

## Sewell, Peggy

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**Subject:** FW: Cellular Communication Advisory Committee

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**From:** Manny and Mari Perotin [mailto:mannyp76@earthlink.net]

**Sent:** Sunday, September 11, 2011 9:02 PM

**To:** njames2@usf.edu; 'david payne'

**Cc:** Moreda, Joe; frisbie\_annv@verizon.net

**Subject:** Cellular Communication Advisory Committee

Thank you once again for your efforts in facilitating the committee meetings. At the last meeting you mentioned we could submit material to accompany the Report that you are preparing. My content follows in this e-mail and I request you include it as part of the packet to the BOCC. As you are already aware my experience is based on the process followed for a new WCSS at Claywell Elementary in Northdale in 2010.

Our Committee was able to make some progress in voting on setback requirements, collocation and expert review, waivers and variances, and the County's current review process for a new WCSS. I think there are some additional areas you should consider:

- Process

- o I feel adding the ability for an outside expert to verify that WCA cannot be located on an existing or approved structure is a step in the right direction.
- o I feel if a new WCSS is proposed on publicly owned property it should be approved by ELECTED officials. For example, County owned property would need to be approved by the BOCC before the application can be submitted (school property the School Board, etc.).
- o I think the current 'meeting' requirement implemented by the School District is a joke (I don't recall if this meeting is mandated by the County Land Development Code or School District Policy). I live across from Claywell Elementary School and attended the meeting held in January 2010 to notify Northdale residents of the proposed tower. After the meeting I felt the School District and their contractor told everyone we intend to put up this tower, this is where it is going (nowhere else so you have no input), we are only here because we are required to have this meeting and inform you, thank you. If the intent of these meetings is to validate public support and collect input, I think the County has to require a much more formal meeting (formal notification and signage similar to a Special Use Hearing, sign-in, meeting minutes, and agenda of what MUST be covered/discussed). Similar to roadway projects OPTIONS should be provided with the positive and negative aspects of each alternative outlined for the public to weigh and discuss. This would be an opportunity for public input versus a time constrained opposition at a special use hearing.
- o Based on my limited experience with the situation on Claywell Elementary, I think presenting alternatives should be mandatory (for both public and private property applicants). I proposed multiple alternatives to the School District, but they were not considered. We could have had a WCSS near Northdale Boulevard with easy access for maintenance and potentially even installing a CCTV Camera for HCSO to monitor the roadway. Instead we have a WCSS adjacent to the floodplain (an issue I still feel was not properly considered with this application – if the tower is critical then the equipment should be elevated three feet per our County floodplain ordinance), neighboring the school's playground, shortening the field used during Physical Education, far away from an access point (I don't think there is another location on the parcel that would have required more cable to be run from the main fiber optic line/TECO power line), and difficult to access for tower operations personnel. To this day I am still puzzled by the location selected, but we were told in January 2010 that is where it is going and no where else (the School District did adjust their January 2010 location

- slightly once I informed them they had a federally delineated floodplain running through their proposed site).
- The Hearing Officer approved the School District's application to construct a WCSS at Claywell Elementary which I appealed. At that appeal the County Attorney explained the hundreds of petitions signed by Northdale residents carry no weight in the Hearing Officers decision; if this is accurate then I really think you must reconsider the current process for gathering public input when a WCSS is proposed on public property.
- NEED
    - The County's process for validating NEED right now is abysmal and if someone had the time and the pocket deep enough to challenge it, the County would probably be in a difficult situation. The application for the WCSS at Claywell Elementary was approved by staff with a one sentence letter from a Radio Frequency Engineer stating the WCSS was necessary due to the fact that there are no alternative vertical structures located within the immediate area. At the hearing the applicant submitted coverage maps showing a gap in coverage without the proposed tower, which I assume the Hearing Officer took into consideration when approving the WCSS application. Ironically, upon approval of the application and BEFORE the WCSS was constructed Clearwire Wireless (the company whose network coverage objectives could NOT be met without the new WCSS at Claywell Elementary based on the one sentence letter from a Radio Frequency Engineer) released coverage maps of the Tampa Bay area and the Northdale Community had coverage withOUT a tower at Claywell Elementary. To this day the coverage maps on Clearwire's website show coverage of Northdale and do NOT come close to matching the before and after coverage maps submitted to the Hearing Officer for the Claywell WCSS.
  - OWNERSHIP
    - I feel no one has a true grasp/understanding of the existing antenna infrastructure with Hillsborough County government. For example, the GIS map and data delineating the towers within the County is inaccurate (in the immediate area surrounding Claywell Elementary there were towers missing). I think this has more to do with technology, federal/state law, and construction of infrastructure expanding at a quicker pace than County government funding could keep up with, than the County not wanting to take ownership. I don't necessarily care for the County having to spend more resources on tracking and managing this information, but if the County Administrator is expected to validate NEED for a new WCSS in the Land Development Code then this information must be accurate. Hopefully the Committee's recommendation for an outside expert to verify the need for a WCS (at the cost of the applicant will help with this).
  - TAXES
    - Does the County collect any property taxes when these WCSS are constructed on public and/or private property? If not, I think this is something that should be taken under consideration by the County Property Appraiser/Tax Collector.
  - STANDARDS
    - We had a subject matter expert come in for one of our meetings. He discussed how the Florida Building Code requires WCSS be designed using the ANSI/TIA-222-G Standard. This standard has three Structure Classifications: Class I – structures that are optional or where a delay in returning the services would be acceptable, Class II – structures used for services that may be provided by other means, Class III – structures used primarily for essential communications. If the applicant states the WCSS is critical for 911 calls during an emergency and applies E911 statute, then the County should require the WCSS meet ANSI/TIA-222-G Class III requirements.

My experience with WCSS before January 2010 was limited to knowing they were necessary for cellular phones to work. When the school district applied for special use approval to construct a WCSS at Claywell

Elementary I led Northdale's opposition which included several hundred signed petitions from property tax paying residents. The experience at Claywell Elementary for me was eye opening, especially in terms of how many resources (time, money, etc.) the County has had to waste due to these WCSS. If I felt like the tower in our neighborhood was needed AND the Northdale residents had input on where it was being placed, I probably would not have done a thing to object to a tower. However, I felt the tower was being shoved downed our throats because 'our kids need money for a proper education'. I respectfully ask when you consider this report and are revisiting the Land Development Code with respect to WCSS that you focus on the applicants actually proving need for a new tower and if it is proposed on public property that the residents in the area actually have some input. I appreciate the opportunity to serve on the Committee and hope you take this input into consideration.

Thanks,  
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