

To:

Town Board

Conservation Board

Planning Board

Tree Conservation Advisory Committee

Subject: Opposition to the proposed cell tower at 62 Granite Springs Road

I attended the January 7, 2025 Conservation Board meeting and have a few issues of concern I would like to share with you. Please confirm receipt of this email and forward it to the Town Board, the Conservation Board, the Planning Board and the Tree Conservation Advisory Commission.

### **ISSUE #1:**

**Cell tower sites can be HAZMAT sites.** A recent January 2026 law suit in California [https://www.ladowntownnews.com/news/verizon-settles-lawsuit-california-cell-tower-environmental-violations-cost-millions/article\\_c3833207-45ba-4b12-8ac5-88eb6d6998f1.html](https://www.ladowntownnews.com/news/verizon-settles-lawsuit-california-cell-tower-environmental-violations-cost-millions/article_c3833207-45ba-4b12-8ac5-88eb6d6998f1.html) , requires Verizon Wireless to pay \$7.7 million to settle a civil enforcement action alleging widespread violations of California environmental laws governing hazardous materials storage, reporting and permitting at cell tower sites throughout the state. Los Angeles County District Attorney Nathan J. Hochman said **“Companies that store hazardous materials**

have a legal obligation to protect the public, first responders, and the environment.” Cell tower sites often store lead acid batteries, large capacity diesel fuel tanks ( some can contain over 180 gallons of fuel), which can potentially leak during equipment failure, accidents, or natural disasters. Some fire departments register cell tower sites as HAZMAT sites because first responders must be prepared for risks such as battery acid exposure, fuel ignition, groundwater contamination and toxic smoke if equipment burns. In addition, cell tower companies routinely spray herbicides and toxic chemical around tower bases to control vegetation and reduce fire risk (fire retardant sprays). These treatments often include professional grade "bare - ground" chemicals designed to stop all plant growth, and they must be applied by licensed professional applicators because of their toxicity and environmental risks. Such chemicals are not safe for children and many children will be living in very close proximity to Homeland's proposed tower. This link explains <https://ehsciences.org/top-10-health-safety-and-liability-risks-of-cell-towers-near-homes-and-schools/> "...services are licensed to use much stronger chemicals than are available to the average person. In fact, some have said the professionals often use a chemical that functions quite like the infamous "Agent Orange", which was used to deforest parts of Vietnam in the 60's. Go to this link to learn why Agent Orange is not desirable around humans and the health problems it can cause, <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/symptoms/24689-agent-orange-effects>.

## ISSUE #2:

**Cell towers are Fire Risks:** The Environmental Health Science article link shared above also highlights that cell tower equipment can catch fire, igniting vegetation on the ground. Cell towers and 5G small-cell wireless installations pose recognized fire hazards due to their combination of high-powered electrical equipment, lithium-ion backup batteries, and densely packed electronics. Electrical faults, such as arcing, overheating, insulation failure, or wiring defects, can ignite fires inside equipment cabinets and at the base of towers, and electrical malfunctions are among the most frequently documented causes of tower-related fires worldwide. The same Environmental Health Safety article points out the obvious, **Cell towers and 5G wireless facilities impact the aesthetic of the surrounding environment.** They create visual clutter and can directly conflict with local design standards created to preserve architectural heritage, natural landscapes, and scenic vistas. Communities have the right to protect local

aesthetics, especially near historic areas ( I will also add residential homes/property, precious town park land, 88 TREES and Stuart's Farm - Westchester's oldest working farm ) **You should ask yourself, is this tower necessary, when the gold standard FCC Broadband map most accurately documents that a cell gap does not exist in this area of Yorktown.** The clearly documented cell gap on the FCC Broadband map presents in Somers. Homeland proposed a tower installation multiple times in Somers and were turned down. Somers also has a more restrictive cell tower ordinance that includes protecting residential areas from cell tower installations. This article explains how **"Cell tower developers often mislead residents and local officials by claiming new or taller towers are needed to fix coverage gaps, even when the Federal Communications Commission's National Broadband Map shows the area already has good coverage."** <https://childrenshealthdefense.org/defender/cell-tower-developers-lying-about-coverage-gaps-to-push-new-towers/>

### **ISSUE #3:**

**Please consider the information documenting the harmful effects cell towers have on wildlife and the natural world. The Environmental Health Trust has addressed this issue here:** <https://ehtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Radiofrequency-and-Wildlife-U.S.-2-Page-with-scientific-studies-2023-1.pdf>. and here: <https://ehtrust.org/environmental-effects-of-wireless-radiation-and-electromagnetic-fields/>

**Certified Wildlife Biologist, Albert M. Manville, II, Ph.D.,** addresses his concerns for Radio Frequency Radiation (RFR) Effects on Wildlife and Their Habitats and The Need for Serious Consideration and Immediate Action here: <https://icbe-emf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Wireless-Radio-Frequency-Radiation-Effects-on-Wildlife-and-Their-Habitats-Professor-Albert-Manville-ICBE-EMF-Presentation-PPT-.pdf>

**Currently the FCC uses safety data dating back to 1996. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 dictates the FCC safety recommendations for cell tower installations and setbacks. The FCC lost in court in 2021 and was ordered to study new, updated cell RF technology and update their safety recommendations. Unfortunately updated studies have not taken place and the government pulled their funding. See details of this lawsuit here:** [https://childrenshealthdefense.org/legal\\_justice/chd-v-fcc-5g-wireless-radiation-guidelines-lawsuit/?lang=es](https://childrenshealthdefense.org/legal_justice/chd-v-fcc-5g-wireless-radiation-guidelines-lawsuit/?lang=es) **Currently, the FCC is trying to pass new bills that will take away a town's ability to say no to a tower and a location.**

**Thank you for considering the information I have shared,**

**Monica Cole**

