



**Planning Board  
Academy Building  
503 Province Road  
Gilmanton, New Hampshire 03237  
603.267.6700**

**Approved: 05/12/2011**

Desiree Tumas, Administrator  
Mark Fougere, Certif. Planner  
Nancy Girard, Chair  
John Funk, Vice-chair  
Rachel Hatch, Select-Rep  
Dan Hudson, Member  
Marty Martindale, Member  
Dave Russell, Member  
John Weston, Member  
Jacqueline Heath, Alternate

**Joint Hearing w/the ZBA Agenda  
April 21, 2011**

**Open Meeting**

*Call to Order @ 7:04 pm  
Introduction of Board Members  
Explanation of Joint Meeting Procedures*

**Member Attendance:** Nancy Girard, Chair; John Funk, Vice-chair; Rachel Hatch, Select Rep.; Dan Hudson, Member; Marty Martindale, Member; David Russell, Member; Jackie Heath, Alternate seated in the absence of Member John Weston; Mark Fougere, Town Planner; Desiree Tumas, Administrator.

**Municipal Attendance:** Phil O'Brien, Police Chief.

**Public Attendance:** (As signed in) Peter Cooke, John Weaver, Brenda McBride, Jonathan McNeil, Brett Currier, John Krysa, Westie Krysa, Donna M. White, illegible signature, Ernest R. Hughes, Debra Waldron, Jerry Waldron.

**Public Hearing**

**Joint Public Hearing – ZBA Case # 03-2011 Planning Case# 0511 GMR Holding of NH LLC, applicant, Christopher Hottel, owner (Tax Map 411, Lots 27 & 28)** - have applied to the Planning Board for Site Plan Review in which they seek approval to construct a 120' multi-tenant monopole wireless telecommunications facility within a 60' x 60' fenced compound area. Proposed accessed by an approximately 700' long and 10' wide gravel driveway. A Special Exception from ZBA is required by Gilmanton Zoning Article III-K4c(2)(b) to be able to erect a Class 2 Cell Tower in area 4. Property located at the end of Copp Road in Gilmanton, in the Rural Zone, Map/Lot # 411-27.

ZBA acting Chair Carolyn Baldwin explained the ZBA did not have a full board but did have a quorum to move forward with the meeting. C. Baldwin also explained that although her term has expired and she didn't seek reappointment, NH RSA's provide that a ZBA Member may continue to serve until another Member is appointed.

Peter Cooke, Project Manager and Representative of GMR Holdings of NH LLC, stated he understood a full ZBA Board had not been seated and wishes to proceed with the hearing based on the established quorum.

P. Cooke explained, Green Mountain Realty Corporation, real estate affiliate of Green Mountain Communications of Pembroke, New Hampshire, manages GMR Holdings of NH LLC. A family-owned company, Green Mountain Communications has been a premier construction contracting and service provider to the wireless industry throughout New England since 1993.

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Currently the company owns sixteen (16) wireless communications sites with additional sites now in development.

AT&T operates a nationwide wireless communications system that offers enhanced features such as caller ID, voice mail, e-mail and superior call clarity. AT&T is in the process of building out a national network as required by AT&T's license issued by the FCC. By filling a significant coverage gap, the telecommunications services in and around Gilmanton and throughout the State of NH.

The Applicant proposes to construct a multi-tenant wireless communications facility within a 60' x 60' fenced compound area in a heavily wooded portion of one of two lots owned by the Hottel family near the peak of Copp Hill. Access and supporting utilities will be taken from Copp Hill Road on and approximately 700' long and 10' wide gravel driveway to be constructed by the Applicant. The site will be served by underground electricity and telephone services brought to common points within the compound area. An 8' chain link security fence with solid slats in order to screen and protect the site improvements will surround the compound.

Also proposed are 4-concrete pads to construct 11' x 20' shingled equipment shelters to house the radio equipment and generator.

The Applicant proposes to construct a 120' monopole that would be painted brown from the ground to the top of the surrounding tree cover and a nonreflecting gray for the remainder. Multiple tenant antenna mounts provide for collocation on the pole and ground spaces for both shelter and equipment space is also represented on the plans. One of the shelters and the top antenna mount shown will be constructed and occupied by AT&T, a co-applicant.

The Applicant has also offered to provide space on the pole at no cost to the Town of Gilmanton for future installation of public safety antennas. The allocated space on the pole is not indicated on the plan at this time.

