

TOWN OF LEWISBORO
Antenna Advisory Board
PO Box 500
South Salem, NY 10590



Email: AAB@lewisborogov.com
Website: www.lewisborogov.com

AAB Minutes for Tuesday, May 16, 2023

The meeting was held at the South Salem Presbyterian Church and via Zoom videoconference. It was called to order by Joseph Neu at 7:06pm

Present: Joseph Neu (Chair), Rob Cummings, Sam Dodge, Brian Porco, Lynne Geaney (remote), Tony Gonçalves (Supervisor/Town Board Liaison); George Latimer (Westchester County Executive; attending as a guest)
Absent: Chris Nelson (KLSD Liaison)

Overview of the Agenda

- Chair walked through the agenda and moved up the item concerning the Verizon site search at the Leon Levy Preserve to be first to accommodate the guest from Airosmith Development, Christopher Thompson. He was on Zoom to present to the AAB. Airosmith Development has been retained by Verizon to find an alternate location for its equipment near to the current cell tower in the Preserve.

Review of Minutes

- A motion was made to approve and adopt the minutes from the February 7, 2023 meeting, which were approved without objection.

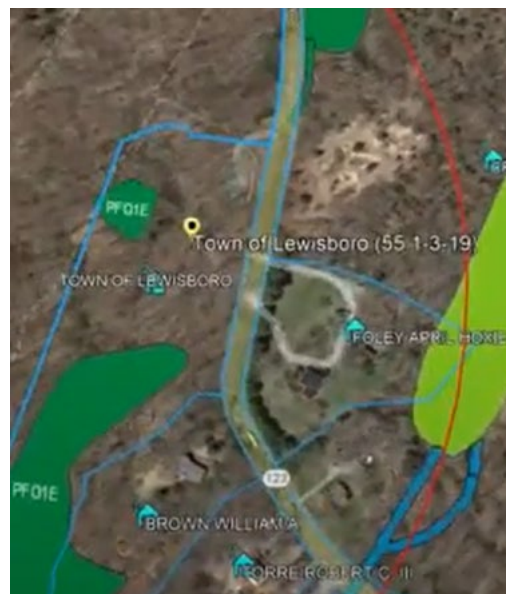
New Business

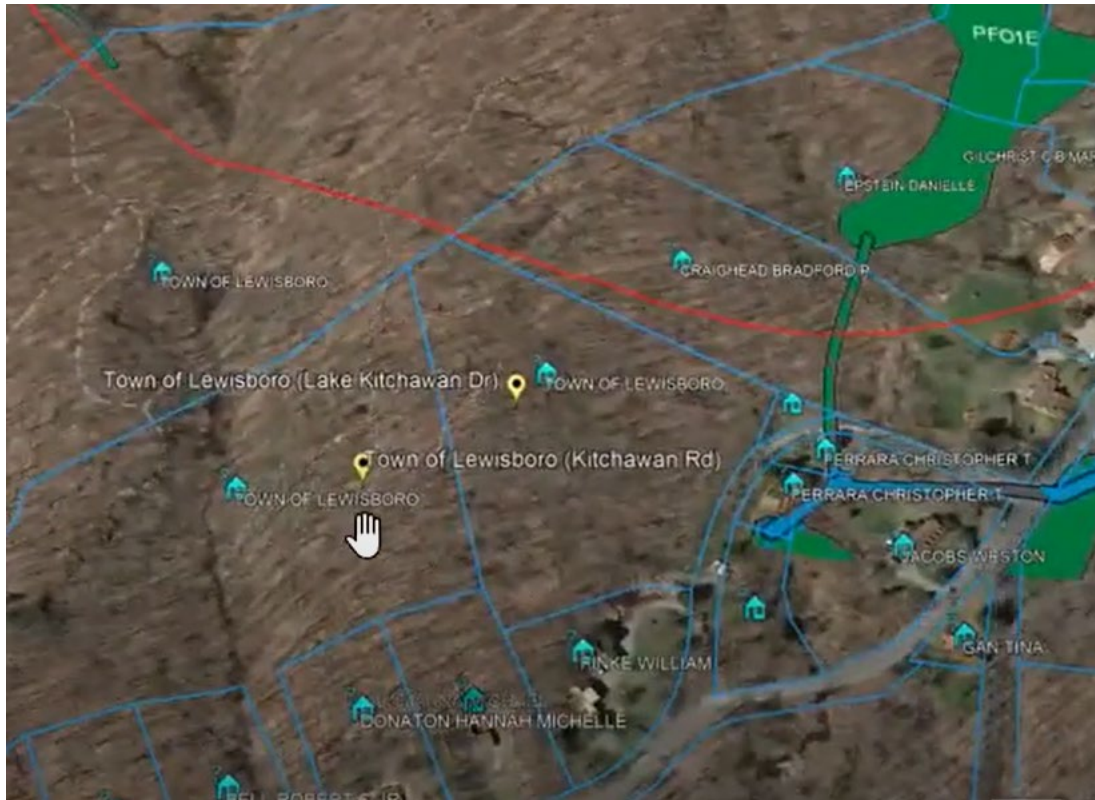
Leon Levy Tower - Verizon Wants Off (new site search by Airosmith Development)

