Commissioners said, you're looking at improving cell service please look at Clark's Gap we have a service issue there we hear anecdotes from folks planning commissioners which we certainly acknowledge and trust but we also need to have that hard data so Verizon and AT&T took a look at this site and I'll show you some propagation maps that show their findings that do corroborate that there is an increased

[00:38:12] need for cell service improved cell service in this area but Milestone also talked with the county and in particular with fire and rescue and they have identified this area as an area of significant concern particularly because it impacts their mobile data computers which will drop calls in this area which is very concerning for emergency services they express a secondary concern and that is that individuals living in this area may be unable to complete calls to you know ask for service so um the project objective here is to increase coverage capacity is also going to offload and improve the performance of the surrounding cell towers

[00:38:51] but also this can provide a fixed wireless home internet option for the approximately 500 residences farms and businesses and uh the 91 000 uh approximate vehicles today uh that are traveling on route 7 and route 9 but also as we know the w no d class passes through this area so you have many cyclists

and other recreational individuals who are using this and would need to have reliable cell service in the case of an emergency as was asked by some board members

[00:39:24] earlier who will be on this poll Verizon and AT&T both will be on this poll AT&T partners with FirstNet which provides a separate mobile network dedicated to first responders and schools Loudoun County does use FirstNet, so this would provide increased service and improved service to our first responders. So here's a look at the existing service and how this would be improved with the proposed cell tower. The map on your left, this is a propagation map, and this shows

[00:40:00] levels of cell service ranging from red, poor coverage, where you're going to be dropping calls, have unreliable calls or not be able to make a call all the way up to green which is your excellent coverage which is the coverage that as cell users we all expect. And you can see that at the intersection of Route 9 and 7 where the star is located there is a solid area of poor coverage and moderate coverage that would be immediately improved with the addition of the cell as shown on the right hand side of the screen. This immediate benefit is notable with the change

[00:40:37] from red to green but also elsewhere on this map there are residual benefits because it does offload some of the stress that existing towers face because they don't have adequate capacity so there are improved benefits outside of the immediate service area as well verizon performed a similar study however with an alternate color scheme that they use similar results on the left you know the the location is not within uh either their good or excellent coverage service area on the right that as you can see an immediate benefit with the addition of the cell site

[00:41:16] just do me a favor can you go back go back to slides okay because go back one more this is this is like is only helpful if i know how the distance we're looking at like if i look at these that circle i don't know what distance in other words i don't know if that star is there is just you know it's sitting on the island so the cell coverage is good because it's sitting on the island I can't tell how far out without any miles being on there that's going out so you know one lives where that that star is so okay is there

[00:41:52] some mileage you can give me yeah I'd like to try to verify that and then respond to you a little bit later just to make sure I give you an accurate mileage rather than estimate at that at this point that's okay if I can respond stop your time yeah okay thank you so looking a little bit closer at the site this is within vdot right-of-way this would be within the off-ramp of westbound route 7. the pole itself is going to be 150 feet tall this is located approximately 185 feet to the nearest property

[00:42:31] line and 331 feet from the closest residence the property owner to the north is here tonight and is supportive of the application. We are looking at a tower that can be built with space for four total carriers. So while AT&T and Verizon are committed to the tower, there is space for additional cell providers should they choose to locate here. The monopole will be accompanied by an antenna hub site. This is the equipment area that has the telecommunications equipment necessary

[00:43:06] for the pole this is going to be surrounded by a 25-foot landscape buffer as well as a 10-foot secured solid fence here's a look at some of the existing towers within prominent right-of-ways in the county to the left yeah you see you have route 7 and 28 that's 150 feet elsewhere we have 190 feet so the 150 feet proposed is customary and actually below the height of others existing in in the county. As part of Milestone's outreach with this application, Milestone contacts folks

[00:43:44] who live within a half a mile of the subject property. We recognize that there is a unique visual impact, so we want to let people know beyond those who live immediately next door. Milestone also provides balloon flies where they fly a balloon at the approximate height and location of the monopole, so that way folks are able to see from different vantage points what it's going to look like milestone also held a virtual town hall as part of its visual demonstrations milestone does perform simulations and they identify areas with wider sight lines from which