With regard to alternative site analysis; no existing buildings provide enough height for acceptable signal coverage levels along Routes 140 and 107 in the town center, the targeted coverage area. Historic districts and regulatory constraints will not allow for the extensive modifications to any of the buildings in the center that would provide sufficient height and space for one or multiple wireless tenants to provide acceptable wireless coverage.

The proposed site is within one of the five allowed areas and is the overlay location closest to the town center. Within this overlay zone there are only five property owners and all five were contacted by the Applicant to determine their interest in leasing property for the erection of a wireless communication facility. Two responded positively and of those only one, the Hottel property, is large enough to meet all required setback areas as outlined within the ordinance. Also, it is the only property in the allowed overlay zone that meets all setback and scenic vista requirements within the ordinance.

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The following materials are also provided:

1. Radio Frequency Report provided by AT&T.
2. Preliminary results summarizing the results of the NEPA checklist screening. A final report will be completed once the snow has melted and site archeological and environmental site conditions can be confirmed.
3. Topo Map showing the two existing tower sites closest to the proposed pole. One in Belmont and the other in Gilmanton. Both locations are already occupied by AT&T and the coverage they provide are included.
4. Maps indicating the current coverage as well as the coverage following the installation of the tower and AT&T antenna.
5. Report dated 01/11/11, from ProTerra Design Group LLC, the project site engineer, describing the existing tree cover on the subject property.
6. Visual impact assessment report dated 01/27/11, prepared by A&D Klumb Environmental, LLC.

J. Funk, Vice-chair questioned the two colors of the pole and if coverage would be provided to the Academy Building; it was explained that the lower brown color is to blend into the natural landscape and the non-reflective gray is also used for blending with the skyline.

Upon review of the coverage maps, it was concluded that there would be coverage provided to the Academy Building.

Brief discussion regarding the use of a tree pole that concluded the height of the proposed tower will not rise above the surrounding tree line to justify the use of a tree pole. The proposed height is based on the canopy height and field measurements.

P. Cooke explained the view-shed study was included with the submission and was circulated for the attending public to view.

The height of 120' is the property owner's preference and is more than adequate for the market. A balloon test will be scheduled to show the height of the proposed cell tower.

ZBA Member, I. Willard stated concern regarding the existing condition of Copp Road and the damage that will be caused with the truck traffic needed to develop the access road and the tower site.

It was explained the road agent and P. Cooke would be meeting to review the existing conditions, what off-site improvements will be needed as well as repairs and inspection of the road at the completion of the tower construction.

ZBA Alternate Member, W. Gray stated concern regarding the steep grade of the access road. P. Cooke explained the grade is not an issue with the 4 x 4 vehicles used to visit the site once a month to test the generator and additional times as needed.

Chair Girard called for further Board discussion, hearing none; opened the public discussion.

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Members of the public questioned the following:

1. What is the extent of electromagnetic signal emissions?
  - *It was explained the antenna uses low power high frequency transmission and FCC Licensing dictates the allowable Radio Frequency. The proposed antenna will use approximately 6% of the allowable RF.*
2. What is the elevation of the site?
  - *The approximate elevation of the site is 1336'.*
3. What is the diameter of the pole at ground level?
  - *The base is triangular and measures 15' x 15' x 15'*
4. Will abutters when in use hear the generator?
  - *The AT&T generator will be housed in a shed and the sound would be minimal as the residents are located well below the site, the tower site will be fenced with slats through the fence and will also reduce the sound as will the tree cover. Although, AT & T does use an onsite generator, not all carriers do.*
  - *Mr. Cooke will provide comparisons of the noise emissions.*
5. Why is there a need to seek ZBA approval for a Special Exception?
  - *To take advantage of the peak of the hill, otherwise there would be a loss of 10'-15' of height.*
  - *C. Hottel plans to build a home near the site and he wanted the tower to be up slope from the potential locations to build the house.*
  - *Natural vegetation was also considered.*
6. How many carriers would be permitted to be located on the pole?
  - *The proposed pole would facilitate a total of 4-carriers. The proposed heights are at 120' (AT&T), 110' (By Others), 100' (By Others), 90' (By Others).*
    - *It was noted that as many as 6-carriers could locate on the pole if the height were to be extended to a height of 140'.*
    - *The Applicant is not interested in extending the height beyond the 120' pole proposed.*
    - *Regardless of the height, municipal communications are usually whip Omni directional type antenna and are located at the top of the pole.*
    - *Police Chief O'Brien stated the police department would be more interested in a repeater.*
7. Concerns regarding Radio Frequency Emissions.
  - *It was explained that the RF emissions and other health concerns are regulated by the FCC and have no bearing on the final decision of the local land use boards.*
  - *Mr. Cooke reiterated the proposed antenna emits approximate 6% of the allowable power according to the FCC Guidelines for the measurements.*
8. Will guy-wires be needed for the proposed monopole design?
  - *The proposed design and height of the pole do not require guy-wires.*