- As the Chair noted, the Leon Levy Tower has been discussed in the past as not being built for wireless cellular equipment, but rather for long-distance microwave telephone transmission (for AT&T). As Mr. Thompson explained, Tillman Infrastructure will be the actual owner of the tower that Airosmith is trying to lease a 100ft X 100ft plot of land for, and they would lease space on the tower to Verizon, which would be the anchor tenant with hopefully other carriers to follow. However, the tower would be built for Verizon regardless. This new tower would be built in addition to the American Tower site currently in the Leon Levy Preserve.
- Mr. Thompson shared his screen to show a Google Earth map of the Leon Levy Preserve indicating where the current tower is located, with a half mile red circle with the current tower as the epicenter representing the ideal search area for a new tower site (see below). Most of the circle is town-owned land and in the preserve.
- As the current tower is in a depression, the new site would also preferable be on a higher elevation. The current tower has antenna with a center line at 125ft.
- One site that had been flagged on the map, is indicated with a yellow dot, has a higher elevation, and then surrounding areas fall off in elevation so that they would require a much taller tower. Rob pointed out that the flagged site is where the ruins of Black Mansion lie, which would likely preclude a tower from being built there.



- Mr. Thompson then proceeded to point to four other sites that had been flagged for consideration:
 - somewhere in the odd-shaped large parcel to the north (owner unknown);
 - one across 123, south of 35 (see below), which ~ 620ft vs. 760ft for the current tower;
 - one further south along 123 across from 45 Smith Ridge Road
 - two sites close to one another, further south near Kitchawan Rd.





- The next step for Airosmith is to get a property owner to sign a non-binding business terms agreement to start negotiations to evaluate a potential site and lay out preliminary lease terms. From there they would prepare a site candidate information package for Tillman. Tillman would then have RF engineers to determine it is a site that they indeed want to pursue. At that time, an application would be made to the Zoning board and a propagation map study would be conducted.
- Chair asked if American Tower might consider rebuilding a tower on their current site. No, according to Mr. Thompson. Brian Porco asked if a new tower could be built nearby, which could be a possibility, and Mr. Thompson agreed to bring that back to his management for consideration in consultation with American Tower.
- Chair asked what Airosmith is asking the town/AAB to do. Mr. Thompson said it would be to get a BTA (Business Terms Agreement) signed to signal interest. That would be non-binding and tied to a potential parcel. Airosmith will prepare a BTA for the town property across 123 from Leon Levy to move the process forward.
- Outside the circle, Airosmith has a BTA out to a property owner north of route 35 (410). Other private property owners are also being pursued.
- The town will also investigate in conjunction with the town assessor if other sites may be viable in and out of the Levy Preserve with consideration for the views that may be disrupted in relation to the trails there. Rob Cummings noted that several of the sites discussed would have an adverse impact on sightlines.
- Chair noted that Emergency Services Equipment should also be part of the discussion with a new tower.