[00:44:22] to show these simulations and it is visible of course from route 7 and also from several areas to the north here's what it look uh the the monopole is going to look like on the off-ramp from route 7 from a further distance away this is the view from eastbound route 7 from the north this is about two-thirds of a mile and a little bit closer from the north as well. So we are pleased that staff has found that this meets the goal of the telecommunications plan and we

[00:44:59] certainly agree. We acknowledge that these are not easy decisions and the telecommunications plan provides a framework for where cell sites may be located and offers a preference for different locations such as within the public right-of-way as being proposed. The telecommunications plan also identifies industrial commercial areas as being suitable for these which of which there are there are none in the immediately surrounding area or for existing tall structures to co-locate and as we've heard from some already this is something that was discussed at planning commission

[00:45:35] and something that the applicant looked at as well in particular there is a dominion owned piece of property to the southwest of the site on colonial highway the applicant took a look at this and there is an existing substation structure on there that substation structure is both located too far to the west outside of dominion's or outside of milestones necessary service area to provide the improved service but it also is 95 feet in height which is too short in order to provide the necessary coverage that would be provided with a monopole and we did reach out

[00:46:14] to dominion following the planning commission hearing to verify whether they would allow for co-location and dominion will not allow for co-location on this site but we do take these suggestions seriously as well as in addition to preparing our application we look at rule outs for tall structures in the surrounding area this is the closest one that we identified we did find other tall structures but they are also too far west from the existing site to meet the coverage objective, or they already have AT&T facilities, which clearly are not reaching

[00:46:47] to where Clark's Gap needs the improved coverage. So all this is to say that we are pleased that staff and VDOT do support the application. I know I'm out of time here, so just one last point, a question that often comes up is whether there'll be any illumination on the poll. We do contact FAA as part of our application there will be no illumination uh on the monopole so that concludes my presentation thank you okay thank you thank you very much supervisors i think we have a lot of questions for the applicants that were for them before so if you have questions for the applicant

[00:47:24] please put your light on none no i do mr brixman do you have any questions for the applicant i have a question okay i do not thank you madam chair mr crony yeah thank you so um my planning commissioner mentioned that, um, that the, I guess you looked at, um, a location to the lower left hand quadrant. Um, I guess that it appears there's an industrial facility there. So in other words, moving it away from the church, I guess there's a church nearby. And by the

[00:48:02] way, I'd like to see where the church is. Um, I'm just wondering if, if you explored that location of um an alternative in the lower left-hand quadrant during the planning commission yes supervisor to crony thank you um for that question so i believe that the structure that you're referring to in the lower left quadrant is this uh oh boy i don't know how that happened

[00:48:32] apologies i don't know how i'd skip forward okay so this is the dominion substation structure that i was referring to earlier okay so it's too far west that's what you're saying yes it is where's the church and the church is located approximately at the location of this laser pointer yes how

[00:49:02] close are you to the church i can't really see with all those lines can you see it i can you've been mapped down to will you stop for a time for just a second approximately 280 feet oh okay okay and you did reach out to the church the church members and the congregation okay yes and that was one of the questions that came up a representative of the church came to the

[00:49:38] meeting and said they hadn't heard about it and so following the meeting we also made an additional outreach to the church to get them the information about the project try to understand how notices might have been missed so we had a productive call with them I don't think they're still in support of or not opposed to the project but we made sure they got the information on the project okay thank you anybody else before i ask questions anybody else okay i have a couple of questions

[00:50:07] will you go back to slide number four please all right four four when you say um four you talked about residents and having having um intranet that they wouldn't otherwise have with this cell tower. Are you saying that they're using their phones as hotspots? What are you saying? Because the intranet and the cell phone tower are two different things. So what are you saying? I don't

[00:50:42] understand that statement. Yeah. So some of the cellular providers are now offering a fixed wireless option, which is essentially getting internet service through your cell phone or in a router at your home that connects to that cell tower directly. Is that what you're doing here?

