The October 14, 2020, Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen was convened at 5:02 p.m. by First Selectman Beth Heller Via teleconference. The meeting was carried live on WGATV Channel 79 and youtube@WGATV79. Youtube video of the meeting can be found here: https://youtu.be/z65U-MQSAO0

First Selectman Heller read the following statement: “In accordance with Governor Ned Lamont’s Executive Order 7 B Section 1, which suspends the open meeting requirements of in-person participation, audio and video of this Regular Meeting is being simultaneously televised live on WGATV Channel 79 and youtube@WGATV79, in order to allow the public to view and listen to our meeting.”

Ms. Heller confirmed via roll call that the following were in attendance: Deputy First Selectman Mica Cardozo, Joseph J. Crisco, Jr., Joseph S. Dey, III, Dwight C. Rowland, Sandra T. Stein Administrative Officer/Director of Finance Anthony Genovese, Assistant Administrative Officer Betsy Yagla, and Town Counsel Gerald T. Weiner.

FIRST SELECTMAN’S REMARKS
“Good evening. First, as an update to the Board, and our residents, regarding our current re-opening plan, we will be opening Town buildings for in-person appointments - beginning on the last Monday of this month. Our doors will remain locked, and folks will only be allowed in by appointment. Town staff have done a terrific job of being creative and providing all needed services to our residents. As we enter the colder months it is important that we give people the opportunity to come in from the cold and meet face-to-face if and when absolutely necessary. I believe that most residents have been satisfied with meeting staff at the door, or picking up and dropping off paperwork, but there are certainly instances where something may be more complicated and not easily handled in a very quick interaction.

During the month of September there were several staff meetings at which a plan was formulated to take appointments for the public who feel the need to do so. Masks and social distancing are mandatory, and we have added hand sanitizing stations at the main entries to our buildings. The Library will re-open for browsing during limited hours, which will begin during the first week of November. There are no plans to resume in-person meetings or allow outside groups to use Town buildings. Our hard-working custodial staff is only working during the daytime hours to provide extra cleaning for buildings during regular office hours and we cannot accommodate evening hours at this time. We are keeping a watch on the coronavirus numbers. They have been rising statewide and locally as well. Our number of positive cases remains at 138, which includes 6 new cases reported between September 11 and October 2. None of these cases were from nursing homes or extended care facilities – all were from private residences. Quinnipiac Valley Health District reported on Monday October 12 that they noted three out of the four towns in their jurisdiction reporting COVID-19 cases, but none have been in Woodbridge.

As with everything during this pandemic, things are very fluid, and we may have to shut down again. I hope that will not be the case, but I will keep you all notified.

One more COVID-19 update for you from Amity Superintendent Dr. Byars. She asked me to share this reminder with the public: “The grounds of Amity Regional High School are in use by students and staff from 6:45 am through 6:45 pm. We ask that visitors maintain physical distancing measure or wear face coverings while on Amity property. Additionally, we have many sports and athletic events in the afternoons and we remind all visitors that dogs are prohibited from the Amity Regional High School property.”

As a general reminder, the Presidential Election will be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2020. I must extend a special thank you to our Town Clerks and Registrars of Voters for all the many months of work you have
put in to provide us all with the opportunity to vote, either by absentee or in person. I would encourage everyone to do so.

You have all received very large packets for tonight’s meeting, including a large correspondence section. There are copies of many emails related to different subjects. I will not be reading the ones that specifically were asked to be read out loud as they are lengthy and we would be here all night. All oral and written public comments are a matter of public record and are filed with the minutes for anyone to request to view. I also want to remind you all that within the correspondence section there are updates from our consultant Mike Boucher, who is still working on the review of our Police Department/Fire Department/EMS Dispatch.

1a. Cell Tower Update & Action as Appropriate

Before I begin with this update, I would ask residents and others who offer comments to me, and to the Board of Selectmen, to please remember to get the facts prior to writing to us. The Town Woodbridge NEVER asked for, proposed or had anything to do with erecting this tower in our Town. This is NOT a Town project. I would also ask that residents refrain from accusations about things that are just not true. We are all here to help residents, and none of us deserve abusive language or misstatements about our intentions. We are better than this – let’s work together to try to solve this problem instead of arguing about untruths!

As you know, the Town of Woodbridge received a packet dated July 17, 2020, informing us of a proposed private transaction between residents at 118 Newton Road and Celco Partnership DBA Verizon Wireless to construct a new cell tower at 118 Newton Road in Woodbridge. The applicant has asserted that the purpose of the proposed Woodbridge North 2 Facility (aka the new cell tower) is to “fill existing wireless service gaps in Celico’s 2100 MHz frequency range and provide more reliable wireless service in Celico’s 700 MHz frequency range to north central Woodbridge.”

At that time, no formal response to the initial July letter was made as none was required. We simply received technical information which needed to be provided at least 90 days before an application is filed with the Connecticut Siting Council, as the decision on the application is exclusively vested in the Siting Council. Additionally, there is a letter in your packets from Kristine Sullivan, our Land Use Analyst, written in response to a resident’s question regarding the “planning” capacity of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission regarding a cell tower. She writes, “Under State Statutes, cell towers, such as the one proposed for 118 Newton Road are specifically exempt from local Zoning Ordinances and are solely under the jurisdiction of the State Siting Council. Because cell towers are exempt from local Zoning Regulations, the members of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission have no authority to approve or disapprove the cell tower.”

After speaking with several adjoining residents, Attorney Weiner and I began the process of trying to find a way to help with this problem. Let me state emphatically that I believe this cell tower does NOT belong in the area of 118 Newton Road or 19 Soundview Drive, or any other residential neighborhood in our Town. Any such location is completely unacceptable in my opinion, and to that end, I have continued to try to find a location that provides the needed service, but does not impact any residential neighborhood in our Town.

