



TOWN OF YARMOUTH

1146 ROUTE 28, SOUTH YARMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS 02664-4492
Telephone (508) 398-2231, Ext. 1276, Fax (508) 398-2365

Planning
Board

June 2, 2021

Cape Cod Commission - DRI Subcommittee

Sent via e-mail to: regulatory@capecodcommission.org

Re: Blue Sky Towers Monopole, Yarmouth (CCC File No. 21005)

Dear DRI Subcommittee Members,

This letter is in regard to the proposed 120' monopole wireless communication tower with ground equipment proposed for 1044 Route 28 in South Yarmouth.

The Town of Yarmouth and the Planning Board have been working diligently to beautify and improve Route 28, our main commercial corridor over the past several decades. Significant progress has been made with many zoning amendments being passed by our community to promote quality redevelopment along Route 28. The passage of the Village Centers Overlay District (VCOD) in 2012 was a particularly significant piece of zoning that shows Yarmouth's commitment to promoting redevelopment opportunities that would improve the aesthetics of our community. Improving Route 28 was also one of the key visions identified for our community during the initial phase of the Community Visioning Project undertaken by the Planning Board this past fall.

Route 28 is also included in the first phase of our proposed municipal wastewater project. Municipal sewers are anticipated to provide significant redevelopment opportunities and promote economic redevelopment along Route 28. Route 28 is on the cusp of significant redevelopment opportunities.

Although we appreciate and understand the need for reliable wireless coverage, it cannot be done at the expense of the progress Yarmouth has made to improve Route 28. The 120' cell tower as currently designed with exposed antennas and the visibility from public ways undermines our community vision and is not suited for this location. As presented, the Planning Board finds this proposal entirely unacceptable.

The lack of photo-simulations at the Forest Road/Route 28 intersection, where the tower would be most visible, shows a lack of transparency on the part of the applicant. These photo simulations should be provided to show the true level of visibility from public ways.

The Board also questions the supposition that the existing wooded area would provide sufficient screening for a 120' tower. The existing wooded area is not dense enough, tall enough or large enough to provide the level of screening suggested in the application. The location of the pole adjacent to the parking lot, along with the removal of trees will make this area highly visible from Route 28.

Blue Sky Towers Monopole
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The Board questioned the lack of any other location or locations for cell facilities that would help to address the gap in coverage, noting that the 70' concealed monopole cell tower across the street at 1045 Route 28 has two open slots. Other operators use a variety of wireless infrastructure to meet their coverage needs while being less visually intrusive (i.e. lower height concealed monopoles, antennas in church steeples or on top of utility poles).

The Board had significant concerns with the proposed design aesthetics of the pole in such a prominent location along Route 28. More imagination, effort, and thoughtful design of the tower is needed to make the cell tower remotely palatable. Other communities and cell tower carriers have worked hard to develop creative ways to camouflage cell towers and make them an attraction, rather than detracting from the area and the community. The applicant should be required to provide other, more creative options that camouflage the cell tower.

The ground equipment, generators, and LP gas tanks for the four carriers will be located on concrete pads behind a 6' chain link fence with 3 strands of barbed wire. This type of installation is more suitable for an isolated industrial area and not along our commercial corridor. Although screening with 4' to 6' tall evergreen trees, are proposed, the ground equipment will be visible from Route 28 at the access gate. Again, more thoughtful design and site location is needed to adequately conceal these utilitarian components.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this project. Please contact me if you have any questions, or require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joanne Crowley", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Joanne Crowley, Chair
Yarmouth Planning Board

cc: Kathy Williams, Town Planner
Bob Whritenour, Town Administrator
Board of Selectmen