[00:51:01] Verizon offers that, and AT&T is starting to launch that option here as well. So it would have Verizon would, as part of their offering, look to expand that here. But that's not an automatic thing that's happening. Verizon would offer that. People would have to sign up for it, yada, yada, and play for it, and all those types of things.

[00:51:18] Is that right? So it's an option if Verizon offered it, and if somebody paid for it, it's an option. That's correct. All right. Because the way it reads, I thought it was some kind of automatic thing that was just automatically happening, wasn't sure about that okay can you go back to to to i think final i slide five and go where all the that one all right so first of all mr kirschner's not here we're probably not going to be voting on this tonight anyway mr kirschner's not here but when we do come back um when this would move this to a meeting with this if i can get some some distance that would be really helpful because

[00:51:57] because with respect i don't know what i'm looking at if with no distance there i'm just it's just it's just colors on a map to me so and i'm not being disrespectful i just don't know what i'm looking at all right it's a good question i appreciate it it's about uh two miles wide by uh four miles uh north to south and that oval uh on the right hand side of the screen so that that's the oval uh that we're looking at in primary coverage area about two miles wide okay but i think i can get some more specifics for you that's what specifics would would be helpful but although that's helpful but more specifics would be a little more helpful as

[00:52:33] well um and tell me again why the why the animal shelter doesn't work can we put this at the animal shelter and a half there is a tower at the animal shelter that's the one he was referencing earlier when the commission brought up other locations as possibility how long how tall is the one the animal shelter i believe it's between 130 and 150 i don't know right off the top i have to it's in the same ballpark as this one maybe a little shorter but we'd have to look it up but it's not but it's not reaching this area basically it's actually you can see it on that we pointed it out

[00:53:10] there it shows actually both AT&T and Verizon are on animal shelter and this is what coverage looks like for AT&T and it doesn't reach this intersection so it's that northwest quadrant thank you very much for answering those questions okay can you bring me the number the names that you have down there please I'm going to call speakers you have two and a half minutes when come to the podium i'll call your name in advance so that you will know that you are next our first speaker is danielle odell followed by kevin odell followed by nico papalori good evening

[00:53:44] good evening thank you ready when you are okay so in the interest of time we have only four people that are going to be speaking tonight for you guys members of the board thank you for allowing me to speak today my name is danielle i'm the owner of the two chick-fil-a restaurants here in leesburg and i live just a quarter mile from the proposed cell tower with my husband kevin and our two young daughters while i understand the desire for improved communication infrastructure i believe this particular project raises several serious concerns but i will be focusing my time on the issue of traffic and visual impacts and wildlife as you're aware route 9 is a key high

[00:54:22] traffic roadway there is 90 days proposed construction time in this application which will lead to increased travel time frustration and potential safety risks for loud and residents the construction of a cell tower will disrupt traffic patterns by causing potential lane closures detours deterring the building process during the building process increased construction vehicles can lead to congestion delaying commutes and potential accidents the reports of the traffic patterns on landmark appear to be have done to appear to have been done in 2022 which we can all agree the amount of cars on the road in 2024 is much higher now and will continue to grow

[00:55:00] anyone who has driven on the route 9 exit ramps knows that a small touch of the brakes anytime is enough to cause a car accident so lastly ongoing maintenance of the tower will definitely result in periodic disruptions impacting the daily flow of traffic even after construction is completed we also need to consider the visual impact of such a tower 150 foot structure will drastically alter the landscape of our neighborhood and community this is an area where families have chosen to live for scenic charm and natural beauty a cell tower introduces an industrial element that disrupts the character section 2a under rural location policy states that

[00:55:38] the county prefers antennas are located on or near existing tall structures my husband will go into that further we must prioritize and uphold the policies laid out in the cpam as it is a guideline for maintaining the appeal of our community for current and future residents furthermore the presence of a cell phone tower will have an a effect on local wildlife the disruption of the natural habitats can lead to declining populations of birds and other wildlife studies have shown that these towers can interfere with migratory patterns i know personally my daughters and i love to get up and look outside and see the cardinals the blue jays i mean it's definitely part of the charm of living where we live we should be striving to protect the environment we cherish not compromising

[00:56:17] it for technology that could be better cited elsewhere i urge you to advocate for alternative locations that prioritize the well-being of our community thank you thank you um kevin odell followed by nico papalori followed by nicole maraquin good evening good evening i agree with the estate with the statements by my wife more importantly this application does not meet the criteria of the county's own strategic land use plan for telecommunications facilities specifically the applicants have not demonstrated the burden of proof required for a special exemption.