The letter listed 7 sites that were identified and investigated – let’s review those first:
118 Newton Road – Cellico entered into a lease agreement with Michael Soufrine, Trustee of the Soufrine Family Trust, for the development of a new tower site on this 6.01 acre parcel in the Town’s Residential A Zone District

19 Soundview Drive – this is an 8.2 acre residential parcel owned by Jay Michael Soufrine located immediately west of the proposed tower site

10 Sperry Road – this is an undeveloped 117 acre parcel west of Sperry Road owned by the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority

615 Amity Road - this is an undeveloped 199 acre parcel east of Amity Road and west of Sperry Road owned by the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority

2060 Litchfield Turnpike - this is an undeveloped 433 acre parcel east of Litchfield Turnpike and east of Sperry Road owned by the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority

46 Burnt Swamp Road - this is a 3.87 acre parcel owned by the Town of Woodbridge. This parcel contains significant wetland areas associated with the Wepawaug River in the southerly portion of this parcel

7 Meetinghouse Lane – this is a vacant 103.34 acre parcel owned by the Woodbridge Park Association, Inc.

I have emailed three letters to all residents who have written to me, dated September 27th, October 2nd, and October 9th. Those letters have been sent to the BOS members as well.

As of today, we have received 73 letters opposed to the cell tower at 118 Newton Road, and 2 letters in favor of such. These letters are all in your packet, and are available to anyone, as part of the public record, by calling Town Hall and they will be copied and emailed to anyone who requests them.

Several additional sites that we have investigated so far (and if you all have others please let me know) are:

11 Meetinghouse Lane and the Police Department tower at 4 Meetinghouse Lane – Although this property is town owned and not very visible from residences or roads, it is about 100 feet lower than the 118 Newton Road property. This property would require a tower about 250 feet with lights at the top and utilities are not building cell towers that are this high.

Elderslie Parcel on Peck Hill Road – this site will need further research. There is a prior grant of Conservation Restriction to the Woodbridge Land Trust dated April 4, 2000. This property does have elevations higher than 118 Newton.

Dillon Road – Verizon has been asked to investigate a property on Dillon Road which is in a heavily wooded lot. We have not yet heard back from Verizon as to whether this property is capable of providing coverage to the area of Town which Verizon contends is under served.

We continue to explore other options. I will say it again: I believe that this cell tower does NOT belong in the area of 118 Newton Road or 19 Soundview Drive, or any other residential neighborhood in our Town.
Any such location is completely unacceptable in my opinion, and to that end, I have continued and will continue to try to find a location that provides the needed service, but does not impact any residential neighborhood in our Town.

I would like to ask that the Board agree to take a formal vote that the Board of Selectmen:

1) does NOT approve of the proposed Cell Tower location at 118 Newton Road, and furthermore

2) the BOS wishes to engage an attorney with experience in such matters, to advise us as to next steps to stop the construction of this tower at 118 Newton Road.

With that I will ask Attorney Weiner to comment on what might be our next legal options."

Mr. Weiner said that no application has been filed with the Siting Council. He has been in touch with Verizon’s attorney and offered alternate sites. He has also contacted an attorney with expertise in cell tower matters. The Siting Council has absolute jurisdiction in siting the tower. Once the application has been filed with the Siting Council—if all alternate sites have been exhausted, it is very difficult to have the Siting Council oppose the applicant’s proposal.

Following each Selectman expressing their position against placing a cell tower in a residential area, the Board unanimously approved the following motions:

The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Stein) that the Board does not approve constructing the proposed cell tower at 118 Newton Road.

The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Crisco – Stein) to engage an attorney with experience in such matters to advise next steps.

WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Interim Superintendent Christine Syriac reported that the original plan to open the school for in-person classes included hiring an additional eight (8) teachers and cost $575,000. Instead, the Board has hired eight (8) temporary substitutes through Thanksgiving with the plan to hire four (4) long-term substitutes for the rest of the school year at a cost of $287,000. With the new plan the deficit is projected at $136,000. Ms. Syriac said a survey has been sent to parents seeking feed-back re the first month of in-person and virtual learning.

Ms. Heller requested that the Board receive a monthly financial report based on the COVID teaching model.

LIAISON REPORTS
Mr. Cardozo:  Economic Development Commission – will be sending a survey to residents asking what business they would like to see in Woodbridge.
Recreation Commission – the Commission has not met since the last Board of Selectmen’s meeting.

Mr. Crisco:  Fire Commission – the Board elected Karen Kravetz as Chair. Engine #3 is currently out to have lettering applied and equipment installed and should be ready for service soon.
Town Plan & Zoning Commission – the Commission has received two applications for zoning changes. 1) for Lucy Street and 2) for parking on Merritt Avenue. Zoning Board of Appeals cancelled its meeting.

Mr. Rowland: Human Services Commission – is awaiting news of the STEAP Grant it applied for; seeking participants and donors for the annual Holiday Baskets. Youth Services ran a “Home Alone” class. Two flu clinics will be held. Inland Wetlands Agency – not available to attend meeting.

Ms. Stein: Library Commission – the library will open for browsing beginning November 5th. The plan is for limited hours on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Appointments will be required to use the computers.

NEXUS GOLF AT COUNTRY CLUB OF WOODBRIDGE
Tim and Patti Vale presented their proposal for a Nexus Hybrid Golf Course on the former Country Club property.

The proposal is to lease 50 acres of the property. The Course has 9 holes that play as 18 holes. There will be a 3 hole practice loop. They will construct a club house to house a merchandise area; wine tasting; bar; food; and practice simulators. If approved, construction and commencement of operations would be in 2 phases. Town retains 90 acres. Video explaining concept can be found on company’s website at https://nexushybridgolf.com/

The Board of Selectmen agreed to discuss the proposal further at the November 10th meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
Public Comments included two (2) regarding the proposed storage shed for the Fire Department; One (1) regarding library reopening; and nineteen (19) regarding the cell tower, (18 opposed – one supported). Copies of the public comments are attached to these minutes as part of the record.

AD HOC THOMAS DARLING ADVISORY COMMITTEE - UPDATE
Richard Blackwell presented a proposed scope of work to be done on the property. Cow Barn – removal of contents for disposal or cataloging (by AWHS); structural review; and structural work based on review. Lead assessment on grounds and outbuildings. The State Preservation Office recommends developing a long-range plan to tap into grant funds. Tree and landscaping work will be done by Chris Sorensen Landscaping – cost covered by a $3,000 donation from Mr. Blackwell. Clean up of outdoor debris and debris within the out-buildings will be contracted or done by public works. Target dates for completion of tree/landscaping work– October 30th; debris clean-up – mid November.

