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2 C E N T R A L P I N E B A R R E N S

3 C O M M I S S I O N M E E T I N G

4 -----x

5 HOMELAND TOWERS COMPELLING

6 PUBLIC NEED CORE PRESERVATION AREA

7 HARDSHIP WAIVER APPLICATION

8 -----x

9 July 16, 2025
10 2:53 p.m.

11 4 West 2nd Street
12 Riverhead, New York

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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2 A P P E A R A N C E S:

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4 JUDITH E. JAKOBSEN, Executive Director

5 TIMOTHY C. HUBBARD, Riverhead Supervisor

6 DAVID WILCOX, Southampton Town Representative

7 MARIA Z. MOORE, Southampton Town Supervisor

8 MATTHEW CHARTERS, Riverhead Representative

9 JENNIFER JUENGST, Suffolk County Representative

10 DAVID J. PANICO, Brookhaven Town Supervisor

11 JULIE HARGRAVE, Joint Planning and Policy Manager

12 TARA MURPHY, Environmental Planner

13 JOHN C. MILAZZO, Commission Counsel

14 ANGELA BROWN-WALTON, Administrative Assistant

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MS. JAKOBSEN: This is the continuation of the public hearing held on May 21, 2025 for Homeland Towers Compelling Public Need for a Core Hardship application.

The Commission members and reps should enter their appearances for record with their name and who they are representing.

MR. WILCOX: David Wilcox, Town of Southampton representative.

MS. MOORE: Maria Moore. Southampton Town Supervisor.

MR. HUBBARD: Timothy Hubbard. Riverhead Town Supervisor.

MS. JUENGST: Jennifer Juengst, Suffolk County Town Executive representative.

MR. PANICO: Dan Panico, Brookhaven Town Supervisor.

MR. CHARTERS: Matt Charters, Town of Riverhead Designated Representative.

MS. JAKOBSEN: Okay. Does the Commission staff have anything they'd like to provide in terms of updates or additional information for the record at this time?

2 MS. HARGRAVE: Just a brief overview
3 of the project and where we are.

4 Just to summarize for the Commission
5 and the public the project and then through
6 to date. Again, back on March 5, 2025 the
7 Commission received a Core Preservation and
8 Compelling Public Need Waiver Application for
9 development in the Core Preservation Area.
10 The project is to develop a 150 foot tall
11 wireless communications tower with a 3,000
12 square foot equipment compound and 1,500
13 gallons of propane storage capacity for an
14 emergency generator.

15 The tower would serve Verizon and
16 other private carriers, including Dish
17 Wireless and two future carrier. The project
18 site is 6.1 acres. It is in the CR 60
19 residential zoning district in Flanders, in
20 the Town of Southampton and the Core
21 Preservation Area. The site is developed in
22 a previously nonconforming junkyard,
23 surrounded by a significant amount of open
24 space against County open space. Development
25 in the Core is prohibited without a hardship.

2 Other options in the Core include the Pine
3 Barrens Credit Program. This applicant is a
4 lessee and does not own the property. The
5 owner has not applied for a letter of
6 interpretation for a Pine Barrens credit. It
7 could be eligible, if it was cleaned up.
8 Again, there's no letter of interpretation on
9 the record.

10 The project is classified as an
11 unlisted action pursuant to SEQRA. On
12 March 16th the Commission coordinated for
13 lead agency and scheduled a public hearing
14 for April 16th. After an extension by the
15 applicant, a hearing was held on May 21st and
16 was left open to continue last month on
17 June 18th. There was another extension
18 request for the continuation of the hearing
19 to occur today, July 16th.

20 On June 18th the Commission
21 established lead agency and the SEQRA
22 determination is pending. The Town responded
23 in the coordination process comments,
24 including the potential it has on the
25 character, land use, and visual and scenic

2 resources, and conflicts with the zoning code
3 in the Town Wireless Master Plan, and it
4 being in an area defined as an avoidance area
5 in that plan; and the precedence of any
6 nature and the requirements for a site plan
7 special exception approval and potential
8 variances, including adding another use to
9 the site, which is a pre-existing
10 nonconforming use.

11 The State DOT responded indicating
12 the project would require a highway work
13 permit. There is a study, and the State
14 Historic Preservation Office indicated there
15 are no archeological resources that would be
16 impacted by the project.

17 The application included a review of
18 other properties that were investigated for
19 this project, including County owned parkland
20 where the County indicated, according to the
21 applicant, that they were not interested in
22 pursuing a lease with Verizon. The applicant
23 also looked at other sites, including
24 existing cell towers, water tanks were
25 Verizon is already co-located, and also

2 privately owned properties where land owners
3 did not respond to their requests.

