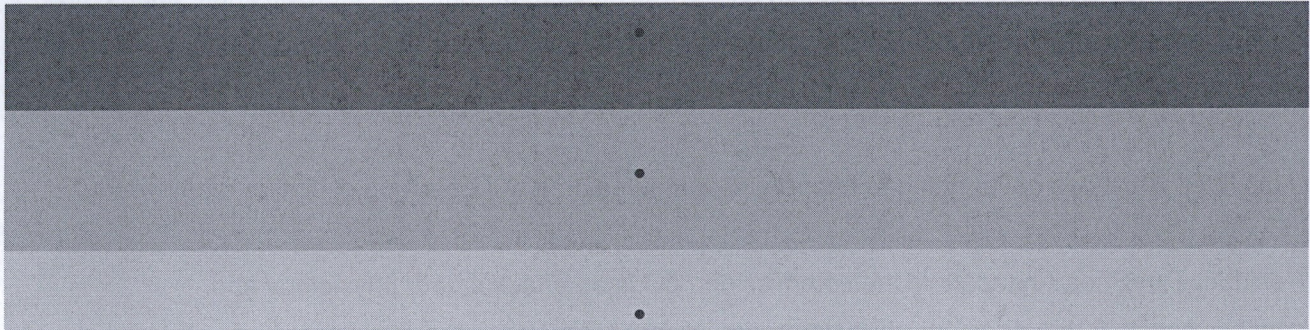


Cell tower atop SOU building OK'd, despite opponents' warnings

BY JOHN DARLING / FOR THE TIDINGS June 27, 2018



A sometimes boisterous crowd pleaded in vain Tuesday for the Ashland Planning Commission to reverse staff approval of a permit for Verizon to put a cellphone tower atop Southern Oregon University's Science Building.

Appellants cited a range of ailments they say are caused by overexposure to the devices, with Alan Rathsam, an engineer, naming tumors, brain and breast cancer, reproductive impairment and bone loss.

However, Commission Chairman Roger Pearce stated that a 1996 Federal Communication Commission rule bars local agencies from considering any health or environmental issues in making decisions about siting of cell towers.

Planners approved the application in May because it met requirements — minimum visual impact, shielded by walls, generates only 21 to 23 decibels (half the limit), offers a co-location option (more devices can be mounted at the same spot) and will have a conditional use permit because it's a bit taller than the 40-foot limit of the building.

Verizon lawyer Mike Connors of Portland called the installation "invisible." When appellants claimed there was no demonstrated need for it, Connors responded there was no criteria for "need" — and "If there was no need, my client would not be doing this. We're not in the business of aggravating neighbors."

Appellants reported many neighbors hadn't been given notice of the tower application, but city planner Derek Severson said residents within 200 feet had been "noticed," twice the area required by state law.

Appellants complained that SOU students, who comprise the bulk of humans exposed to emissions daily, had not been notified — and no students attended the Tuesday hearing. Staff said they didn't know whether students were told. Connors confirmed that notice didn't go out to students. A notice was posted by the sidewalk in front of the building.

Although city policy encourages co-location for new devices, appellants objected, saying it opens the door to further health problems. For the same reasons, they also objected to the possibility Verizon would up the system from 4G to 5G (fifth generation).

"I can't tell you that's never going to happen," Connors said. "It will be a long evolution many years."

Resident TaraShea Ananda told the commission, "5G is an attack on our physiology and consciousness. It threatens our ability to dream, to meditate, and to feel our connection with each other. We don't have to roll over because of what the federal government said in 1996."

No one in the standing-room-only crowd spoke in favor of the tower, though a few said the jury is out, awaiting solid proof of any health dangers. Local physician Amy Monroe said thousands of studies leave her "very worried." Some 55 percent of the studies, she said, say electromagnetic radiation is harmful and 45 percent say there's no health effect, so, she told the commission, "the industry mantra is there's 'no conclusive proof of harm.'"