DISCUSSION RE TOWN PLANNER – ACTION AS APPROPRIATE
Mr. Genovese reported that the 2030 Committee recommends the Town retain a part time Town Planner (8 – 10 hours/week) to assist in a long range plan for economic development, housing, land use of the former Country Club of Woodbridge property, and grant applications. The Board requested more information, i.e. funding source and job description. No action was taken.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/DIRECTOR OF FINANCE’S REPORT
Monthly Report – Mr. Genovese reported that as of September 30, 2020 he is projecting a deficit of $243,025 resulting in a June 30, 2021 fund balance of $5.87M or 11.69% of the annual projected expenses.
FUNDING REQUESTS
The Board of Selectmen VOTED to recommend the following funding requests to the Board of Finance:

2021-05 – Interdepartmental Transfer  
   To: Thomas Darling House Repair & Maintenance Buildings (1540-00/53530)  
   From: Revenue – Donations (1-6-1100/46410)  
   For: Transfer donation to Thomas Darling House budget for specific tree work as described in the quote.  
(Crisco – Stein) Unanimously approved

   Amount: $ 3,000

2021-06 – Intradepartmental Transfer  
   To: Selectmen’s Office – Part time clerical (1110-00/50310)  
   From: Selectmen’s Office/clerical (1110-00/50215) $4,500  
         Selectmen’s Office-Genera Prof. Svc. (1110-00/52100) $5,400  
   For: Hire Part Time Blight Officer  
( ) Unanimously approved pending hiring approval by Board of Selectmen

   Amount: $10,000

2021-07 – Transfer for Town Planner was not acted on.

2021-08 – Interdepartmental Transfer  
   To: CNR-CCW-Bldgs. (302-1192/57500)  
   From: CNR – Police Radio (302-2100/57410) $825  
         CNR-Assessor-Reval. (302-1160/52200/REVAL) $1,222  
         CNR-Bldg Maint.-Fence (302-3700/53530/FENCE) $4,507  
         CNR-Recreation-Ice Rink (302-4100/52100/SPACE) $8,446  
   For: Secure main clubhouse at the former Country Club of Woodbridge from trespass  
Discussion: Mr. Genovese will seek Mr. Rizzo’s advice re filling in the pool vs. fencing.  
(Heller – Stein) Unanimously approved

   Amount $15,000

REQUEST FOR BID WAIVER
The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Cardozo) to approve the bid waiver request to purchase Bulk Blizzard Wizard from Morton Salt at $68.99 per ton.

OLD FIREHOUSE RENOVATION – POSSIBLE ACTION – SILVER/PETRUCCELLI ARCHITECTS
Mr. Genovese reported that David Stein of Silver/Petrucci Architects, whom the Town has been working with regarding renovation plans for the Old Firehouse, has entered a proposal of $17,700 to create the documents required for a referendum. The fee will be paid from the insurance proceeds.

The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller –Stein) to retain Silver/Petrucci Architects to prepare documents as the first step towards the process of a referendum for the renovation of the Old Firehouse.

ADDITION TO PUBLISHED AGENDA
The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Rowland – Crisco) to add two items to the agenda: 1) Woodbridge Volunteer Fire Association – Truck/Treat; 2) Action as appropriate.
WOODBRIDGE VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSOCIATION ("WVFA") – TRUCK OR TREAT
Chief Rowland said that due to the pandemic, the WVFA requests permission to conduct a Halloween drive-by Truck or Treat on October 31 in lieu of the usual gathering at the firehouse that they have been hosting since Superstorm Sandy cancelled Halloween 9 years ago.

The plan is to host the drive-by from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Trucks will be lined up on Meetinghouse Lane to distribute candy and fire prevention material; no one will exit their vehicle; spooky music will be in the air; and there will be no food or fireworks. Chief Rowland said that the association is seeking sponsorship of trucks and donations of candy.

The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Stein) to approve the WVFA’s proposal to hold a Truck/Treat on Halloween (October 31, 2020).

ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER’S REPORT
Application to hold events on Town property: Ms. Yagla presented two applications to hold events on Town Property.
1) Sound Affect requests to film part of a Christmas video at the Gazebo on November 15 or November 22.
   The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Stein) to approve the request.

2) Troop 63 Scout Master Ted Pocwierz requests use of area between the Old Fire House and The Center parking lot to hold the Troop’s annual Holiday Greens Fundraiser.
   The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Rowland) to approve the request.

Bike/Pedestrian Proposal – Grant Application
Ms. Yagla said the Woodbridge Complete Streets Committee has proposed improvements to walking/biking within Town. Several e-mails in support of the Grant application to fund bike and pedestrian safety improvements were in the packet.

The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Stein – Cardozo) to approve submission of the grant for bike and pedestrian safety improvements to the State Department of Transportation and authorize the First Selectman to sign the grant application.

Woodbridge Board of Education/Town Shelter Agreement – this Agreement will be discussed at a later date.

TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS
The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Stein) to acknowledge receipt of the Town Clerk’s Reports for the month ending September 30, 2020 and the cumulative report from July 1, 2020 thru September 30, 2020.
MINUTES
The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Cardozo) to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2020, Regular Meeting.

MEETING DATES
The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Cardozo) to add to the schedule of Regular Meetings for 2020 filed with the Town Clerk December 1, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. and December 3, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. At 6:00 p.m. the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen will hold Budget Review Meetings.

TOWN COUNSEL’S REPORT
America Medical Response (“AMR”) Contract Update – Mr. Weiner said that the current contract expires December 31, 2020. The Town is planning to negotiate an extension while it seeks to retrieve from the Connecticut Department of Public Health the license held by AMR. If the Town is successful an alternate provider would be needed to provide all the services AMR now provides. Mr. Dey and Mr. Weiner have met with the attorney who handled the Town of North Haven’s successful attempt to retrieve its license from AMR. It was noted that the legal fees are very expensive. Mr. Weiner also noted that the Emergency Medical Services Commission (“EMS”) is pleased with AMR’s performance.

The Town must have a plan to show it can handle the medical response or hire someone else. Towns that are successful in providing their own service have paid fire departments – where Woodbridge’s department is volunteer.

Result of discussion: 1) Invite EMS to the November Selectmen’s meeting and ask them to provide a report on response times for the latest six (6) months. 2) ask the Woodbridge Volunteer Fire Association to provide a plan for medical service as good or better at a similar or less cost. 3) invite Fire Chief Rowlund to attend the November Selectmen’s meeting. 4) Mr. Genovese to contact C-MED re options if the Town decides to terminate contract with AMR.

2 Orchard Road Zoning Application – Mr. Weiner said that the application to construct a multi-family unit in a zone regulated to single family housing presents a very complex legal matter and major ramifications for the Town. He said he has spoken with legal experts and is seriously considering recommending that an attorney be hired to analyze the law and guide the Town Plan & Zoning Commission through this complex issue.