[00:56:51] The CPAM document is clear section 2a states the county prefers antennas to be co-located on or near existing structures especially in rural areas which are held at a higher standard because maintaining the natural beauty of the landscape is crucial. The applicants have dismissed the possibility of using the existing 13 poles along Route 7 even though four of them are within close proximity to the site at less than half a mile away and could be fitted with small cell antennas.

[00:57:14] there is however a better alternative location just across the intersection at 40065 east polino highway 17 acre property that has tree coverage with less visibility an existing large driveway for construction access and an already existing large utility tower almost 100 feet tall despite this the applicants claim the location is too far west and lacks sufficient height however after careful review i can confidently say these claims are false the property is only a quarter mile away they already said tonight that it covers a two mile radius and it's only a quarter mile away this is actually at the center of their coverage area as well if you look at the map

[00:57:50] i have also been made aware tonight that there's claims that applicants are suggesting it's impossible for them to obtain a permit for this property because dominion won't let them and the alternative property due to mountainous slopes this argument was not part of their original application and appears to be a new tactic after the previous statements about the height and the location were scrutinized. I urge the board not to be swayed by these tactics.

[00:58:11] The claim is easily refuted by the fact that a nearly 100-foot tower already is permitted on that property for Virginia Electric. The applicants, the real issue here is that the applicants prefer to be on cheap public land instead of getting land from Virginia Electric because they want to maximize their profits. While it might be more expensive or maybe more challenging and less profitable, it doesn't mean it's not feasible. In conclusion, this alternative site is clearly better for our community with existing infrastructure in place, less traffic and virtually the same coverage area. While it fits with and it fits within the county guidelines, the applicants have failed to meet the requirements to justify a special exemption

[00:58:49] and there are clear feasible alternatives. We should not be favoring private company profits over the well-being of our local communities and the constituents, especially when there are perfectly reasonable solutions. I'd like to welcome all of those who agree with our statements of opposition to this tower uh location to please stand thank you very much um nico nico papalori followed by nicole maraquin followed by samantha wall good evening yeah my name is nico pampoloni i'm a member of the board of deacons of bridgeview christian church the church that you mentioned

[00:59:28] earlier just for clarity we're about 950 feet or so from the proposed tower location i'm here with a large portion of our congregation and also some community members as you just saw to share some of our concerns about the proposed plans to install a cell phone tower at the Clark's Gap location. In addition to the reasons that have already been discussed, I'll be bringing up two additional concerns, the first being the long-term health risks to our congregation and community, and the second one being potential

impacts to property values. Regarding potential health risks, as a father of four young children, I'm very concerned about the long-term impacts that having this tower in such close proximity to our church could have on mine and other children

[01:00:07] in the community. We have a young girl in our congregation with Down syndrome and other special needs, and also a member currently battling leukemia, who are both extra sensitive to radiation exposure. As I'm sure you're aware, current FCC regulations and guidelines regarding harmful exposure from cell towers are nearly 20 years old. And while we understand that the FCC regulations prohibit municipalities from preventing the placement of cell towers based on health concerns, the county has already made policy decisions based on these health risks specifically in regards to the placement of cell towers on public school grounds. Loudoun County Public School

[01:00:43] Policy 6350 states the considerations for the placement of wireless network facilities include health, safety, and security considerations for students, staff, and the surrounding community. The second concern I'd like to raise is the impact on property values. A study published in the Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics found that having a cell tower within 2,300 feet from a property and visible from the home could reduce the property value by up to 9.7 percent.

[01:01:10] We believe that there are better alternatives that should be evaluated for the placement of this tower that can still meet the connectivity needs of the community. And I'd also like to just comment on the comment that the applicant made regarding communicating this with the church.

