



Pelham Preservation Society, Ltd.

September 29, 2018

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Terrance Donoghue
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 8
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

RE: Crown Communication Proposed Cell Tower Placement at Hutchinson River Parkway,
Exit 9 at Colonial Avenue, Pelham, NY

Dear Mr. Donoghue:

The Pelham Preservation Society was incorporated in 1999 to "foster an understanding and appreciation of the architecture, historic structures, natural beauty and aesthetic character of the Town of Pelham and surrounding areas." Consistent with that mission, we are writing to you opposing the proposal to install a cell tower on the parkland near Exit 9 of the Hutchinson River Parkway on the Pelham-Mount Vernon border.

The proposed tower, at 130 feet high, would represent a significant visual blight on the parkway, causing a jarring break from the otherwise continuous greenspace of this area. Its construction would also have a deleterious effect on the surrounding residentially-zoned areas and would be inconsistent with the historic structures within visual distance of the tower. We note at the outset that the location of this property, being east of the Hutchinson River, is bounded on the east by Wolfs Lane and on the south by the residential street, Colonial Avenue (not, as indicated in the proposal, on East Sanford Boulevard, which is the road name west of the Hutchinson River in Mount Vernon).

When the Hutchinson River Parkway was created by the Westchester County Park Commission in 1926-28, it was designed to be a park through which a new transportation

route was installed. As a "parkway," the land along the road was purchased for the dual purpose of providing a pleasurable and scenic driving experience for motorists while also preserving the peace and tranquility of the already-existing residential communities through which it would pass. The importance of that greenspace buffer has only increased as the amount of traffic on the parkway has increased significantly in the 90 years since it was established.

The plot of land where the cell tower has been proposed is especially important as greenspace because of the narrowness of this section of buffer and the close proximity of the parkway in that location to homes, schools, playing fields and a library. It provides critical scenery for residential homes in Mount Vernon on Highland Avenue and is the only buffer between the Exit 9 on/off parkway ramps and a row of 1920s era homes on Wolfs Lane in Pelham immediately to the north. Indeed, the entire area surrounding this proposed cell tower location is zoned to allow only for single-family residential homes.

The land also provides a visual screen between the parkway and the adjoining Pelham Memorial High School and Middle School complex and playing fields, located to the immediate east. It is critical to understand the context and topography of the area where the tower is proposed to be erected. Pelham Memorial High School is an historic structure. Designed by the firm of Tooker & Marsh, the 1919 high school represents one of the first collegiate gothic buildings of its size or character in Westchester County. Built entirely of locally-quarried granite, it has been determined to qualify for listing on the state and national registers of historic places. Ingall's Field a historical site of the British encampment during the Battle of Pells Point is adjacent to the school and directly across Wolfs Lane from the proposed tower. Now, Ingalls Field is a sports field that is continuously used by the community for high school and middle school physical education and sports and the Town of Pelham's recreational sport programs. It represents one of a very limited number of playing fields in the community.

Directly across the street from the site of the proposed tower at the southwest corner of Colonial Avenue and Wolfs Lane, is the children's reading room of the Pelham Library. The children's reading room has a full-glass bay window which looks directly toward this greenspace. A greenspace which now acts as a sound buffer for the busy traffic on the Hutchinson River Parkway.

The proposed location of a cell tower and accompanying equipment, fencing and access driveway would occupy so much of this land as to ruin its effectiveness as a buffer and screen between the parkway and each of these surrounding homes and buildings.

Therefore, placing a cell tower in this location is markedly different from other monopoles that have been installed in very limited number along the parkway, all of which are located on tracts of land that are substantially wider and at a much further distance from homes and other buildings.

We respectfully submit that the use of this greenspace for a cell tower would represent a radical departure from the purposes for which it was acquired in 1926 and for which it has been maintained continuously since that time. We ask that the Department of Transportation find that the land cannot be permissibly used for a cell tower, that the environmental impact of this structure cannot be mitigated and that it reject the proposal by Crown Castle International Corp. to locate the tower at this location.

Please include us as an interested party as you complete your SEQRA process

Thank you for your consideration and immediate attention to this matter.

Respectfully yours,

Pelham Preservation & Garden Society

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan P. Pereira", written in a cursive style.

By: Nathan P. Pereira Chairman

cc:

Assemblywoman Amy Paulin

Senator Jeffrey D. Klein

Mayor Michael Volpe, Village of Pelham

Mayor Jennifer Monachino Lapey, Village of Pelham Manor

Supervisor Peter DiPaolo, Town of Pelham

Sue Bratone Childs, President, Board of Education, Pelham Public Schools

Dr. Cheryl H. Champ, Superintendent, Pelham Public Schools

Paul A. Karas, Acting Commissioner, New York State Department of Transportation

Lance MacMillan, P.E., Director, New York State Department of Transportation, Region 8

Kayla Biltucci, New York State Department of Transportation, Main Office-Right-of-Way