EXECUTIVE SESSION
The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller - Stein) to move into executive session pursuant C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(B) regarding 47 Pease Road litigation and 4 Deer Run Road Tax Appeal and to invite Mr. Weiner and Mr. Genovese to attend.

At 8:31 p.m. the Board of Selectmen moved out of executive session and returned to the regular meeting. Ms. Heller declared that no motions were made or votes taken in executive session.
47 Pease Road Litigation
The Board of Selectmen took no action regarding the 47 Pease Road litigation.

4 Deer Run Ridge Tax Appeal
The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Stein) to approve the settlement awarding $4,500 to the Wright Family. This settlement does not affect the assessed value of the property.

ADJOURNMENT
On a non-debatable motion by Ms. Heller, seconded by Mr. Cardozo the meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.
PUBLIC COMMENT RE PROPOSED CELL TOWER AT 118 NEWTON ROAD

As a resident of Woodbridge, no one should be burdened with financial loss or health issues by allowing a commercial structure on private property. How convenient we can't site health issues in protest. Who set these parameters, the cell companies?

My wife and I moved to Woodbridge thinking this town was serious in protecting its integrity. We donate to the Police Fund, Fire Dept., the Woodbridge Land Trust and 2 libraries [Woodbridge & Bethany]. Our company has a green based motto of not manufacturing anything toxic to our customers. In addition, we utilize high school students in the special needs class in Amity for projects. The money they earn goes towards their field trips since school budgets are shrinking. I feel we have immersed ourselves in this community and wish it to remain a safe and respected place to live.

I feel so strongly about this issue of a cell tower, that relocating would become a priority for my family.

Bill Karales
President
Sea Lark Enterprises Inc.

I can not express the extent of my frustration and anger in recently finding out a Cell Tower will be built on private property located at 118 Newton Road.

I am questioning the integrity of our Board of Selectman who would not immediately realize that this would be unacceptable when they first received the letter from Cellco/Verizon back on July 17th. It was never addressed publicly until residents had to step up and spread the information.

3 years ago, my husband and I moved to Woodbridge from Long Island, NY. We loved the peaceful, quiet wooded area. We spent a year looking at different towns before choosing Woodbridge.
In addition, we moved our company up here, purchasing an office building and warehouse in Bethany, bringing jobs to the community.

I am starting to question our decision to move here.

Thank you,
JoAnn & Bill Karales
40 Orchard Road.

As 20 year residents of Soundview Drive, we want to express our strong objection to the cell tower being planned for 118 Newton Road. This is a quiet residential neighborhood and the
planned location is far too close to many houses. If regulations prohibit cell towers 250' from schools, why is it OK for this one to be 150' to the nearest house?

Additionally, we have seen a significant increase in traffic on our little cul-de-sac, coming to and from the planned location. Will Verizon contribute to the upkeep of our street? Not likely.

We're asking the town of Woodbridge to support us and help provide alternative locations to Verizon. It seems to us that placing this on town-owned land would be a welcome source of income to the town.

We've been disappointed and dismayed at the lack of information about this project - there was no notification to neighbors until adjacent property owners received official notice last week. We can see from various minutes from board meetings that the town has been aware of this for months. We understand that the CT Siting Council makes the final decision but we expect you to support us and help us prevent this from being forced upon us.

Sincerely,

Margaret and Andrew Maley
11 Soundview Drive

Submitted for comment to the Board of Selectmen meeting of October 14 2020

Regarding the proposed cell phone tower on Newton Road:

While there may be many good reasons not to place this cell phone tower in the middle of a residential neighborhood, I'd like to address the issue of property values. I will let others appeal to higher-minded values and tackle this issue of crass self-interest because it is the issue that affects nearby residents most directly and in the most quantifiable terms.

A home is the largest purchase most people will ever make, and a mortgage payment plus taxes and insurance is the largest expense in most peoples' monthly household budget. The internal debates will be familiar to many, I suspect, of deciding how far to stretch financially to buy a house in a town with good schools, or access to a train station, or proximity to a large city where jobs are available. We go right up to the limit of what mortgage we can get approved for, figuring that we can learn to make the budget work and that we can one day sell the house and - hopefully - at least get what we paid for it.

All other factors being equal (square footage, number of bathrooms, granite countertops, etc.), who would choose to buy a house in a neighborhood where the most prominent visual feature is a large radio tower? Who would choose to buy a house that is within 100' of a tower? Every house has a price at which it will eventually sell to somebody, and the price of a home next to or with a prominent view to a tower must necessarily be lowered to attract a buyer. This represents a direct and real financial injury to the current homeowners in these houses. What is the response to this? Does the person whose yard is next to the tower not have a claim to some kind of compensation? Would the bank lower the mortgage for these residents? Would the town lower its tax assessment? Would the lease payments from the cell-phone company be spread out to those residences with a year-round view of the tower?
Political developments of the last few years suggest that we shouldn’t rely on the idea of a government-sponsored healthcare program. Programs like Medicare and Social Security become a political football in election years. Is this idea of trying to protect yourself financially too selfish? Realize that you’re asking a group of residents to accept a financial hit of tens of thousands (or even…potentially…hundreds of thousands of dollars) when they eventually sell their home. If the counterweight to that argument is better cell phone reception for 911 calls — that’s certainly desirable and better for the overall community — but you haven’t resolved the issue of financial injury to the homeowners. Residents in this neighborhood have somehow managed to get by for years with the current cell-phone coverage, so if the response is simply ‘too bad’, then what you have in these towers is a public nuisance that outweighs its benefit.

You can’t choose where a hurricane will make landfall, or where a tornado will touch down, but you can choose where cell towers are located. Placing a cell-phone tower in this location is a choice being made by people who can weigh the effects before approving it. A home is considered an asset by many that they may use to provide for their financial security in retirement. By locating this cell phone tower in the middle of the neighborhood, within 100’ of some homes, you are threatening their financial security and future with a counter-benefit of better cell-phone reception.

Dan Hofstatter

Dear Mrs Heller,

We can’t believe that your administration IS STUPID ENOUGH TO EVEN CONSIDER ALLOWING A CANCER CAUSING TOWER TO BE PLACED IN THE HEART OF A RESIDENTIAL AREA OF WOODBRIDGE!

