



Planning Board

**TOWN OF ACTON**  
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pb@acto-ma.gov

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**INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION**

**To:** Board of Selectmen **Date:** June 17, 2010  
**cc:** Steve Ledoux, Town Manager  
**From:** Planning Board *[Signature]*  
**Subject:** *Wireless Communications Facility (Cell Tower) Inquiry – 8 Forest Road*

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On May 1, 2010, the Town Manager received a letter from SBA Towers II LLC inquiring about locating a wireless communications facility (cell tower) at 8 Forest Road (the Town transfer station property – see attached SBA Towers letter). Mr. Ledoux replied that the property is not available for a tower. According to his letter, the only space available for a tower would be on top of the existing landfill and the Town is presently considering options for using the space for solar power generation equipment (see attached 5/24/10 letter). The Planning Board requests that the Town reconsider the SBA Tower inquiry for locating a tower on the 8 Forest Road property.

One of the purposes of the Town's cell tower bylaw (Acton Zoning Bylaw Section 3.10) is to "limit the overall number and height of Personal Wireless Towers to what is essential to serve the public convenience and necessity." SBA Towers has shown a service coverage gap from approximately the middle of the Great Hill conservation land east to Nashoba Brook, and from approximately Acton Town Hall south to the MBTA commuter line<sup>1</sup> (see attached coverage map). SBA Towers is currently proposing a tower at 5-7 Craig Road with a special permit application before the Planning Board. However, based on coverage maps provided by SBA Towers, David Maxson (the Town's wireless facilities consultant), and Michael Maglothin (an abutter to the 5-7 Craig Road application with wireless communications experience), 8 Forest Road appears to be one of the best locations to fill the service coverage gap (see the attached 5-7 Craig Road map and the 8 Forest Road map). It appears that a tower at 8 Forest Road might help minimize the need for additional towers in Acton in the future.

The Planning Board understands that 8 Forest Road is being considered for solar power generation equipment, but maybe there is a possibility for both uses to locate at the site. It doesn't seem that a tower could cast a large enough shadow to negatively impact solar power equipment. SBA Towers asked for 100' x 100' fenced lease area (with a 20' wide access and utility easement). However the 5-7 Craig Road application only has the compound fenced in, and the compound itself is only 30' x 90' size. Mr. Maxson also confirmed that a +/- 3000 square foot area could probably "do the job" for SBA Towers. In other words, there might be some flexibility with the size and shape of the area SBA Towers would need for the facility.

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<sup>1</sup> The coverage gap appears to extend further south to the Acton, Maynard, Sudbury, and Concord border and beyond, but the proposal is focusing on the northern end of the coverage gap.

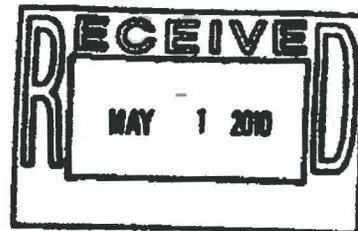
There are other planning/zoning issues that would have to be considered if a wireless communications facility was proposed at 8 Forest Road. Another purpose of the cell tower bylaw is to "minimize their adverse impacts on adjacent properties, local historic districts, residential neighborhoods, and scenic vistas." The 8 Forest Road site might help minimize adverse impacts on some of these areas as compared to the 5-7 Craig Road site. However, most wireless communications facilities visually impact surrounding residential neighborhoods, and the Planning Board acknowledges that such a facility at 8 Forest Road would be no different. In addition, a wireless communication facility proposed for Town-owned land may need Town Meeting approval.

In summary, the Planning Board recommends that the Selectmen reevaluate the wireless communication facility proposal for 8 Forest Road. The Selectmen, Town Manager, Town staff, those involved with the solar power generation equipment, SBA Towers, and others may be able to develop a plan that could achieve several Town goals and serve the citizens of Acton more efficiently.



April 30, 2010

Town of Acton, MA  
Steven Ledoux, Town Manager  
472 Main Street  
Acton, MA 01720



RE: **SBA - Proposal for Wireless Telecommunications Facility**

Attention: Steven Ledoux, Town Manager of Acton

On behalf of SBA Towers II LLC, I am contacting you regarding the potential of locating a telecommunication site on the municipal property located at 8 Forest Street in Acton, MA. Identified by the Acton Assessing Department as parcel G4-76 and consists of 19.88 acres; this property is also known as The Town of Acton's Transfer Station.

SBA is a leading independent tower owner and operator, as well as one of the nation's largest providers of professional network development services to companies in the wireless communications industry. Located in Boca Raton, Florida, SBA is a publicly owned company listed on NASDAQ under the symbol SBAC. Additional information is available online: <http://www.sbasite.com/>

Based upon wireless communication coverage objectives, SBA has identified a search area, which includes this parcel, to locate a cellular communication tower. The development SBA is proposing is a communication tower housed within a 100' x 100' fenced in lease area along with a 20'+/- wide access & utility easement from the lease area to the nearest Right-of-Way. The lease area will be used to house the necessary related communication equipment and shelters associated with the antennas that will be located on the tower at the above referenced property.