4 The SEQRA process allows for
5 alternatives to be explored. And there are
6 potential alternatives, additional
7 alternatives that could be made available to
8 the project, including alternatives such as
9 the development under the existing zoning
10 district which could allow approximately
11 three residences. Alternative technologies
12 to reduce a visual impact, including
13 exploring other sites outside of the Core on
14 the proposed site on the north side of
15 Flanders Road. Alternatives technologies may
16 include one or more shorter poles to achieve
17 the same coverage that's needed; so, a few
18 poles that are shorter, such as utility
19 poles. We distributed an article that
20 recently, on May 22nd, there was an article
21 in the East Hampton Star that discussed this
22 type of technology being developed in the
23 Town of East Hampton to address coverage
24 issues and protect the character of the area
25 and reduce visual impacts.

2 After the continuation of the hearing
3 today, the hearing would be closed. A
4 comment period, up to the Commission, of five
5 days or seven days for written comment period
6 to allow the public comment on the material
7 that was supplied by the applicant recently,
8 and the new material that was submitted by
9 the applicant on July 22nd, which the
10 applicant is here to cover and include
11 letters from Verizon recognizing the gap in
12 service.

13 MS. JAKOBSEN: Do we want to add that
14 East Hampton article as an exhibit?

15 MR. MILAZZO: Yes. We'll mark it
16 whatever we're up to.

17 MS. JAKOBSEN: I think it's G.

18 MS. HARGRAVE: Thank you.

19 (WHEREUPON, the above-referred to
20 document was marked as Exhibit G, in
21 evidence, as of this date.)

22 MS. JAKOBSEN: What is the title of
23 the exhibit?

24 MS. HARGRAVE: Small Cell Solution to
25 Improve Poor Service.

2 MS. JAKOBSEN: Is there a date?

3 MS. HARGRAVE: May 22, 2025.

4 MS. JAKOBSEN: Thank you.

5 Does the applicant want to provide
6 any additional information, at this time?

7 MR. GAUDIOSO: Yes. Thank you, Madam
8 Chair and Commission. Robert Gaudioso with
9 the Law Office of Snyder & Snyder on behalf
10 of the applicants, Verizon Wireless and
11 Homeland Towers.

12 Without reiterating everything that
13 we discussed back at the May hearing, I do
14 want to touch on a few high level things.
15 This is a very important application, for a
16 number of reasons. There's a public utility
17 facility to serve a significant gap in
18 service, particularly along Flanders Road
19 from the location in Flanders all the way
20 through Hubbard County Park and the
21 surrounding areas. This is not a small gap
22 in service. We actually submitted a report
23 of coverage maps. We did a dry test with a
24 crane and we actually tested the signal.
25 This is an area that spans not only the road,

2 residences, but also, obviously, all of the
3 surrounding parkland which is, obviously,
4 heavily wooded.

5 What we discussed last month were the
6 visual renderings. We did a full visual
7 resource evaluation that showed the minimal
8 visual visibility of this facility. We
9 proposed a number of different alternatives
10 of your standard monopole of which there are
11 in the area, but we also showed the
12 internally mounted cell pole, and that's in
13 the package. We submitted, obviously, the
14 concurrents from the New York State Historic
15 Preservation Office. There is no impact on
16 historic resource or archeological resources.

17 We looked at numerous alternative
18 sites. We have Mr. Ray Vergati's affidavit
19 with all the alternative sites that we looked
20 at. Again, there's an area that is along
21 Flanders Road. This is the over six acre
22 property which historically has been used and
23 has a certificate of occupancy for a
24 junkyard. It's the one commercially used
25 property in the area. If we were to go

2 further to the west, quite frankly, we would
3 be right next to the residential
4 neighborhood. So, we pushed as far away as
5 we could go. If we go to the east, that's
6 all parkland, and we're not allowed to go
7 into the parkland for various reasons. We
8 looked at all the different alternatives both
9 inside the Core and outside the Core, and
10 this is not only the least intrusive, but
11 really the only alternative available.

12 We also submitted a report confirming
13 that the facility is safe from an engineering
14 standpoint. We submitted a structural report
15 that we discussed. The facility is designed
16 to stay within the property. We submitted an
17 FAA determination that there is no lighting
18 required. We submitted the full site plan
19 confirming the wetlands, no water causing
20 impacts. We also confirmed there were no
21 impacts to threatened or native species.

