

Subject: Strong Opposition to Wetlands, Tree, and Stormwater Permits for the Homeland Towers Project – Granite Springs Road Cell Phone Tower

Dear Members of the Town Board,

I am submitting these comments for the public hearing regarding the **wetlands, tree, and stormwater permits** for the **Homeland Towers Project – Granite Springs Road Cell Phone Tower**. I am **strongly and unequivocally opposed** to the issuance of these permits and to the placement of this project at the proposed site.

This project is proposed in a **completely residential area surrounded by homes**. This is not a mixed-use or commercial zone. It is a quiet residential neighborhood where families live, children play, and residents reasonably expect protection from industrial infrastructure. There is **no legitimate or compelling reason** for a large telecommunications tower to be placed in the middle of such a setting. The siting of this project is fundamentally inappropriate and incompatible with the character of the neighborhood.

The Homeland Towers Project raises serious and cumulative concerns related to wetlands protection, stormwater management, tree removal, public safety, environmental health, property values, and overall quality of life. Most importantly, it places the burden of risk squarely on nearby residents who receive **no benefit** from hosting this infrastructure.

The Town Board has a clear responsibility to **protect its residents and neighbors from harmful projects** that could negatively impact health, safety, property values, and the environment. Allowing a project of this nature in a fully residential neighborhood would **set a dangerous precedent**, signaling that Yorktown residents' health, property, and quality of life are secondary to corporate interests. The Town Board's duty is not only to approve projects presented to it, but to **carefully safeguard the welfare of the community**, ensuring that residential neighborhoods are not exposed to undue risk or harm.

The Homeland Towers Project includes wireless antennas that emit radiofrequency (RF) non-ionizing radiation. When such infrastructure is placed directly adjacent to homes in a residential neighborhood, residents are subjected to **continuous, involuntary exposure** to RF radiation. RF radiation is increasingly recognized as a form of environmental pollution due to its constant and unavoidable nature.

A substantial body of independent, peer-reviewed scientific research has documented biological and health effects associated with long-term RF exposure at levels comparable to those experienced by people living near cell phone towers. Reported effects include headaches, dizziness, nausea, sleep disturbances, fatigue, memory and concentration problems, irritability, anxiety, and depression—often described as “radiofrequency sickness” or “microwave syndrome.” Studies have also reported associations with increased cancer risk, genetic damage, cellular stress, and reproductive impacts.

Unlike personal cell phone use, exposure from a nearby cell phone tower is **continuous—24 hours a day, seven days a week**. Residents cannot turn this exposure off or opt out. Children,

who do not use cell phones, are nonetheless involuntarily exposed. Children are especially vulnerable because they absorb RF radiation more deeply into their brains and bodies and because their developing organ systems are more sensitive to environmental stressors.

Hundreds of scientists and medical professionals worldwide have urged governments to reduce exposure to RF radiation and strengthen safety standards, particularly for children. A 2022 peer-reviewed review analyzing more than 100 studies found consistent evidence of adverse biological effects in people living near mobile phone base stations at low exposure levels.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has repeatedly expressed concern about RF radiation exposure and has called for updated standards that account for long-term, cumulative exposure—standards that do not currently exist in the United States.

Beyond health concerns, many municipalities have recognized that cell phone towers do **not belong in residential neighborhoods** and have adopted setback requirements to prevent exactly this type of situation. Numerous towns—including in New York State—prohibit towers within hundreds or even thousands of feet of homes and schools, including:

- **Encinitas, CA** – No antennas within 500 feet of homes, daycares, or schools
- **Shelburne, MA** – No antennas within 3,000 feet of schools and 1,500 feet of homes; no residential zoning
- **Copake, NY** – No wireless facilities within 1,500 feet of homes, schools, or places of worship
- **Sallisaw, OK** – No towers within 1,500 feet of homes
- **Calabasas, CA** – No Tier 2 facilities within 1,000 feet of homes and schools
- **Bedford, NH** – No antennas within 750 feet of residentially zoned property
- **Scarsdale, NY** – No facilities within 500 feet of homes, schools, parks, or houses of worship
- **Davis, CA** – No freestanding facilities within 500 feet of residential zones and schools
- **Westlake Village, CA** – No facilities within 500 feet of homes
- **Randolph, MA** – No antennas within 500 feet of homes and businesses
- **Petaluma, CA** – No small-cell antennas within 500 feet of homes
- **Suisun City, CA** – No small-cell antennas within 500 feet of homes
- **Contra Costa County, CA** – No high-visibility towers within 300 feet of residential zones
- **North Hempstead, NY** – No installations within 350 feet of schools

These communities have determined that residential neighborhoods should **not be used as testing grounds for industrial wireless infrastructure**. Yorktown should do the same to **protect property values and maintain the character of its neighborhoods**. Allowing this tower would **devalue nearby homes**, lower the tax base, and create ongoing harm to the community. Protecting residents' financial and physical well-being is part of the Town Board's essential responsibility.

There are also serious liability and safety concerns. Insurance companies routinely classify cell phone tower radiation and electromagnetic fields as “high risk” and exclude coverage for long-

term health damages. Wireless companies themselves warn shareholders of potential future litigation and financial losses related to RF exposure, yet residents living near these towers receive no such warning and no protection.

From an environmental standpoint, this project is particularly troubling. Cell phone towers can catch fire and often contain hazardous materials such as diesel fuel and lead-acid batteries. Accidents and leaks have occurred elsewhere, resulting in soil and environmental contamination.

This proposed tower is located near a wetland and Crystal Lake, a critical environmental resource and the focal point of a defined watershed. Any disturbance, runoff, or contamination associated with this project could harm wetland functions and water quality. Tree removal and increased impervious surfaces will further degrade stormwater management and increase erosion and pollution risks. These impacts fall squarely within the scope of the wetlands, tree, and stormwater permits currently under review.

Additionally, cell phone towers are widely regarded as visual blight in residential neighborhoods. Properties with direct views of towers often experience reduced marketability and lower property values, negatively affecting homeowners and the Town's tax base. Protecting property values, environmental integrity, and the well-being of neighbors is **a responsibility the Town Board cannot ignore.**

This project negatively affects residents in **every respect—health, safety, environment, property values, and quality of life—while offering no benefit** that justifies placing it in a fully residential neighborhood. The Town Board's primary obligation is to **protect the people who live here**, uphold the integrity of neighborhoods, and prevent harmful projects from being imposed on residents. Yorktown must act as a **guardian of its community**, not a facilitator of corporate intrusion into residential spaces.

For all of these reasons, I strongly urge the Town Board to **deny the wetlands, tree, and stormwater permits for the Homeland Towers Project – Granite Springs Road Cell Phone Tower**, and to reject the project entirely. I also urge the Town to **adopt an ordinance prohibiting similar projects in residential areas going forward**, ensuring that no neighborhood is exposed to these unnecessary hazards in the future.

Approving this project would place residents at unnecessary risk and would represent a failure to protect the health, safety, welfare, and property of the community. Yorktown residents increasingly feel under attack by outside companies seeking to disrupt our way of life. Please put a stop to this by denying this variance and this project in its entirety.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Corrine Simone
Walden Woods – Yorktown Heights