[01:01:25] We did have a representative at the planning commission who stated we hadn't heard about it before. They had a discussion afterward and a phone call. But the member of the deacons that spoke with the applicant made it very clear that in no way did we consider this coordination with us it was simply informing us what was happening and we definitely do not agree with the placement and are not in favor of it so i just wanted to clarify that that was mr steveley who's also a member of our board of deacons so thank you for your time and consideration and we'd ask you to consider another site thank you deacon let me ask you you said you are i know you're a deacon of the church are you speaking on behalf of the church i am yes ma'am okay thank you thank you

[01:02:00] um nicole maraquin followed by samantha wall followed by mike taylor good evening ma'am thank you all for your civil service and being here to listen to us tonight my name is nicole maraquin i'm a homeschooling mother of four and i go to a church here in paonian springs i am the head teacher for the children's care program for the visitors i have worked in public schools and have been teaching children for almost 20 years the church has generously offered their building for our various homeschool needs the children of our church have music lessons orchestra practice and choir practice every week in the church building

[01:02:36] next we meet at the church every week for national memorization competition practices the church hosts the east coast and virginia league meet for the teen and youth memorization competition our youth team won first place in nationals last year and our group has a 10-year top quizzzer here with us tonight among other decorated participants these kids are serious and very dedicated, and the church is the hub for their competition in the sport. We believe our church building is equivalent to that of a place of education. Our children receive their socialization in this community, and we have elementary and team homeschool activities, youth softball, youth soccer,

[01:03:13] teacher-led classes, and various performances that they use the church building for. Without this building, our kids would not have their community and these programs. We strongly disapprove of the building of this cell tower. Thank you. Thank you. Samantha Wall, you will be followed by Mike Taylor, followed by Donnie Walker. Samantha Wall, are you here? Samantha Wall, going once, going twice.

[01:03:41] Okay. Mike Taylor, you'll be followed by Donnie Walker. Good evening, Mr. Taylor. Good evening, Madam Chair, members of the board. I'm Mike Taylor. Please don't call an airstrike. I am the house that's 300 feet away from this. I'm the closest residence. Anyone who's ever driven through Clark's Gap knows, you tell whoever you're on the phone with, hang on, I'm going to lose you.

[01:04:06] And that's just the way it has always been through there. As far as Verizon, they are telling people that you can't keep your POTS line, your copper phone line. They want to move you into their call connect service. They don't tell you it's a cellular option. And Verizon has done a site assessment for me and says I'm not even eligible because of the poor signal. Internet, I depend on T-Mobile. I've had to spend a good bit of money on Antenna so I can reach the Canby Tower, which was built during the Eisenhower administration to allow the Pentagon to talk to

[01:04:39] Mount Weather. The tower at the animal shelter, I don't hit. Canby's the only option. As you can see from the layouts up there, without the colors on them, you can see the roads and get a better idea of where all this coverage and lack of coverage is. But we've been in a dearth of it.

[01:04:59] I don't have any other internet access. People say Starlink if you want to pay that kind of money. I have AT&T and Segra literally buried in my front yard, and they'll be happy to hook me up for \$500 a month for slower than what they sell for residential service. So those are the dark areas that we're in. RF, everybody's got their house full of Wi-Fi. When you talk on your phone, the farther you are from the tower, the phone is turning the power up right up against your head for people that like to talk to a slice of bread or they stick earbuds in you know you've got rf

[01:05:36] right there in your ears being generated we've got a power line that runs right over top of us so we've already got that and as far as aesthetics you know this tower without any lighting on it and landscape is going to be better than the 35 poles that we have that provide the stadium lights for the circles and construction you know the construction of the truck climbing lane and circles uh you're not going to see anything comparing with this small project yes it's going to be some disruption on the ramp they can time it um but you know the amount of traffic goes

[01:06:13] through there you know the amount of wrecks you see the fire and rescue reports people are trying to call you're stuck in traffic you can't even reach your boss saying we'll be late thank you for your time thank you thank you and our last speaker is donnie walker good evening mr walker good evening good evening board i know a little bit about cell phone towers i grew up around my uh my uncle who was a seated supervisor had one of the first towers and when they switched the signals from analog to digital he said the county's really not going to like seeing towers every two