Resident Darwin Thusius cautioned that an oft-cited article in Scientific American (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/new-studies-link-cell-phone-radiation-with-cancer/>) actually explores strong findings on both sides.

Commissioner Troy Brown chided appellants for their cheers and applause (not allowed at city meetings), adding they "call us on the carpet for something we don't have control over" but didn't show up for an important wildfire prevention hearing, minutes earlier, "over which we have 100 percent control."

An organizer of cell tower opposition, Kelly Marcotulli, said the tower will give off "massive amounts of radiation" that will kill bee colonies, cost the city a lot of money and "cause depopulation all so that people can download a movie in 10 seconds instead of 20 and talk to a cousin in Bend while strolling in Lithia Park."

"We'll fry, right along with bees," she said. "We're guinea pigs for this guy who came in here and threatens our way of life. This is like cigarettes in the '50s, but here, the effects are inescapable."

Teacher Ivy Ross, another opposition organizer, said she wanted the Planning Commission to hold off for 90 days so they could educate students and the public.

"SOU hasn't done any community education on this and Verizon pays them only \$16,000 a year to rent the spot, then Verizon is free to rent it to other companies," Ross said. "We're not going to quit the fight. We're putting up signage, researching, protesting, showing movies. We see this as a five- or 10-year process. We're challenging the '96 law and the telecom industry."

The Verizon lawyer cautioned the panel, "Most of this testimony is health-related, not about approval criteria. You're constrained by federal law. You are not policy makers."

Chairman Dawkins predicted, "This is going to LUBA," the state Land Use Board of Appeals, a move that could significantly delay the project. Opponents have 10 days from when notice of a final decision is mailed to file an appeal to LUBA. That decision is expected to be formalized at the commission's regular meeting on July 10, followed by mailing of notice of the decision to those to took part in the hearing.

Since the initial decision was made by staff, the commission's consideration of the appeal is the city's last word. It can't be appealed a second time to the council.

Commissioners recalled a near-identical brouhaha in 2010, when locals fought AT&T to a standstill over a proposal for cell antennae atop Ashland Street Cinema and AT&T dropped the idea of placing them there after the City Council said AT&T had to show they couldn't be co-located with existing antennae elsewhere.

Marcotulli said in an email to the Tidings late Wednesday opponents plan to file an appeal with LUBA.

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Story updated June 28 with information about opponents' intent to appeal the decision, correcting information about how that's done (directly to LUBA, not to the City Council) and clarifying the outcome of a previous proposal by AT&T.

Radiation information sites

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/9619514/Mobile-phones-can-cause-brain-tumours-court-rules..html>

http://www.createhealthyhomes.com/cellphone_risks.php#1

<http://www.electrosmogprevention.org/cell-towers-health-alerts/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCAyPMVuJHY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCAyPMVuJHY>

<http://www.greenmedinfo.com/blog/citizens-arms-against-5g-wireless-technology-roll-out-are-their-concerns-justify>

<http://mystreetmychoice.com/>

<https://www.electricsense.com/13826/treating-emf-impact/>

https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-349528A1.pdf

https://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/ntp/about_ntp/trpanel/2018/march/actions20180328_508.pdf

<http://ehtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Scientist-5G-appeal-2017.pdf>

<https://ehtrust.org/about/>

<http://slowdigital.com/2017/11/21/10-scientists-quotes-about-radiation-that-make-you-think/>

<https://www.quora.com/How-does-radiation-cause-cancer>

<https://ehtrust.org/science/bees-butterflies-wildlife-research-electromagnetic-fields-environment/>

<https://www.engadget.com/2018/01/29/fcc-ajit-pai-government-5g-network/>

<https://www.sdxcentral.com/articles/news/new-fcc-rules-may-lower-5g-network-costs-for-verizon-and-att/2018/03/>

