



LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVES  
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Preservation, Restoration, Education and Recreation

**DATE:** December 4, 2017

**MEMO TO:** Carol Calabresa, Chair  
Planning Committee

**FROM:** Alex Ty Kovach  
Executive Director

**REQUEST:** Provide policy direction regarding Central States Tower's request to site a cell tower at the Countryside Golf Club following the open house and public input process.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION SUPPORTED:** Organizational Sustainability

**FINANCIAL DATA:** At this time there is no financial impact.

**BACKGROUND:** The Lake County Forest Preserve District (the "District") License and Easement Ordinance cites Section 6 of the Downstate Forest Preserve District Act, which states that the District has the "power to grant licenses, easements and rights-of-way for the construction, operation and maintenance upon, under or across any property of [the] District of facilities for water, sewage, telephone, telegraph, electric, gas or other public service..."

Since at least the spring of 2006, the District has periodically been approached with requests to construct and operate cell towers at various Forest Preserve locations. The rate of inquiries has increased significantly in the past few years. In preliminary discussions, staff has delivered to the cell tower companies, the Committee-approved "Terms for New Cell Tower Site Requests" (dated February 22, 2016) (the "Term Sheet") which sets for the terms under which the District is willing to consider new cell tower agreements.

Policy direction on the request by Central States Tower (CST) for a site at Countryside Golf Club was brought before the Planning Committee on March 6, 2017. Consensus at that time was that, as required by the Term Sheet, CST must hold a public open house and bring the results back to the committee for review.

At the June 26, 2017 Planning Committee meeting, the committee reconfirmed that CST would need to host an open house and share the results with the Planning Committee before considering the siting request.

On October 18, 2017 CST hosted an open house at Mundelein High School from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The District provided CST a list of 826 addresses to which the open house notices were to be sent, and CST reported that it received notice that five of them were undeliverable. Forty-one (41) residents of the surrounding area attended the open house, where they were invited to provide feedback through conversation, comment forms, or through a dedicated, District-sponsored, e-mail address. Thirteen (13) comment forms were completed during the meeting; one supported a cell tower at that location as the best alternative, and 12 opposed it. Additionally, the District has received six (6) e-mails regarding the cell tower; five (5) opposed the idea, and one supported it (noting that, since a tower is likely to be installed somewhere nearby, the District should "reap some benefit").

Staff provided an overview of the open house to the November 6, 2017 Planning Committee Meeting. Twenty (20) residents attended the Committee meeting to voice their opposition to a cell tower being sited on the golf course. In addition, the District has received a written petition with 103 signatures and an on-line petition with 247 signatures of individuals who oppose a cell tower at Countryside Golf Club.

At this time, it is appropriate for the Committee to give staff policy direction on whether to proceed further to negotiate an easement or license agreement with CST to allow a tower at Countryside Golf Club. Based on the feedback received from the open house, petitions, and e-mail opposing the cell facility at Countryside Golf Club and the failure to demonstrate that Forest Preserve land is the last and best available option and no compelling argument that a cell tower utility is needed in this area at this time, staff is recommending that the Committee give staff policy direction not to proceed with such an agreement.

**REVIEW BY OTHERS:** Executive Director, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Planning, Corporate Counsel.