

Bug Tussel Communication Tower Site Visit – Joint Planning Commission/Town Board

October 31, 2020

Webber property - 9108 Ridge Road, Mt. Horeb, WI

Attending:

Dale Judd, Alex Elkins, Martha Gibson, Steve Flach, Gretchen Hayward, Jerry Judd, Lynn Pitman

Bug Tussel Representative: Gary Henshue

Neighbors: Tim Kozina, Chris Rayne, Jeff Lahey, Jeremy Lincicum.*

The proposed site is in an agricultural field on Ridge Road. It is just below the crest of the hill, and has excellent unobstructed views, especially to the north, east and west.

The site would require one of the property's building densities. It is unclear whether a remaining density is still available, since there have been several parcels from the original farm that have already been sold since the land use plan went into effect. Because the proposed site is in an agricultural field, the density would need to be available under option B in the land use plan, which requires 70 acres per density. The county will need to do a density study to determine what densities remain based on the 220-acre Webber property, and whether a site in an agricultural field would be possible.

Should a density under option B be available, however, this particular site would not meet other requirements. A new drive to access the site would need to be constructed off of existing field road. This drive from the field road would cross agricultural land and is over 300 feet. A drive crossing agricultural land that is more than 300 feet is prohibited in the land use plan.

Other broader questions about the need for the communication tower were also raised. The site was chosen by Bug Tussel engineers based on a route that uses current and planned towers owned by Bug Tussel across Dane County. Given this route, there are no other existing towers that Bug Tussel could use to co-locate equipment. It is unclear whether a route using co-location has been explored. The proposed tower would be equipped so that Bug Tussell could offer co-location services to other cellular carriers.

The tower is 195 feet, so that it is not subject to the requirement for a lighted tower that is 200 feet or higher. The township's understanding is that it does not have any control over the height of the tower into the future. Concerns were expressed that the height of the tower could be easily increased once the site was approved, which would require lights. Dane County requires a \$20,000 removal bond for tower construction. Concerns were raised that this was not sufficient for actual removal costs, should that be required by the ongoing, continuing changes in technology.

Bug Tussel currently does not offer any high-speed internet services in Dane County, but does so in surrounding counties. The representative mentioned the possibility of services becoming available to the township, but that plan is not clear. Current plans offered by Bug Tussel in adjoining counties for high speed internet include 8 different levels of service, but only one. Just meets the current FCC guidelines for high speed broadband service of 25megabit download, and 3megabit upload.

Submitted:
Lynn Pitman
November 12, 2020

*revised November 16, 2020