Existing Business

Update on South Salem Cell Tower Considerations [Homeland Towers Evaluation of South Salem Presbyterian Church Steeple Location as Alternative to Salt Dome

- Chair asked Sam Dodge to provide an update as there had been no update from Homeland Towers (with the 6-week estimate provided at the February meeting having come and gone).
- Sam noted that Homeland Towers came out to visit the site again with an engineer to see if the cinderblock base of the steeple was reinforced with steel. They found the corners are reinforced but the center is not and the doors are not, so those would have to be replaced. None of this is a deal breaker they said, as the cost of shoring up the steeple would be favorable in comparison to a new tower construction. All communications with Homeland Towers had indicated that they were still looking favorable on the project and they were continuing to move forward, though without providing much detail.
- Sam added that the Church land is actually owned by the Presbytery, and they have a group that deals specifically with wireless carriers. They are thus supportive of the project and would deal with the carriers to negotiate the lease with some experience. The local Church elders still have to approve the project, but with their approval the negotiations move to the Presbytery.
- There is no specific timeline indicated by Homeland Towers, including when they would report back again.
- Sam said he would follow up in two weeks with Homeland Towers based on a correspondence with the engineer suggesting he do that (dated May 10). Chair said he would do the same.
- Chair then asked the AAB members if they had discovered anything new about the process and approval issues Homeland Towers raised, stemming from the fact that the Church is not on Town property (including the need to go through

the planning board, State Environment Quality Review, ACARC review of the application, etc.). Homeland Towers had not reached out to Town on this as far as anyone was aware.

- As Homeland Towers had noted at the prior AAB meeting (the Chair summarized), there are two pieces to the Steeple site being an option: 1) that the engineering of tower within it was viable from an economics and coverage perspective and 2) that the approval process in comparison to the Salt Dome on Town property would not extend into a yearslong exercise.

Update on CityScape Wireless Infrastructure Study Project

- The comment deadline for the final draft of the study report was the day of the meeting and Lynne Geaney provided a summary based on her review.
- It is very helpful, both the main section and the special section for Lewisboro, according to Lynne. She recommended to Supervisor Gonçalves that he have the other Town Board members read the report because it gives good background to help their understanding of wireless infrastructure and the language used to help their decision making as discussions of towers come up.
- Lynne also noted the code change recommendations that the AAB can also look to help enact. Some of the existing code, for example, may predate the shot-clock regulations and it will need to be updated to reference specific timelines. There are also some set-back updates that may be worth looking at.
- Lynne did not see anything that looked inaccurate or warranted comment.
- Chair noted a mislabeling of picture of a tower on Site L5, that is the proposed Salt Dome site that does not have a tower currently to picture.
- The AAB also encourages town residents to review the report, including the maps in it, since they not only outline the macro-site (tower) recommendations but also some smaller, micro-site locations with the propagation overlays.
- Lynne pointed out that this is important considering the frequently asked questions about putting up antenna in different spots, apart from the proposed towers, where gaps in coverage and capacity are and how they can be addressed. Presenting this visually to people is quite helpful and the AAB can use the maps as part of our communications and in advising the Town Board.
- Chair proposed and the AAB agreed that Tony respond officially to CityScape as Supervisor and Lynne and other AAB members would forward any comments to him to meet the comment deadline.

Update on Emergency Services Communications

- Brian Porco updated the AAB on new developments, starting with updated pricing on a new communications system from Motorola. The infrastructure side of the project is \$1.4mn. That does not include the subscriber units. As was discussed at the last AAB meeting, this is consistent with how Bedford has structured their project: replacing the radio, subscriber units in the field first and then bonding out the infrastructure piece once these are in place.
- The current price quote is not state contract pricing because they intentionally quote a higher price in case there are cost overruns so that municipalities can

budget conservatively. If that price is manageable, then they apply the state contract discounts to the official proposal.

