

Sugar Hill Planning Board

August 6, 2025

Members: Secretary Amy Venezia, Mike Valentine, Patty Robertson, Arthur Chase, Rob Hayward, Jim Keefe, Rusty Talbot (Selectboard Rep), Kyle Kinsey

Zoning Board Members: Gary Way, Sarah Pinney, John Barth, Carl Hjelm, Ed Cenerizio, Evan Carmean

Absent: Margo Connors (Alternate), Steve Monsein (Vice Chairman)

Guests: Dick Bielefield, Kathy Jablonski, Earl Duval (Counsel for Applicant), Larry Sawyer, Judy Sawyer, Steven Cummings, Jeanne Cummings, Joel Lanz, Lisa Hjelm, Lisa Brown, Claudia Hunt, Richard Hunt, Chris Cramer, Chris Ellms, Rose Ellms, Elizabeth Fraser, Timothy Egan

Chairman Rob Hayward called the meeting to order at 5:30PM on Wednesday, August 6, 2025. On a motion made by Rusty Talbot, seconded by Jim Keefe the minutes of the July meeting were moved to be approved. **PASSED**

UNANIMOUSLY

Blue Sky Towers IV, LLC

Site Plan Review

Conceptual Hearing

Joint meeting with Planning Board, Zoning Board and Select Board

Counsel for Blue Sky Towers, Earl Duval presented plans to the Boards for review. He explained that when the applications are officially filed the project engineer and radiofrequency engineers and possibly some other experts depending will also be present to explain in further detail.

Mr. Duval went through the plans and gave a brief overview of the plan to install a cell tower in Sugar Hill. He stated that they have met with the Conservation Commission and are working on getting plans to address the issues with the current culvert and replacement.

He explained that Blue Sky has a lease with the Presby family for a 100 x 100 sq ft area as well as an access road. 65 ft will be fenced in with a 6 ft high chain link fence with barbed wire on the top around the cell tower area. They are proposing a 100 ft monopole style tower designed for 4 cell phone carriers. It has been designed for Verizon Wireless and there has been discussion with AT&T and also T Mobile for additional carriers. There is a significant gap in coverage in Sugar Hill and this would look to help fill some of that gap. There would be a 1000-gal propane tank for a backup generator. The generator will be tested on a routine schedule every 2 weeks for a 30-minute cycle. He explained that this could be scheduled to run at a time that is not inconvenient to neighbors. There would be a double access gate with a parking spot and turn around for access vehicles. The access gate would be locked and located just over the salmon hole culvert.

They are doing a flow study analysis with Red Fish out of ME and waiting for the results of that study to determine the best course for culvert replacement, either pre cast concrete arch or bridge. They have an application with DES for stream crossing. Once reasonable certainty the plans will be updated to show that.

As part of the application, hard copy exhibits bound and in color, full RF report for coverage maps will be available. The Town will also post this information on the Town website and in the Town offices for review.

The balloon test that was done back in March was discussed and reviewed. They took photos from different sites during this time.

It was noted that 100 sites were reviewed as possible sites. There was a lengthy discussion about how this lot was chosen and if it was the best location for the town. Chairman Hayward noted that they have to provide the information

about the 100 other sites they reviewed as part of the application. Mr. Duval encouraged people to send him information on other sites Earl and he will ask the RF engineer to run a study to make sure the site that was chosen is the most feasible site.

Patty Robertson asked about the overall visibility (include approach and how it looks from different areas). Mr. Duval stated that the photo simulations they will be submitting will be covering that question. Patty noted that the balloon was smaller than the actual tower and Mr. Duval explained that the photos simulated the tower in them and not the balloon.

There was a discussion on the style of the tower and color. It was noted that a monotone is the most stealth tower and overall is aesthetically more pleasing than the tree. It was noted that when a tree tower is put up and it is above the tree line it sticks out more than a regular tower. Steve Cummings noted that he thinks painting the tower in a matte brown tone makes it blend in the best and white is the worst.

Patty Robertson asked about the 4 carriers on the tower. Mr. Duval stated that it was being designed for 4 carriers and they were in conversation with the 3 most popular. Patty asked about the height and Mr. Duval stated that at the next hearing there would be an engineer present to discuss the reason for the height. It was noted that any change in height in the future would need to come back before the Zoning Board for approval. Chairman Hayward noted that they could not go higher than what they are approved for and any changes would prompt a new variance.

Chairman Hayward explained that State law and Federal law supersedes the town laws. The applicant has to prove the height they need for the tower. He noted that the road is existing and will have to be approved to standards the board deems necessary. Chairman Hayward noted the Telecommunication Act of 1996 as a reference.

Ed Cenerizio asked about the decimal level of the generator. Mr. Duval noted it was a 50KW and he did not have the decimal level but could get that information for the next hearing. A question about lighting was asked and answered that there would be no lights on the roadway or tower and there would be a motion activated light attached to the equipment compound shed.

Tim Egan asked about the coverage area and where it might increase coverage. A map of the coverage area was shared. Mr. Duval noted that there is a report of all existing surrounding sites and showed diagram of proposed site and then areas that would be improved. He stated that the challenge is the topography.

Larry Sawyer asked how many poles would need to be installed to run the electricity up to the tower. The answer was 1 pole with the rest being run underground.

A question about the proposed time for this to be completed was asked and answered that spring time build was hoped if time lines are met. Currently the flow study has been the thing that has been holding them up.

Mike Valentine asked if Blue Sky Towers has received any opposition to this proposal to date. Mr. Duval stated that he was not aware of any opposition that has been presented for this particular site.

Rusty Talbot asked about when the color for the pole would be proposed and decided on. Mr. Duval stated he would obtain information on sites that have different colors for review.

Steve Cummings asked if they were willing to do further photo simulations using a particular address. Mr. Duval will look into this.

It was noted that for the next presentation a projector and screen will be used.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7PM.

Submitted by:

Amy Venezia

Secretary to the Planning Board