[01:06:46] miles and i think that's pretty true i agree that towers don't look very good but i agree that the site that milestone has picked out is the best site i wish they'd picked our alternate site on the commercial property my family has i think it would be good for us but looking at the connection issues on clark's gap road at the six commercial businesses on clark's gap that have no coverage the residents this is the ideal situation the ideal location where they're putting it to get the best cell coverage i understand that the new congregation at the church is not very happy about

[01:07:25] having that cell phone tower there even if we select another site to put that cell phone tower ideally our site they're still going to be within view within 900 a thousand feet of that tower i urge the board on behalf of also the community of peonian springs that has a lacking cell phone signal to move forward and adopt this so that we can finally get a safe way to communicate i have firsthand called 911 over 25 times i've had to run into buildings and grab landlines and now that

[01:08:01] vdot has elevated the speed limit on clark's gap intersection of nine and removed the guard rails it's become more dangerous so this is something that we really need thank you thank you all right that was our last speaker so i'm going to go ahead on and make a motion with the mr kirschner's not here, and so I'm going to make the motion in his absence. I move the Board of Supervisors forward. Lege 2023-0092, Milestones-Clark-Gap, CPMT-2023-0010, and special exception 2023-0027

[01:08:35] to the November 19, 2024 Board of Supervisors Business Meeting for Action. Okay, thank you for that second. I made this motion because I'm actually not ready to vote on this tonight myself but also the district supervisor is not here so just out of respect to him but I think he'd want to be here for this vote I move this this item to to to the November 19th meeting so this is this is an interesting moment because um yeah there was a community once before that I was about I don't know about seven years ago that had the same exact statement some of them

[01:09:12] they didn't want a cell tower and then and now they're they're like begging us to put cell tower Now, the difference between then and now was COVID happened and everyone had to go online. Well, you all are post-COVID, and so you know what that's like to be in a world where you do have to do so much online.

[01:09:30] So I guess it's not quite apples to apples because you already know what that's like. I actually don't like this location just for the visuals. I think it does not look good. I think it's always my goal to keep Western Loudoun County as pristine as possible.

[01:09:49] Having said that, if you ever listen to me talk, and I'm sure you haven't because we're not that interesting and y'all have lives, but if you did, you would hear me say that the number one thing I always look at more than anything else, if everything, no matter what else is going on, what I will look at is safety.

[01:10:09] And so one of the things I will kind of dive into between now and November 14th is talk to our first responders, talk to our firefighters, talk to our sheriff's deputies, to our sheriff's department, and ask what are the public safety implications if we don't do this?

[01:10:28] Because I'm really very wary of having public safety issues if we don't do this. I also would wonder if a 911 call is made and this tower is not there, will that call jump somewhere else where we don't want it to go, not in the area?

[01:10:44] That has happened before. Something like that happened before. We never want a 911 call to be diverted someplace else, so that would be one of the questions that I look into as well. I will ask staff about any possible other locations.

[01:11:02] Right now I'm literally kind of sitting at a 50/50 place. I just don't know. I can absolutely understand why, you know, people wouldn't want it. It is tall. It's not very nice looking. I get it. I get that completely. On the other hand, I need people to, I need our first responders to be able to communicate and make people, make sure people are safe and they get to where they need to be and provide the servicing to provide in a timely and adequate fashion.

[01:11:32] So I don't know where I'm going to land yet, But those are the things I will be considering over the next until between now and November 19th. Anybody else? Yes, Mr. Crony. Okay, thank you, Chair Randall. I want to thank everybody for coming out, the congregation and the residents.

[01:11:49] So it seems that we definitely need coverage. You know, there's a service gap in Clark's Gap. And like Chair Randall said, there's also a safety issue. But I need to get more information about why that location at Dominion, at that property that Dominion owns, which is only 0.3 miles away from the current site, does not provide the coverage that is needed for the community.

[01:12:23] I heard you that it's too short, 95 feet, but why can't it be 150 feet at that site? So that one would not be as visually impactful. I think the community realizes that, you know, we need the service coverage.

[01:12:41] I don't think the community is against the service coverage, but I think it's the location that they're concerned about. And to me, something 0.3 miles away could provide the coverage, at least could fill in the gaps that I see up on this map.