- Tony said that the Town's procurement process would need to look at the actual number. Brian said he would ask them to provide the discounts upfront. This would take the price down by about 20-25%.
- Sam Dodge asked if grants have been explored, and they have not been. He recommended that the Town call NY State Rep. Chris Burdick on this matter. Sam said was able to get money from the NY State Dormitory Authority to fund radios in Pound Ridge back when David Buchwald was our representative. Tony said he would ask about this at an upcoming meeting with Representative Burdick.
- Chair asked if tower operators have been approached to help cover some of the equipment and installation. Brian said that installation is a small portion of the cost so even if they do it at no cost, it will not impact the project cost significantly.
- This would be a type of advanced system to get the coverage wanted that avoids the line-of-sight requirements between the towers, as Brian noted.
- Supervisor Gonçalves noted he had recently met with L3 Harris, set up by the Lewisboro Chief of Police, which is another equipment vendor. The MTA uses their equipment, and an MTA representative was at the meeting to speak about their experience. L3 Harris said their review indicated that Lewisboro would have 95% coverage with their equipment without any additional towers.
- Brian noted that the coverage estimate may not include portable coverage. Portable coverage is an important safety issue as was indicated by a recent police incident where they were in pursuit of a potentially violent suspect and could not reach officers in pursuit. He also noted that the State Police, who are the Town's primary dispatchers, are on Motorola equipment so the town should take care to ensure there are no incompatibility issues if it goes with L3 Harris infrastructure, which is otherwise a good system.
- Tony noted that one of project objectives is to have interagency connectivity between Police, Fire, Highway and LVAC, plus to neighboring towns including Connecticut along with NY State.
- Sam asked if we knew if the neighboring towns and State Police were definitively going with Motorola. Brian replied that we do not. However, Ridgefield does use Motorola as does Westchester County (plus New Canaan and Stamford). Indeed, Ridgefield's system architecture would be very similar to what Lewisboro is looking at doing.
- To conclude on this issue, Chair announced as a point of public disclosure (as was included in the minutes from the last meeting) that Brian Porco had disclosed to the AAB in executive session that he has taken a part-time job with Metrocom, which is a reseller of radio equipment (including Motorola). The AAB continues to value Brian's expertise in the emergency communications area and we have agreed that, if it ever comes up, even though it is not the purview of this advisory board to recommend or make purchase decisions on particular equipment, that Brian would recuse himself from those decisions.

Update on Optimum Fiber-to-the-Home and Internet Service Issues

- Tony reached out to Frank Aleva from Optimum/Altice (or municipal representative) to get an update. He was hoping for Altice to do a presentation

at the May 22 Town Board meeting, but Frank had yet to confirm with management that they could present. If that meeting does not work, then he will keep pushing to arrange a presentation at subsequent Town Board meetings given that we have all seen that they have been rolling out fiber on utility poles throughout town.

- Meanwhile, there do not seem to be as many issues being reported on service as it stands.
- AAB concurred with Tony's preference that there be competition for broadband across town as there is in Goldens Bridge with Verizon and Optimum.
- Rob Cummings reported on the Westchester County's Broadband Coverage Verification Initiative session he attended, which was focused on gaps in access, which there are not any of significance, but less about the quality and speed.

Public Comment

- Westchester County Executive George Latimer commented that he was happy to listen in on the issues discussed and is looking forward to working with the Town of Lewisboro and the AAB on them. He encouraged us to reach out via Tony if there is something specific that he can help follow up on from a county perspective. The AAB thanked him.

Polling of the Board and Action Items

- Sam thanked AAB for coming and Brian for his work on emergency services communications. He validated Rob's summary of the Broadband Coverage session: there is really no issue with coverage. He reminded Tony to reach out to Rep. Burdick, including about Dormitory Authority funding.
- Tony will follow up with Frank on the Altice presentation and comments to CityScape.
- Chair thanked Sam for hosting the AAB at the South Salem Presbyterian Church.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11pm.