



February 4, 2011

Hempstead Town Denies - GC South Cell Antennas

Supervisor Kate Murray and Councilman Ed Ambrosino announced that the Hempstead Town Board has denied an application of T-Mobile Northeast to install wireless communication antennas on the roof of a building located at 3 Nassau Boulevard, near Cambridge Avenue in Garden City South.

“We couldn’t be more thrilled with the Board of Appeals’ decision,” said Supervisor Murray. “Preserving the suburban character of neighborhoods like Garden City South and Garden City and protecting area home values are issues that we take seriously in Hempstead Town. Indeed, these were the priorities that inspired us to hire a telecommunications expert and craft landmark legislation dealing with the placement of cell towers, antennas and other wireless equipment.”

The case was among the first major tests of a wireless communications expert recently retained by the town to offer expert testimony, and review data in an impartial manner in relation to cell tower/antenna application cases that come before the Board of Appeals. It was also the second major victory since the town hired the consultant. The Board of Appeals also recently denied a proposal to install cell antennas on the roof of a religious institution in Wantagh.

“While the Board of Appeals is a completely autonomous body of government separate and apart from the Town Board on which we serve, we are pleased with the decision,” said Councilman Ambrosino. “We believe the Board of Appeals considered the testimony of the residents who appeared at the hearing, and the town’s telecommunications expert raised valid issues and presented insightful questions that assisted members of the Board of Appeals in making their decision.”

In reaching its decision, the board considered the impact of the proposed antennas on local home values and neighborhood character. The board also reviewed evidence concerning the effect the antennas could have on residents who live less than 80 feet from the proposed site. The Board of Appeals also found that the applicant lacked adequate evidence that a gap in cell service existed. The board’s opinion stated, among other things, that “the use (cell antenna installation) will prevent the orderly and reasonable use of adjacent properties or of the properties in adjacent use districts.”

“It is evident that our telecommunications specialist offered expert testimony which yielded positive results,” concluded Murray. “This was a true test of our actions to retain a consultant. It is not only great news for our neighbors in Garden City South and Garden City, but for all residents in Hempstead Town. The board’s decision was right on the merits and right for local neighbors.”