The required merging of scientific (radio frequency), legal, zoning, permitting, construction, and political considerations that come to bear on every site make each possible site location a challenge. Unless we are able to get all of the components in line, the site simply cannot be used. The first step is to determine if ownership is interested in such an installation on their property.

Your immediate attention to this proposal would be greatly appreciated.

Any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at (508) 341-7854.

Sincerely,

Peter LaMontagne  
Independent consultant to SBA Towers II LLC  
[plamontagne@clinellc.com](mailto:plamontagne@clinellc.com)  
508.341.7854





**Town Manager**

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May 24, 2010

Mr. Peter LaMontagne  
Independent Consultant to SBA Towers II, LLC

Via e-mail: [plamontagne@clinellc.com](mailto:plamontagne@clinellc.com)

**Re: SBA Proposal for Wireless Telecommunications Facility in Acton**

Dear Mr. LaMontagne:

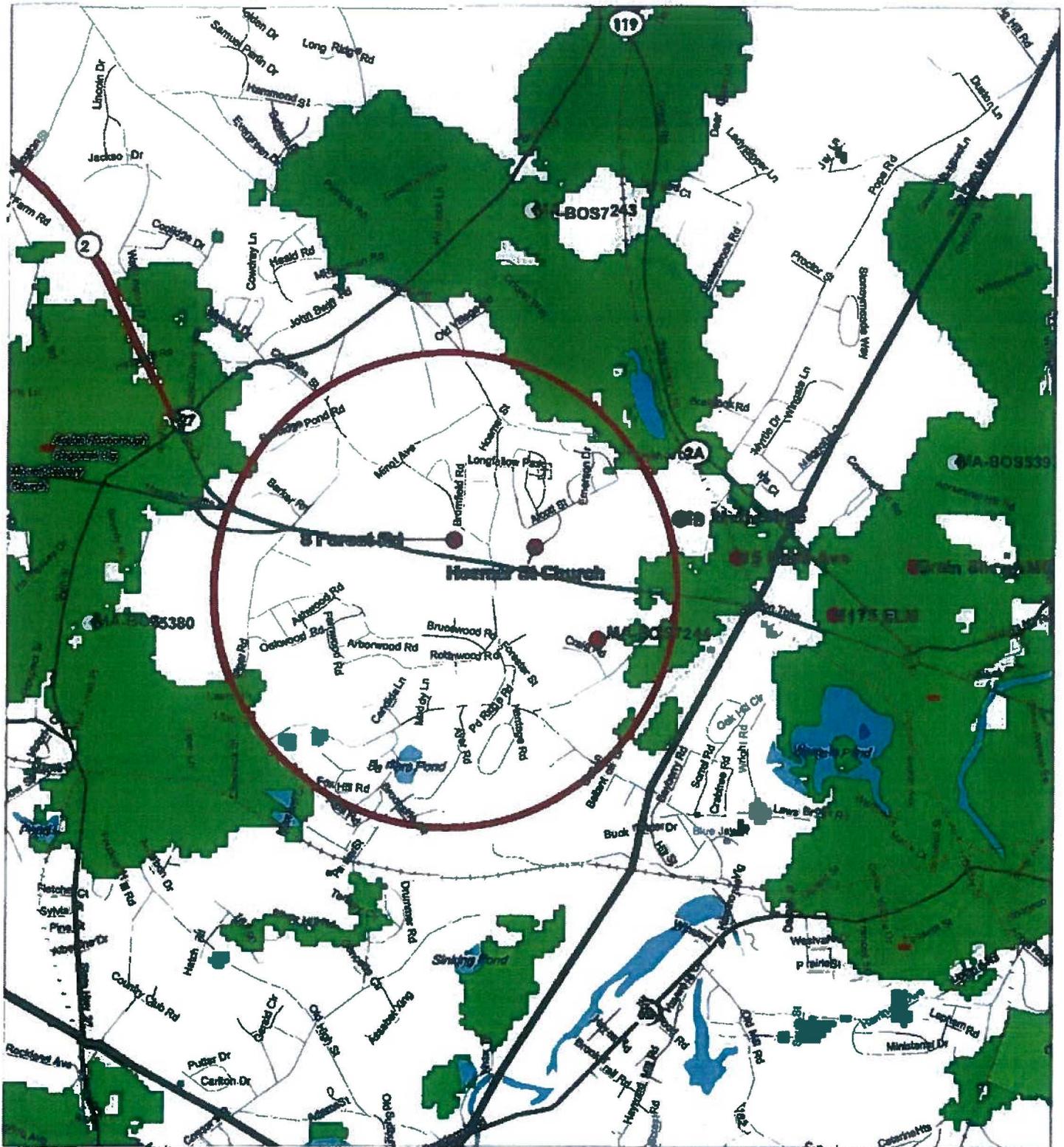
Thank you for your inquiry about the potential of locating a Wireless Communications Facilities tower at 8 Forest Road. Please be advised that this property is not available for a tower. The site is fully utilized with Acton transfer station and highway department operations and facilities. The only space for additional facilities is on top of the existing landfill. The Town is presently considering options for using this space for solar power generation equipment.

