



PLANNING COMMISSION

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

GREENE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
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TO: Greene County Board of Supervisors, Brenda Garton, Interim County Administrator

FROM: Jim Frydl, Planning & Zoning Director
Stephanie Golon, Deputy Planning Director

SUBJECT: **Emergency Communications Tower (Pocosan Mountain)**

DATE: March 14, 2023

Article 21-2-14 (b) of the Greene County Zoning Ordinance provides the regulations for review and approval of communications towers that are county-owned facilities. Subsection (2) requires the Board of Supervisors to provide a written description of public necessity and a detailed description of the proposed tower. These are included in the following pages and are available for public review. The board must also accept public comments on the project for a period not less than 30 Days.

The public comment period begins today 3/14/2023 and will continue until 4/25/2023. During this period, comments can be emailed to planning@gcva.us, or mailed to Greene County Planning, PO Box 358, Stanardsville, VA 22973. Public comments can be made in person at the Board of Supervisors meetings during this period. The meetings will be held in the County Administration Building, 40 Celt Road, Stanardsville, VA 22973 on March 28th, April 11th and April 25th, 2021 starting at 6:30 PM.

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Proposed Emergency Services Communication Tower and Description of Public Need

Greene County is a rural county with mountainous terrain and scattered, remote housing. Our existing emergency communications system was installed in the 1980's. It was the best affordable technology available at that time, but it only provides mobile radio coverage to about 65% of our county. The existing system also has limited connectivity inside structures. This means that there are many times when our first responders cannot talk to dispatch or other responders. The inability to communicate places our first responders in danger and disrupts their ability to provide service.

In 2015 & 2016 the Board of Supervisors, Director of Emergency Services and Sheriff studied the best way to improve our emergency communications. The study identified that the best approach for Greene would be to develop a regional radio system in conjunction with Madison County. This approach maximizes communications coverage, redundancy, and efficiency. Motorola was selected as the vendor to design and build the new radio system to provide provides emergency communication to 95% of Greene County, 95% of the time.

Motorola has identified several existing tower sites that will be modified and two new towers that will be added in order to provide the required coverage. The system engineering has identified each of these tower sites as critical in order to create the network connection required to keep our first responders safe and ensure their ability to serve the citizens. A new tower is needed at parcel 8-(A)-28, located near the end of state maintenance of RT 637, Pocosan Mountain Rd, Stanardsville, VA 22973. The tower will be constructed on a designated utility lot accessed from an access easement North East of the end of state maintenance

The location of the Pocosan tower is critical to the success of the new emergency communications radio system. It will connect the western tower locations northern and the eastern tower locations. Without this relay point the system will not be able to provide coverage. The property for the location is owned by the County of Greene and the tower will be constructed on a 0.05 acre utility lot with a 15' driveway. The tower will be owned and operated by the County of Greene for the purpose of providing emergency services to our citizens and visitors.

The tower will be 120 feet tall. The tower will be constructed as a lattice-work tower and will have a small building for the communications equipment and a back-up generator. The utility lot is wooded and only the trees located in the area of the tower foundation will be removed, allowing the rest of the lot to remain screened with natural forest buffer. Additional screening landscaping shall be added as needed.

Detailed drawings of the location and tower design, including images from the balloon test can be viewed at the Greene County Planning Office, Room 232, 40 Celt Road, Stanardsville, VA 22973. Please call 434-985-5282 for more information.

The Board of Supervisors is holding a public comment period beginning 3/15/2023 and continuing until 4/25/2023. During this period, comments can be emailed to planning@gcva.us, or mailed to Greene County Planning, PO Box 358, Stanardsville, VA 22973. Public comments can be made in person at the Board of Supervisors meetings during this period. The meetings will be held in the County Administration Building, 40 Celt Road, Stanardsville, VA 22973 on March 28th, April 11th, and April 25th, 2023 starting at 6:30 PM.

**RESOLUTION DETERMINING A PUBLIC NECESSITY
FOR A COMMUNICATIONS TOWER**

WHEREAS, Greene County, Virginia has a responsibility to respond to emergency calls received by the Greene County emergency call center; and

WHEREAS, the Greene County emergency call center is tasked with receiving emergency calls from citizens and then communicating details of the emergency to first responders, including fire, rescue, and law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, first responders and the emergency call center rely on radio communications throughout the county; and

WHEREAS, the Greene County Board of Supervisors previously determined that its radio system did not cover large parts of the county and left dead spots where first responders could not communicate with each other or the call center; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors entered into a contract with Motorola to update its radio communication system in order to get better radio coverage throughout the county; and

WHEREAS, in order for the updated radio system to work effectively, additional towers must be installed; and

WHEREAS, in working with Motorola, it was determined that for effective coverage a new tower must be placed on Pocosan Mountain, and shall be located near the end of state maintenance of RT 637, Pocosan Mountain Rd, Stanardsville, VA 22973 also identified as parcel 8-(A)-28, which is owned by The Schmoker Family Trust and a portion of which is leased by the County; and

WHEREAS, the tower will be 120 feet tall and placed on a wooded poortion of the parcel; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Greene County Ordinance 21-2-14, the Greene County Board of Supervisors made all specifications of the project available to the public and accepted comments from the public regarding this project for not less than 30 days; and

WHEREAS, the Greene County Board of Supervisors has determined that for public safety purposes, this telecommunications tower is a public necessity.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Greene County Board of Supervisors hereby resolves that the tower to be built near the end of state maintenance of Rt 637, Pocosan Mountain Road Stanardsville, VA 22973 (tax map parcel 8-(A)-28 shall be built as a matter of public necessity.

**APPROVED BY THE GREENE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON
APRIL 25, 2023.**

**Dale Herring, Chairman
Greene County Board of Supervisors**

ATTEST:

**Brenda Garton, Clerk
Greene County Board of Supervisors**

Recorded Vote:

Steve Bowman _____

Marie Durrer _____

Dale Herring _____

Davis Lamb _____

Abbey Heflin _____