<https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/05/16/611598361/senate-approves-overturning-fccs-net-neutrality-repeal>

<http://www.nbcnews.com/id/34509513/ns/health-cancer/t/electrosmog-harming-our-health/#.WwHZa9Mvx2Y>

<http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/pages/goals.aspx>

<http://mieuxprevenir.blogspot.com/2012/11/san-diego-state-university-brain-cancer.html>

<http://stopsmartmeters.org/>

<https://zero5g.com/>

<http://www.rense.com/general56/rad.htm>

<http://www.iject.org/vol4/spl1/c0046.pdf>

Hearing loss site

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13102818.2017.1373033>

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/new-studies-link-cell-phone-radiation-with-cancer/>

5G Appeal <https://ehtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Scientist-5G-appeal-2017.pdf>

The danger inflicted by electromagnetic waves of a particular frequency generally increases with frequency. This is because waves with higher frequencies have greater penetration capabilities, due to the smaller wavelength.

So, as far as we know, gamma rays are seen to be the most harmful. It would take lead linings, or blocks (depending on the intensity) to absorb them in a short distance.

But that doesn't make the others harmless. All of them have possible effects on living tissue, but with lower probabilities of giving you cancer. Generally different ranges of electromagnetic waves affect different materials (Affect = Have effect on, not necessarily harmful). This phenomenon is what allows us to see the world around us in all its beautiful colors. This, is also what causes sunburns, or skin cancer, in the extreme cases.

What actually causes the harm is the power delivered into your body cells by the wave. Since most electromagnetic waves in the low frequency range have high rates of absorption/diffusion in things you see around, like trees, earth, water, or any sort of matter for that matter, what really causes the difference is your proximity to the source, and the duration of exposure.

<https://www.quora.com/Why-are-radio-waves-more-harmful-than-visible-light-even-though-radio-waves-have-lower-frequency>

<https://www.emfacts.com/2012/07/symposium-on-tree-damage-by-electromagnetic-radiation/>

5G Sebastopol letter

<http://emfsafetynetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Letter-to-Seb-Verizon-5G.pdf>

<https://nutritionfacts.org/video/the-effects-of-cell-phones-and-bluetooth-on-nerve-function/>

<https://www.saferemr.com/2014/03/dept-of-interior-attacks-fcc-regarding.html>

<http://electromagneticsafeplanet.com/>

<http://dailytidings.com/news/government/cell-tower-plan-can-proceed-commission-rules>

<http://scientists4wiredtech.com/sebastopol/sb-muni-code/>

<https://forbiddenknowledgetv.net/first-5g-rollout-in-ca-causing-brain-damage-to-firefighters/>

<https://www.smombiegate.org/britains-first-5g-court-case-and-the-people-won/>

https://thetruthaboutcancer.com/perilous-5g-network/?utm_campaign=news-network&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_source=email&utm_content=perilous-5g-network&mpweb=144-7441574-744033473

<https://www.thenation.com/article/how-big-wireless-made-us-think-that-cell-phones-are-safe-a-special-investigation/>

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196\(18\)30221-3/fulltext?dgcid=raven_jbs_etoc_email&fbclid=IwAR2jRB7rYq8YEW5n2DGnl6HC_o3z-LzX5TYzkn-AhCl80Usoa71-HxUEzc](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(18)30221-3/fulltext?dgcid=raven_jbs_etoc_email&fbclid=IwAR2jRB7rYq8YEW5n2DGnl6HC_o3z-LzX5TYzkn-AhCl80Usoa71-HxUEzc)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9bdU_uw2Dc DANA Ashlie

https://www.radiationhealthrisks.com/5g-cell-towers-dangerous/?fbclid=IwAR2ERrjALBRLIIlRodASmzI7gyoOcwL69ktXlGf0nmcB3aFCEtI6_7zOV7I8

<http://www.safeinschool.org/2011/01/wi-fi-is-removed-from-schools-and.html>