Sincerely,

Steven Ledoux  
Town Manager

cc: Acton Planning Board

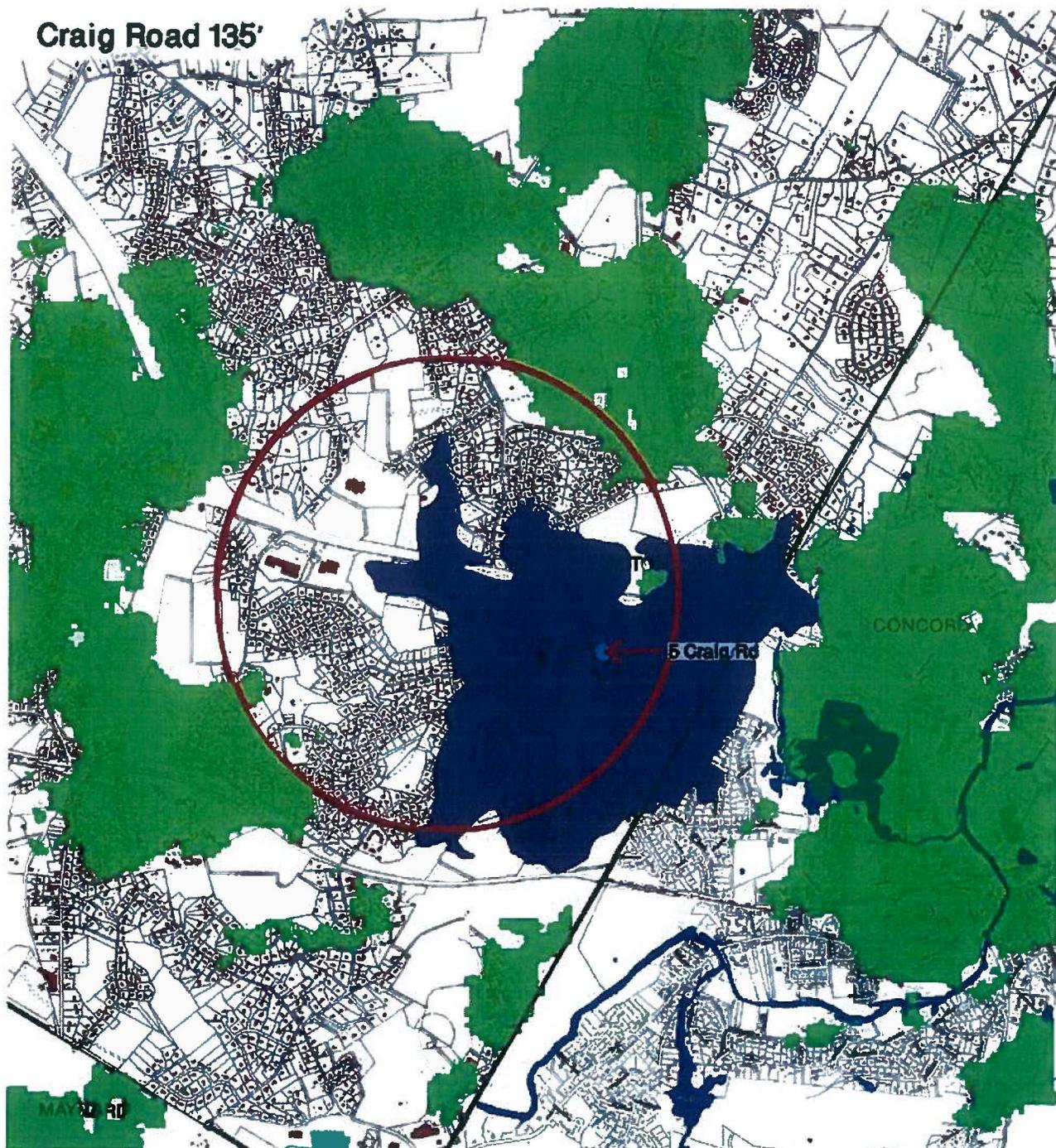
COVERAGE MAP



 <p><b>CLEAR</b><sup>TM</sup></p> <p>Scale: 1 inch = 0.5 mile</p>	<p><b>Clearwire Wireless Broadband</b></p> <p><b>Town of Acton</b></p> <p><b>Reliable Coverage</b></p>	<p>Future Coverage From Neighboring Sites</p> 	
	<p>Address</p> <p>Acton, MA</p>	<p>Proposed Site</p> 	
		<p>Future Sites</p> 	
		<p>Town Boundary</p> 	
		<p>Water</p> 	

5-7 CRAIG ROAD  
COVERAGE MAP

Craig Road 135'



8 FOREST ROAD  
COVERAGE MAP

Forest Road 135