Surely money is not as important as even one loss of life. Everyone knows 5G towers are serious Health Hazards.

WE WISH TO HAVE OUR OPPOSITION TO THIS INSANITY RECORDED.

DR JAMES V AND BARBARA A BOSCO
24 Old Still Rd. Woodbridge residents for 48 years.

October 14, 2020
Board of Selectman Meeting

Dear First Selectman Heller and Members of the Board,

We are writing in vehement opposition to the proposal for a 144 ft. cell phone tower to be located at 118 Newton Road and to be accessed from Soundview Drive. We have lived at 15 Soundview Drive for over twenty-five years and the tower would be right next-door and would directly abut and impinge upon our residential property. We never could have imagined that such a project could possibly be proposed. This would drastically alter the residential neighborhood we chose to live in and change it into a commercial environment. Among other things, this would negatively affect property values and will then ultimately lower the town’s tax base. We strongly believe that this proposed site would neither be an appropriate nor a morally conscieousable location.
We are seeking the town’s support (which has been provided by other municipalities in similar situations) in organizing, representing, and promoting a unified front on behalf of its residents in strong opposition to this proposal. We are requesting a commitment from the town to obtain legal representation that has the requisite expertise and familiarity with this specialized area of the law in order to make our case and defeat this proposal. Finally, we are asking the town to either have Verizon use new technology that can be added on to already existing sources, or to find an alternative site for this 144 ft cell tower, preferably one on property owned by the town so that it can reap the financial rewards from this tower.

We believe it is only right that the town support and protect our interests to ensure that our neighborhood remains the quiet, safe, and beautiful area that it currently is. On a daily basis, several times a day, people from all over our town take walks and jog down our street, parents stroll their babies, people walk their dogs, kids ride their bikes, some stop and play in the cul-de-sac, that’s what it’s all about! This tower would completely change the landscape, appeal, beautiful setting and our reasons for choosing this location to make our home.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we implore you to do anything and everything necessary to get this application withdrawn. Thank you for your expeditious attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

Mark and Shelly Greengarden
15 Soundview Drive

Re: Question regarding proposed cell tower 118 Newtown Rd. Woodbridge

Please read during the public comments segment of the Board of Selectman meeting scheduled for 10/14/20 at 5pm:

My family recently relocated to Woodbridge to enjoy the open spaces the town has to offer. However, with the proposed cell tower location being so close to my home, we are concerned for our children in regards to the long-term health effects from radio-frequency (RF) waves. In fact, The American Cancer Society has stated, “Most expert organizations agree that more research is needed to help clarify [the presence of notable health effects], especially for any possible long-term effects [caused by RF waves]”. Having two young children, this is NOT a risk our family is willing to take. Therefore, should the tower come to fruition, we will relocate our place of residence as well as my husbands’ practice. Woodbridge would lose a young family as well as a practicing physician in a town with an already scarce commercial infrastructure.

With this said, what precautionary measures are being taken in consideration of the emittance of RF waves in a residential neighborhood? Additionally, what is your stance regarding the dangerous health effects the tower would have on Woodbridge residents?

Sincerely, Brian & Jessica Hollander – concerned residents – Burnt Swamp Road
I propose the following questions:
Why and how was the cell tower site on Newton Road chosen, rather than a location in a less heavily populated area such as the water company properties in the Northeast corner of Woodbridge?

Given that the Town of Woodbridge enjoys no legal jurisdiction over the location of cell towers within its borders, what role (if any) will the Town play at the State level meeting on October 22nd?

If the State Committee on October 22nd chooses the Newton Road site, what recourse, if any, does the Town of Woodbridge retain, if its citizens remain opposed to the Newton Road location?

Thank you very much,
Robert Giebisch

Dear Ms. Heller,

Please consider these points against the plan for Cellco to build Woodbridge North 2 cell tower at 118 Newton Road:

I) ISSUES WITH THE TECHNICAL REPORT PROVIDED BY THE APPLICANT

Please note the following issues with the technical information supplied by Robinson Cole in correspondence to the town of Woodbridge dated July 17, 2020.

1) From the coverage plots presented in Attachment 2 the following significant cell-signal contributors are omitted.
   Whether these are provided by Cellco or not our phones rely on them in the northern part of town.
   • Cell tower at junction of Rt.34 and Rt.15 (a.k.a. Ogg Meadow Road) in Orange
     Signal from this antenna is detected along North-South portion of Rt. 114 and also
     further up on N. Racebrook Rd, Forest Glenn and Soundview Drive.
   • Cell tower a top of West Rock Ridge
     This signal is detectable along Amity Road (63), Burnt Swamp, Newton Road and
     Seymour Road (67), Orchard Road, Soundview Drive
   • Golf Club at Oak Lane in Woodbridge
     Signal from this tower is detected along southern part of Rt.114 up to Ansonia Road
     Rt.243

2) The origin of the data used in generation of the coverage maps is not revealed.

3) No actual empirical data was supplied.

II) EXISTING COVERAGE FROM THE USER PERSPECTIVE VERSUS UNREALISTIC PICTURE
    PRESENTED BY THE APPLICANT

The picture presented in Attachment 6 is in stark contrast with my experience while living in this area for six years. The Robinson Cole document reads on page 2 of Attachment 6: “These existing facilities currently provide little or no reliable wireless service in the area around the proposed Woodbridge North 2 Facility location. These gaps in reliable wireless service and signal level deficiencies persist along portions of Route 63, 67, and 114”.
I live on Soundview Drive not far from the proposed North 2 Facility. I move frequently through routes 67, 114, 313 and 63. I never experience cell signal degradation or inability to conduct a phone call anywhere in this area.

In the past, more than a year or two ago, I occasionally experienced a call degradation or a drop while moving through the Burnt Swamp Road. For some time now a year or so I no longer experience any call problems even while driving through Burnt Swamp. I’m using the same iPhone-5 now upgraded to Modem Firmware 11.80.00 and IOS 10.3.4 and I use Verizon for service.

In the last couple of days, we conducted an experiment. We configured our phones to display cell signal power in dBm. We monitored cell signal power while driving in the neighborhoods of Rt.63, Rt.67, Rt. 313 and Rt.114. When power appeared to be low, we pulled over and made a phone call and conducted internet browsing. Every time without a problem. Furthermore, we did not find any areas without cell signal coverage. Based on my experiment I can conclude that the area in question has cell signal coverage of sufficient quality to allow for effective phone calls and for web browsing and text messaging activities.