22 Since the last meeting, there were a
23 couple different comments that the Commission
24 had wanted to address, and we wanted to take
25 the time to address that. So, we appreciate

2 you holding the hearing open until today.

3 We submitted a letter from Mark
4 Harris who spoke at the last hearing; he is
5 with Verizon Wireless. In the letter he
6 confirmed the fact that not only businesses
7 and individuals use Verizon service, but also
8 very important emergency communications. So,
9 for example, the Suffolk County Sheriff's
10 Offices uses Verizon. Both the Town and
11 Village of Southampton Fire Departments use
12 Verizon's service, and the Brookhaven Police
13 Department, by way of example, uses Verizon's
14 service.

15 So, this facility will be designed to
16 support all wireless carriers. We have
17 Verizon on the application. We submitted a
18 letter from Dish, we have an application in
19 from AT&T, and we have also shown this to
20 T-Mobile, and we believe they will join as
21 well. So, the tower and the compound and the
22 base and the design are with all those
23 carriers. As we said at the last meeting,
24 Homeland Towers makes its facilities
25 available for municipal agencies to place

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2 their emergency communication antennas on the
3 tower if necessary.

4 We submitted a letter from Mr. Neil
5 McDonald. There was a staff comment about a
6 propane tank. Number one, there is a fire
7 hydrant right across the street. Number two,
8 if the Commission so desires, we would place
9 the propane tanks underground, which would
10 further secure them. So, we made that offer
11 as well.

2 there are no records of rare or state listed
3 plants or animals or significant communities
4 on the property. And we confirmed that we
5 are not removing any trees, so there is no
6 impact on the endangered or threatened bats.

7 Regarding alternative technologies.

8 We did address this in our report. It is
9 part of the Southampton Code. In our
10 planning report that you do have, it includes
11 the report from V-Comm, our professional
12 radio frequency engineer. They looked at the
13 issue of alternative technology, they looked
14 at the issue of the height of the facility.
15 They confirmed the facility is the minimum
16 height.

17 They confirmed what we call the DAS
18 system, a Distributed Antenna System, where
19 you put antennas on utility poles. That's a
20 fine solution in certain circumstances. If
21 you're in a dense residential area, I assume,
22 such as the East Hampton area, like they're
23 proposing. College campuses, sometimes
24 stadiums, they'll use DAS systems. This is a
25 large area. I think even in the materials

2 that you marked in Exhibit G, which was a
3 newspaper article, conceded to the fact that
4 these facilities cover a very small area,
5 about 500 feet. So, even if you put antennas
6 on the utilities poles, if those utility
7 poles could support those antennas, that
8 signal would not be able reach into the
9 parks, that signal would not be able to reach
10 into the surrounding areas, it would only
11 cover a small strip along the roadway, and we
12 would need one approximately every 500 feet.
13 So, it's not a feasible alternative
14 technology. It does have its uses in certain
15 circumstances, but significantly not in this
16 circumstance.

17 Also, if you look at the utility
18 poles along Flanders Road, they are very low
19 in height. This is all detailed in the
20 alternative technology report, which I
21 believe is Exhibit D of the planning report
22 that we submitted. On page 13, it talks
23 about the height of the utility poles. On
24 top of the utility is a wire. So you would
25 have to go below the top, you couldn't go

2 above the top, like the photograph in
3 Exhibit G that you marked. So, the coverage
4 would actually be less than going on top of
5 the utility poles. And those poles are all
6 lower than the surrounding tree line, so the
7 signal would be significantly attenuated.

8 So, the bottom line is we did look at that,
9 and that is in the report. You do have the
10 expert's opinion on that. We had covered
11 that with the initial application.

12 So, again, this is a very important
13 project. We're asking for a compelling
14 public need hardship waiver, because this is
15 a public utility use licensed by the FCC.
16 This facility will solve a significant gap in
17 coverage, not only for Verizon but for all of
18 the carriers. It's not limited to a DAS
19 installation, and we're making it available
20 for public service entities. And Verizon's
21 service, in particular, is used by many of
22 the public service entities.

23 We talked about, last time, the fact
24 that fire is a concern in this area.
25 Obviously, the last fire they did a

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2 tremendous job. Mutual aide was called in.

3 Those agencies have to coordinate, and they
4 coordinate with emergency communications, and
5 they use Verizon service in those instances.