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9. Will life and safety concerns be addressed?
  - *The shelter is alarmed with entry and smoke alarms and the pole climbing pegs are removed from the ground to a height of 30'.*
  - *The entrance will be gated and locked with a daisy chain. Access will be provided to the police and fire departments.*
10. Where will the utility transformer be located?
  - *The co-op requires that the transformer be located outside the compound. The exact location will be determined when the lines are put in place.*
11. Frequency of tower failure?
  - *There have been a couple towers that have failed due to design flaws at the base of the tower.*
  - *P. Cooke is unaware of any tower failures in New England.*
  - *The structural loads have been upsized in recent years.*
  - *The tower is designed to handle ½ inch ice load.*

Board Members scheduled a Balloon Float test on Saturday April 30, 2011 beginning at 8:00 am and ending at 10:00 am. The subsequent date in case of bad weather will be Saturday May 7, 2011, beginning at 8:00 am ending at 10:00 am.

Planning Board Members will view the balloon float and take pictures if visible to be plotted on a visibility map.

Chair Girard called for further discussion from the Board, hearing none; called for further public discussion.

Members of the public expressed the following additional concerns:

1. What if any improvements will be made to Copp Road, before during and after construction with consideration of the impact of the truck traffic to first clear the path for the 700' access and then the equipment installation and the crane needed to erect the pole? Police Chief O'Brien also stated concern regarding the current condition of Copp Road.
  - *P. Cooke will be meeting with the road agent to address the Copp Road concerns.*
2. How long will construction take?
  - *Construction of the 700' access road should take a couple weeks weather permitting. Construction of the pole should take about 8-weeks. Most of the time will be waiting for the concrete to cure. The other equipment is premade offsite.*
3. Why is the tower proposed to be 120' in height?
  - *C. Hottel explained that he originally wanted to have a 100' tower but that would not be a height sufficient enough over the existing tree canopy to allow for additional carriers to collocate below 100'.*

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4. Will property owners be able to seek abatement, if they now will have a view of the tower?
  - *The view shed will be addressed with the balloon test. The public was encouraged to view the balloon test and take pictures of the balloon.*
  - *Mrs. Tumas will speak to the Assessor and provide the Board with information at the next continued hearing.*

Chair Girard called for further public discussion, hearing none; redirected discussions to the Board for final comment.

Board Members questioned the following:

1. The use of recent technology, which utilized small antenna located on telephone poles, steeples and other structures?
  - *It was explained that the technology is better suited for urban areas where there is a direct line from tower to tower to tower with the smaller antenna providing gap coverage.*
2. What if any battery backup is provided?
  - *Batteries are in a rack configuration built for expansion. There are 12 battery packs, 3 stacks in 4 rows of 4 batteries. The batteries last approximately 6-8 hours and provide power to the equipment in the event the generator does not come online. The batteries would provide sufficient power until a technician arrived.*
3. Preservation of Boundary Stonewalls.
  - *Any stonewalls disturbed during development will be done in accordance with state regulations.*

Planning Board Chair Girard and ZBA Acting Chair Baldwin encouraged members of the public to view the application, supporting documents and plans on file at the Town Offices.

Chair Girard called for further discussion, hearing none; entertained a motion to continue the hearing until May 12, 2011.

***Vice-chair Funk moved to continue the Joint Hearing until May 12, 2011, M. Martindale seconded the motion as stated; the motion passed unanimously.***

Chair Girard explained to the public, the hearing would resume on May 12, 2011.

**Adjournment**

***M. Martindale moved to adjourn the Joint Public Hearing at 8:45 pm, D. Russell seconded the motion as stated, the motion passed unanimously.***

Respectfully submitted,

Desiree Tumas  
Planning Administrator