This stark differences in assessments should not be glanced over.

IV) IS THE EXISTING EQUIPMENT CONFIGURED TO WORK OPTIMALLY?

It is well known that systems including software-based systems such as cellular telephony are vulnerable during transition stages. In the cellular telephony there exists a concept of handover where a call is passed from one cell antenna to another. A call connection as well as the conversation content must be passed seamlessly. This requires that the equipment of various vendors and various generations must interoperate to complete the transition. We should therefore ask the vendor for the following information:

Is the equipment used in cell towers by various vendors including Cellco tested for interoperability?
If yes, then to what standards, how often and who conducts the test?
Are granular test results available for review?
Does Cellco have a list of known issues with the equipment they install?
Is a list of known issues and bugs available for review?
Do they have ability to enter newly found issues into a database?
Do they know who maintains the database and fixes bugs?
How often are firmware or software updates performed and by whom?
Who is responsible for the hardware?
How often is the equipment upgraded?

III) CELL TOWERS SERVING THE NORTHERN PART OF TOWN

We were able to identify the cell towers carrying Verizon signal in the northern part of Woodbridge. Those towers are listed below starting at Old Amity Road in the North and counting counterclockwise:

1) Old Amity Road in Bethany
2) Progress Drive in Seymour
3) 1 Deerfield Road in Ansonia
4) Junction of Rt.34 and Rt.15 at exit 58 (a.k.a. Ogg Meadow Road) in Orange
5) Golf Club at Oak Lane in Woodbridge (signal detected along Rt.114 reaching up to Ansonia Road Rt.243)
6) Pease Road (Jeremy Garden Ln) in Woodbridge  
7) Woodfield Road in Woodbridge  
8) West Rock Ridge in Hamden

Note: We did not detect Verizon signal from the following cell towers:  
- Congregational church on Meeting Lane in Woodbridge  
- Litchfield Turnpike opposite Dawson Lake in Woodbridge

V) WEST ROCK RIDGE CELL SITE TO BE DECOMMISSIONED

West Rock Ridge cell site is uniquely positioned to provide coverage vast areas of the eastern part of Woodbridge including the northern part of Litchfield Turnpike. Because of the topology it appears impossible to parallel this coverage from the proposed North 2 cell tower location. Cellco should renew their lease and continue to operate from West Rock Ridge location.

VI) ALTERNATE SITE SHOULD BE AWAY FROM THE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Soundview drive is a residential neighborhood it is not a place for industrial infrastructure. Please help to identify a site away from residential area. Some examples are:  
1) Water Authority land along Sperry Road in Woodbridge  
2) Existing Antenna tower near the police station  
3) On town-owned property  
4) Elderslie Preserve

Thank you

Gregory Karwowski  
10 Soundview Drive  
Woodbridge CT 06525

In regards to the cell tower proposal:

I would like to ask how the town could receive this notice in July, and at no time did the residents hear about this from the town. Nothing in the Woodbridge paper, no notice to any town committees? From my understanding, the residents directly adjoining this property, and those within several hundred feet were never noticed. I have to think there is a requirement to do so. I would have to do so to build a shed. While this location may or not be the best location for this tower, I would think this is reasonable for town residents to be informed of this.

Did the town explore other locations that might be town property? The private property owner of this proposed location is likely to have significant long-term income that could be generated by the town. These leases typically equate to ~$1MM value to the property owner for 1/4 acre. How could the town not look to have this located on town property?

In regards to the Woodbridge Country Club property, what is the total dollar amount the town has spent in legal fees, consultants, etc., considering offers, evaluating the feasibility of a sale, land use studies, etc, etc.? Seems to me the residents of the town keep legitimately rejecting
sales proposals and the town keeps spending money to push proposals. I would like to hear the total amount we have spent.

Lastly, With a fair housing organization making significant approaches to put high density housing in residential neighborhoods, how come I have to hear about this from an out of town newspaper? Again, I read in the Woodbridge paper from the First Selectman about Flu clinics and other rather minor events, and nothing on a cell tower or major zoning changes to allow for high density housing?

Kevin Tatro
30 Orchard Rd
Woodbridge.

I am strongly opposed to the proposed Newton Road cell tower. This is not appropriate to build in the middle of a residential neighborhood. It would also be better to build on property owned by the town, so that the town could benefit from the income.

I would also like to note that the email address for public comments on the draft agenda for this meeting (available at: https://woodbridgect.org/AgendaCenter/Board-of-Selectmen-3) is incorrect. Thus, many residents of the town were likely deprived of the ability to comment on this and other proposals discussed at this meeting.

-Steven Kleinestein, 62 Forest Glen Dr, Woodbridge, CT 06525

Greetings Gerry,

First thank you for the confirmation of your receiving my previous communication you sent to me last week. I just received your email regarding tonight’s BOS meeting and would appreciate your forwarding the following to the Board members.

I have attached two photos: The first is the proposed cell tower sighting balloon aloft; smack in the middle and taller than any surrounding trees looking out the north side of our home. The second is said balloon in one of my trees after their test; obviously not a good harbinger of their construction ethics and practices we would have to deal with.

It is hard to scale drawings when they send you an 8.5x11 inch copy of the “ABUTTERS PLAN” which has scales only for 22x34 and 11x17. However, with my scale ruler the best I can figure is Elizabeth’s and my home’s property is about 60 feet from the south east corner of the proposed lease area. Obviously this is extremely close to our home which is located on under two acres, and it would be visible from anywhere on our property. This obviously guarantees abysmal chances of being able to market our property, by dramatically reducing its value; even though that is not our objective by any means—would you buy a residence looking at the proposed monstrosity?

Plus the fact that as I intend to utilize the property as a small farm, I would not be comfortable working outside all day next to something that is similar to a mono-tower, measuring over 2000 microwatts per meter of radiation by a High Frequency Analyzer from around the same distance, which I understand is twice the US safety limit, and I assume this tower will be set up for 5G which emits even more electromagnetic radiation at higher frequencies. Obviously, with the short notice of this proposal I have not had much time to research this, and hold no degree in electronics, but do not like the possibilities.
Please take this into consideration piloting through this ordeal.
Respectfully,
Timothy Mulherin
Elizabeth Avery Crafts
110 Newton Road

To First Selectman, Deputy First Selectman and Board of Selectman,
I am writing to indicate my strong opposition to the proposed cell tower to be located off of Newton Road. I do so as a property owner residing in the neighborhood and as someone deeply concerned with the safety, esthetics and property values in our neighborhood. This tower should NOT be erected in this purely residential neighborhood.
Thank you for your attention.