[01:12:59] So I would like to understand why that Dominion site that is industrial can't be a location that's viable, because I do think it visually would not be, you know, it wouldn't look, people wouldn't see it as much.

[01:13:20] it could be hidden much more. It could be buffered. So that's something that I want to look into, is why not? Why is that site not viable? So I need more information about that before I make a decision. Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Sains? Thank you, Madam Chair. Can I ask the applicant a question? Sure. Could you, instead of it being, well, looking like a cell tower, There are some in other places that look more like a, well, try and make it look like a tree and fitting with the surrounding.

[01:13:53] Is that possible with this one? Supervisor Sains, we're glad to explore alternative designs. However, we often do find that sometimes the results of those alternative designs do end up attracting more attention to the poll than otherwise while well intended.

[01:14:18] So that's something that we do consider. You know, and it's just kind of a give and take because we have seen monopines, for example, where, you know, the pines are well above the tree line and it stands out a little bit more. But, you know, that's something we can look into and report back to you on. And do you have any pictures or images that you could, if you have some, could you send those to my office, please?

[01:14:39] Sure. Thank you. Mr. Letourneau. Thank you. So every location that's selected for a cell phone tower has opposition. Could you address the questions right now on the other site that's the power site?

[01:14:56] Yes, Supervisor Letourneau, and to respond more fully to some of the Supervisor DiCaroni's questions about that site. You've got about two minutes. Yeah, if it were not to be co-located on that structure, that property is encumbered by Mountainside Overlay District.

[01:15:12] There are restrictive easements on the Dominion property in which a pole could not be constructed. And the property contains trees and considerable grade. So if we were to be able to find a suitable location that could physically accommodate it, there would be considerable tree loss and grading.

[01:15:32] That is all assuming that we have a cooperative property owner, which is uncertain, frankly, in these areas, given that it's Dominion's property. Right. And the process of going through that and trying to acquire the property and so on could take months years and so forth um yeah look i mean everybody

addresses we've talked about up here how we can't consider health issues i continue to be amazed a little bit by hearing those and then people are like this all day where the radiation is right in front of you if there is

[01:16:08] an issue with it it's far worse than it is on a tower um safety should be the number one consideration it's that simple and a site that's owned by bdot and easily acquired has a lot of advantages for a lot of reasons um so i think it's very unlikely i wouldn't support this application just because we we just have to do some of these things sometimes and i understand that it's not it's not great news for people but in the suburban part of the county we have these all over um can see some from my house and you know it's it's the price we're paying for the the world

[01:16:46] that we're we're living in which is very much based on um internet and so on so you know we we could play the game of well it could be here and it could be here it could be there yeah it could be but we're going to go around in circles and spend months years decades sometimes in these conversations and never solve the problem so at some point you just have to move forward thank you mr um mr brixman do you have anything no madam chair thank you all right thank you um

[01:17:19] how long will the building process take generally it's about two months about two months okay and then somebody mentioned you know if maintenance has to happen how often do you if you have to do maintenance would that be quarterly um per carrier so probably four to eight trips per year four to i'm sorry say them four to eight trips a year you said four to eight four to eight trips per year so two months to build four to eight trips per year per carrier maybe if perhaps if that was needed and just to be clear right now you have AT&T and Verizon you don't have any other

[01:17:56] carriers and you're leaving space for any carriers that might want to come along later is that correct that's correct and and the 150 is required for four carriers yes 150 really gives us a great opportunity to provide that coverage for not only AT&T and Verizon but the additional carriers because it's line of sight communications could anything lower still give you four carriers um you really see a significant drop off in coverage okay all right all right so i made the motion to move it to the 19th mr um the eternal second the motion all the people say aye aye miss briggs but i cannot

[01:18:34] see you you're not on the screen i'm assuming you and i all right any opposed that motion will pass eight zero one this motion this item will go to the um november 19th meeting thank you everyone thank you thank you staff appreciate it supervisors um since i'm not going to be singing happy birthday to michael turner tonight i think we are finished and i think we are adjourned happy birthday happy birthday yeah