10 MR. PANICO: So, Verizon is going to
11 allow other carriers to co-locate on the
12 pole, essentially?

13 MR. GAUDIOSO: Even better than that.
14 Homeland Towers owns the pole; they are a
15 co-applicant. They are going to allow it
16 and, in fact, they are encouraging it. We
17 already submitted a letter from Dish; they
18 are going to go on the pole. A&TT has made
19 an application to us to go on the pole, and
20 we already forwarded this to T-Mobile, and we
21 believe eventually they would go on the pole.

22 So, not only the pole, but also the
23 ground area, and all of the utilities coming
24 in would be designed and constructed for all
25 four carriers. If any of the towns emergency

2 service entities needed to place equipment on
3 the pole, we would allow that as well.

4 MR. PANICO: Okay.

5 MS. JUENGST: Is the owner going to
6 continue to use this land for a junkyard?

7 MR. GAUDIOSO: I think the intention
8 is probably to do something else. I don't
9 want to speak for the owner, but we did
10 submit a letter to the owner confirming the
11 fact that it is already cleaned it up. It's
12 90 percent cleaned up. If you look at the
13 photographs from the original aerial, the
14 entire property was covered in junk, and now
15 90 percent is taken out. We submitted
16 photographs from a month ago, and it's been
17 cleaned up even more since then. We think
18 it's a tremendous improvement.

19 MR. PANICO: What is the footprint of
20 the licensed or leased area you are taking?

21 MR. GAUDIOSO: 3,000 square feet of
22 the 6.18 acre of the property. A very small
23 portion of the property.

24 MR. HUBBARD: This tower is designed
25 to collapse down inside itself?

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MR. GAUDIOSO: That's correct,

3

supervisor. We submitted a letter from our
engineers saying the tower would deflect upon
itself and stay on the property.

6

MS. JAKOBSEN: Any other questions?

7

MS. JUENGST: What's the general
coverage area?

9

MR. GAUDIOSO: We submitted maps to
show it. What we did is not only did we do
propagation maps where we used a computer to
predict it, but we actually put that crane up
there and we put an antenna to see exactly
where it would cover. This was very
important to confirm the height of the tower.
Basically, it covers the gap. There's the
firehouse to the west that has a tower, and
then on the other side of the park is where
the next tower is, and this will cover that
gap between those two towers all along
Flanders Road. As I mentioned before, not
just Flanders Road. There is a residential
area, there are some scattered homes in
between, and also the parkland on either side
as well.

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MS. JUENGST: Thank you.

3

MS. JAKOBSEN: Any other questions?

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Does the public have any questions at
this time?

6

(No response was heard.)

7

MS. JAKOBSEN: I guess at this point
we would close the hearing. Do we keep the
comment period for seven days open.

10

MR. MILAZZO: A week, ten days. And
then I think there's a SEQRA determination.

12

MS. HARGRAVE: December 17th.

13

MS. JAKOBSEN: Can I have a motion to
close the hearing and to leave the comment
period open for seven days?

16

MS. JUENGST: So moved.

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MS. JAKOBSEN: Is there a second?

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MS. MOORE: Second.

19

MS. JAKOBSEN: Motion by Ms. Juengst,
second by Supervisor Moore.

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All in favor.

22

(WHEREUPON, there was a unanimous
affirmative vote of the Board.)

24

MS. JAKOBSEN: Any opposed?

25

(No response was heard.)

2

MS. JAKOBSEN: Motion carries
unanimously.

4

MR. GAUDIOSO: Thank you very much.

5

See you in September. Have a nice summer.

6

MS. JAKOBSEN: That's brings us down
to the second public comment period on the
agenda. Is there anyone in the public that
would like to provide comment at this time?

10

(No response was heard.)

11

MS. JAKOBSEN: So, we need to go into
closed session to discuss litigation matters.

13

Can I have a motion to go into closed
session?

15

MS. MOORE: So moved.

16

MS. JUENGST: Second.

17

MS. JAKOBSEN: Motion by Supervisor
Moore, second by Ms. Juengst.

19

All in favor.

20

(WHEREUPON, there was a unanimous
affirmative vote of the Board.)

22

(No response was heard.)

23

MS. JAKOBSEN: Any opposed?
Motion carries unanimously.

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(Time Ended: 3:12 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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5 I, BETHANNE MENNONNA, a Notary Public
6 within and for the State of New York do
7 hereby certify that the foregoing is a true
8 and accurate transcript of the proceedings,
9 as taken stenographically by myself to the
10 best of my ability, at the time and place
11 aforementioned.

12 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
13 set my hand this 29th day of July, 2025.

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BethAnne Mennonna

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BETHANNE MENNONNA

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