Barry L. Zaret, MD
37 Spoke Drive,
Woodbridge

Re Proposed multi-family housing – 2 Orchard Road

Perhaps one of the issues that became front and center for my view was that there was a statement given implying that Woodbridge segregated those of color from living here by virtue of their being the populace of the low income constituent. This in itself is racist and it depicts Woodbridge as intentionally insulating “the priviledged” from those of color. This would additionally suggest that those of color would not be part of a “priviledged” segment of citizens.
And now here’s the part that gets me fiercely upset… We were selected as the “test case” from amongst others named as more affluent towns. Perhaps this is secondary to our being a smaller town which would, in their damn heads, likely not be fortified enough to defend itself and would surrender to the owners of this attack on our zoning OR…might it actually be an offense on a town which has a definite large presence of those of us from the Jewish Faith who are antisemitically viewed as “priviledged”?
The other towns mentioned do not come close to the Jewish population demographics .With the generalizations regarding those of color noted by this group, it would not be plausible to dismiss this reasoning as well.
I don’t see an assault on Fairfield County or other Shoreline towns being orchestrated .I wonder where They live!
In closing, permit (not intended as a pun) me to recall how appreciative I was to become part of CUPOP in order to achieve the involvement in preserving our public and/ or open spaces . That remains a constant.
While my thoughts continue regarding a potential prejudice towards assumed “priviledged” status for those of the Jewish Faith, I hope to be on the active end of resisting this proposed offensive !
As always sincerely,
Leslie Lyons

Several items of concern
o: Board of Selectman
From: Debbie and William Barbieri
October Hill Rd, Woodbridge

Please accept this written public comment in regards to a few agenda items:

1. We would like to express our concern over a cell tower proposed for 118 Newton Rd/Soundview Dr. Although we welcome improved service, a residential zone like that location is not the best placement.

The Town of Woodbridge should be more proactive and work with tower operators to locate towers where the town can receive the income. Why hasn't the town looked for these opportunities? The Transfer station, Pease Rd fields, the Country Club, or the Public Works areas are all better locations - the towers would not be visual pollution, ruin the character of a neighborhood, and expose residents to constant noise, and possible harmful health effects.

2. The proposal for a multi-family housing project for 2 Orchard Rd is ill-fitted for that location. Having four multi-bedroom units on one residential lot is very irresponsible. There is not ample space for multiple septic systems and wells - and if sharing those systems, it will sure to be trouble for those residents as well as their neighbors. So 4 wells, 4 septic systems - that does not make sense for a property of that size. It can't work.

Also, there is not ample space for parking for the high number of vehicles that 4 multi-bedroom units (and their guests) would generate, and street parking on Newton or Orchard would not be safe for those residents, other drivers, and the many walkers in the area. Overnight street parking is prohibited and even day street parking would impede snow plowing efforts, sight lines, and mail delivery.

Affordable housing is important, and should be created. A location where either public water/sewer is available, or a much larger piece of property where the utilities and parking can be created in a responsible manner is the better option.

3. In regards to usage of the Old Firehouse, we don't think the town should operate a Fitness Center in that location. It is yet another expense that could be trimmed. Operating a fitness center for such a small number of patrons (at a loss) is wasteful. There are over a dozen places for fitness within a 10 minute drive. The space should be rented out for a coffee shop, co-working space, and community room usage. Please do not rely on dated studies, and please think about ways to bring residents together, and creating some revenue for the town.

Thank you.

Dear Beth,
My name is Brian Daley. I am an employee of Yale University and a resident of Woodbridge on Soundview Dr. My family and I have truly enjoyed living in this community. We met once at Citrus, the restaurant in
Milford. It was right after your election and my 8 year old son recognized you and wanted badly to meet you. He introduced himself and you invited him to visit the Town Offices. He still talks about meeting you to this day.

I do wish I was writing this email in better times and under better circumstances. We recently found out that there are plans to have a 144 foot cell tower and a 50 x 50 foot compound for the tower directly adjacent to our property on Soundview Dr. Apparently this has been under consideration for months and we just heard about it this week.

This proposed cell tower will be located directly in a residential cul-de-sac neighborhood as the lot proposed for the tower on Newton Rd also abuts properties on Soundview Dr as well as Forest Glen Dr.

I do believe the placement of this tower is inconsistent with the values of our community and certainly the values within our neighborhood. The proposed cell tower will be feet from the cul-de-sac on Soundview Dr where all of our surrounding neighbors take their daily walks and the neighborhood children play.

Not only do I believe that the placement of this tower is inconsistent with our community values, but in a small community that relies heavily on property tax I feel the placement of the tower will have a drastic negative impact on the surrounding property values, including but not limited to properties on Soundview Dr, Forest Glenn Rd, Newton Rd, Orchard Rd, October Hill Rd, and Penny Lane neighborhoods.

The Impact of Cell Phone Towers on House Prices in Residential Neighborhoods, was published in The Appraisal Journal of the Appraisal Institute in 2006. The Appraisal Institute is the largest global professional organization for appraisers with 91 chapters.

The study indicated that:

- The results of the sales analysis showed prices of properties were reduced by around 21% after a cell phone base station was built in the neighborhood.


- 79% said under no circumstances would they ever purchase or rent a property within a few blocks of a cell tower or antennas.
- 88% said that under no circumstances would they ever purchase or rent a property with a cell tower or group of antennas on top of, or attached to, the apartment building.
- 94% said a nearby cell tower or group of antennas would negatively impact interest in a property or the price they would be willing to pay for it.
- 94% said a cell tower or group of antennas on top of, or attached to, an apartment building would negatively impact interest in the apartment building or the price they would be willing to pay for it.
- 95% said they would opt to buy or rent a property that had zero antennas on the building over a comparable property that had several antennas on the building.
- 89% said they were generally concerned about the increasing number of cell towers and antennas in their residential neighborhood.

To say we are disheartened by the recent developments of this proposed cell tower is an understatement, but rather my family is devastated.
As we fall in the large percentage of people who would never live within a few blocks of a cell tower, let alone directly next to one I am forced to consider what options are available for my family. Without a doubt, if push came to shove we would abandon our home and deal with the financial consequences rather than have our son grow up next to this tower. I never believed I would ever have to entertain the thought that “Moving to Woodbridge could be the biggest mistake of my life”.

Sincerely,
Brian Daley

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Brian M. Daley
Clinical Systems Manager
Yale University
School of Medicine
Department of Pathology

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Good Afternoon First Selectman Heller and the Members of the Board,

Please see below previous letters from us for tonight’s Board of Selectmen meeting. I’ve also attached a letter that was delivered recently to the residents of Woodbridge to be included for the public comments segment.

We moved here a few years ago and chose 14 Soundview Drive, the end of a cul-de-sac in the town of Woodbridge for our son, Liam. One of the things many people mentioned about this town was the superior educational system and surrounding peaceful nature views. We enjoy living in a neighborhood where Liam can ride his bike, play basketball or practice hockey drills with his friends. He has made great friends in town and we have been fortunate to connect with many wonderful families. Our hearts broke when we first learned about the proposed cell tower at 118 Newton Road, which would use Soundview Drive as the access point road. We further learned that the cell tower was first considered four years ago and that it was brought to the town’s attention again in May 2020 before Cellco/Verizon submitted the letter proposing the monopole on 118 Newton Rd/Soundview Dr. in July 2020. If we knew that our backyard was ever a possibility for a cell tower site, we would NEVER have purchased this close to one. In addition to the visual and noise pollution, there are many unknown long term effects of living close to a cell tower. If the construction of this cell tower is approved, we will do what is best for our family and move. We have heard similar statements from other Woodbridge families.

What we are hearing from some of you and other residents, most people DO NOT want to live near a cell tower and most of us DID NOT move to Woodbridge to have our children ride their bikes and play with their friends with a cell tower hovering from above. We urge the town to think about your children, your families and what would you do if this was in your neighborhood. We are asking the town to do the right thing and speak up. We need the town to communicate our strong opposition to Cellco/Verizon and find alternate locations within town that are not in a residential neighborhood. Please do not let one person’s desire
overshadow the interests of this beautiful residential neighborhood and the lives of those who call it home.

Sincerely,
Brian and Chanmany Daley
14 Soundview Drive
Dear Woodbridge Neighbors,

We recently learned a cell phone tower was being proposed in our quiet, residential neighborhood when someone noticed a large, red balloon hovering in the sky. We since learned this was Cellco/Verizon conducting a balloon test to determine the location of this tower (see picture to right).

The 144 ft steel tower would be topped with antennas, radio heads, and placed on a platform housing propane tanks, generators, and fans that will be running at all times to monitor temperatures. The tower would stand in clear view at the end of Soundview Drive and be visible to surrounding neighborhoods.

**Why should you care?**
If this can happen in our neighborhood, it can happen in yours! We believe in a smart and sensible telecommunication policy for Woodbridge. Placing an industrial structure in a residential area does not benefit the community, but rather decreases property values and burdens residents with visual and noise pollution. We do **not** agree with wireless companies being able to construct towers wherever they want, without input from neighboring residents. Oversight of these towers is with the CT Siting Council (“CSC”) where inconceivably 96% of applications submitted are approved. Local zoning and building ordinances do not apply.

**The solution?**
The answer lies in finding alternate, viable sites that are NOT in residential neighborhoods. It is within our town’s power to identify alternate sites for consideration. A tower on town owned property as opposed to private property would generate revenue for Woodbridge.

We need your strong support NOW! We need to protect our privacy, property values, safety of our children, and the preservation of our neighborhoods. **Time is running out** to stop the application from being filed on October 15, 2020!

**How can you help?**
Urge our town officials to actively protect our residential neighborhoods, communicate our concerns and look for alternate sites within Woodbridge and in surrounding towns.

1. **Sign the petition.** Go to [https://www.nocelltowerplease.com/](https://www.nocelltowerplease.com/)
2. We ask that you call and/or email the Board of Selectmen and our State Representatives. Town and state contacts are provided on the back of this letter. (Please email NoWoodbridgeCellTower@gmail.com to request a sample letter to send to elected officials.)
3. Attend the Board of Selectmen Meeting scheduled on October 14, 2020.
5. Fight to pass local zoning ordinances re: telecommunication sites. Many cities across the US have already rebuffed Verizon because of the negative impact and harm from placing industrial, commercial structures in residential areas.

With appreciation for your much-needed support,
Concerned Woodbridge Neighbors
No Woodbridge Cell Tower
P.O. Box 3688
1449 Whalley Ave
New Haven, CT 06525
To the Members of the Board of Selectmen

Re: Proposal to Construct a Wireless Telecommunications Facility at 118 Newton Road

Dear First Selectman Heller and Members of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen:

I write on behalf of myself, my family, and the more than 300 individuals who signed an online petition protesting the installation of a new cell tower in Woodbridge. My family and I live at 16 Forest Glen Drive; as such, our property directly abuts the site of the proposed tower. We will have a direct view of the tower, based upon the balloon demonstration from a few weeks ago.

Not only will the tower be visible from my property, it will be visible from most parts of town. It will be an eyesore and will destroy scenic views throughout town. No matter where we go, when we look up the tower will be staring back at us. The material provided by the developer as part of its July 17, 2020 submission reveals that the analysis of the proposed impact of the tower on the community is incomplete. The submission acknowledges that its analysis regarding visibility is preliminary only, and I have not seen any further analysis following the balloon demonstration.

The tower will, of course, cause a decline in the value of my property and all surrounding properties. These declines in property values will result in a decline in property tax revenue.

Importantly, there is no need for this tower at this location. Cell phone reception throughout town is already adequate. The developer wishes to provide “enhanced reliable wireless services”. That is an admission that the current services are already adequate.

The developer has not yet done a study of the potential adverse environmental effects or considered the impact upon scenic, historic, or recreational activities. As quoted by longtime Woodbridge resident Dr. Bernie Siegel “the cell tower offers more potential problems related to exposure and health then benefits to Woodbridge residents, the science behind its dangers are real and known.”

The developer should be made to look for a more suitable site for this tower. They identified seven sites that were investigated, but they have failed to indicate why the Newtown Road site is superior to the other sites, given that their investigation is incomplete.

Accordingly, we ask that the Town commit to opposing the development of this tower before the Connecticut Siting Council and other administrative agencies and in the Superior Court.
Thank you for your consideration in this matter vital to this town.

Sincerely,

Kristy M. Laydon
Jeffrey E. Laydon