



CITY OF VAUGHAN

TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITY SITING
PROTOCOL TASK FORCE

AGENDA

Committee Room 245
2nd Floor, Vaughan City Hall
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario

Thursday, June 14, 2012

7:00 p.m.

1. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA
2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST
3. COMMUNICATIONS
See attached
4. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION / INFORMATION OF THE COMMITTEE
 - 4.1 Request for a further extension to complete and submit the Task Force's findings report
 - 4.2 Urban Design Considerations – Farhad Jalili, Urban Design Division, Development Planning
 - 4.3 Reorganized Issues List – Brainstorming session
6. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Members		
<u>Representing Vaughan Council</u>	<u>Representing the Public</u>	Representing the Industry
Regional Councillor Schulte, Vice-Chair Councillor DeFrancesca	Mubarak Ahmed Tina Catalano Von Chaleunsouk Ann-Marie Colosimo Mark Goldberg Christina Sgro, Chair	Stephen D'Agostino Colin Lavery Michelle Vivar

From: Aaron Posner [aaronposner@gmail.com]

Sent: June 7, 2012 17:17

To: OfficeofthePresident@rci.rogers.com; nadir.mohamed@rci.rogers.com

Cc: leighann.popek

Subject: Re: Rogers Site C3276 - Cell Phone Towers on roof of Aish Thornhill Community Synagogue. 949 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill

Attention Mr. Mohamed c/o Office of the President

Re: Cell Phone Towers on roof of Aish Thornhill Community Synagogue. 949 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill – Rogers Site C3276

Firstly I would like to thank the office of the president staff for taking the time to speak with me recently, and requesting that I submit my issues in writing so that it can be addressed appropriately.

As a brief background, Rogers entered into a contract to install cell phone towers on the roof of the Aish Community Synagogue. Meeting between the community and school with Aish senior staff occurred, however Rogers did not attend these meetings to hear of the concerns.

While Rogers is following the guidelines from Industry Canada (IC) to a tee, please let me copy and paste in the paragraph directly after the exclusions in section 6 and highlight a few sentences:

“Individual circumstances vary with each antenna system installation and modification, and the exclusion criteria above should be applied in consideration of local circumstances. Consequently, it may be prudent for the proponents to consult the LUA and the public even though the proposal meets an exclusion noted above. Therefore, when applying the criteria for exclusion, proponents should consider such things as:

- The antenna system's physical dimensions, including the antenna, mast, and tower, compared to the local surroundings;
- **The location of the proposed antenna system on the property and its proximity to neighboring residents;**
- **The likelihood of an area being a community-sensitive location; and**
- Transport Canada marking and lighting requirements for the proposed structure. “

When I sit here and reflect on these clauses, I wonder to myself how Rogers is operating and what goes on in the background so I try to put myself in your shoes.

I can see how the Rogers representative was eager for the contract to get done, but I am sure they did not realize a few points at that time that I bring to your attention:

1. The Aish building houses a pre-school, home to 16 teachers and well over 100 children.
2. The Rogers representative, previous to Aish, went to the building directly next door that shares the parking lot, the Reena center for the developmentally disabled. The Reena center did not accept to install towers on the roof of their new building they are erecting as were fearful of the impact to their staff and children they care for. Imagine how they feel now!

3. The distance to the closest residences, some of whom have lived in the area for 25 years, is 5 meters!

I am sure that Rogers sends out highly trained sales and business development people to acquire and grow business. As Rogers is big into Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)(<http://www.rogers.com/web/content/ManagingCorpSocialResp>), I can only surmise that the Rogers representative made a mistake. How else to explain the blatant disregard for the two bulleted points above in Section 6. In fact Industry Canada also says in its health guidelines (<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/csr-rse.nsf/eng/home>) "stronger relationships with communities" in the first paragraph.

Clearly we have a disconnect from good and responsible business practices. While I can understand that there are guidelines set out by Health Canada (HC) and they are being followed "health wise", they are not from a social perspective, and this is where Rogers and other Telco's have to decide their true face to the people of this country.

On the health front, while HC may have guidelines set out, the debate on the long-term effects is, at best, unknown. In fact, correspondence from Beth Pierson, Director General Health Canada, Environmental and Radiation Health Sciences Directorate, states in an email dated May 10, 2012

"As part of our mandate, Health Canada continues to monitor and analyze ongoing scientific research on this issue as well as fund its own studies on potential health impacts of electromagnetic radiation and evaluation of exposure frequencies. To ensure safety codes are sufficient for the protection of the health and safety of Canadians, the exposure limits in Safety Code 6 are periodically updated to take into account emerging scientific data from studies carried out worldwide. Safety Code 6 is currently under review and a new version is planned for publication in early 2013. While it may be true that no studies have been done looking directly at health impacts of cellular tower emissions on children, there is a considerable body of evidence from which extrapolations to children can be made.

To say that the HC guidelines are accurate by any means is a huge stretch. No true study has been done and the guidelines will very likely be revised in the coming months. HC bases its current assessment from the World Health Organization, which in itself is based from science prior to 2006, as well are also re-evaluating its position in this matter in 2012 (<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs193/en/>). So while Rogers can hold the position that all is fine, what happens WHEN the guidelines change. Will there be a huge removal and adjustment of equipment and towers?

Clearly we don't want to wait and see, and clearly we don't want our children to be the guinea pigs in a science experiment.

Let me also explain the impact to our community:

1. The pre-school of over 100 children will not open their doors in September if the towers are on and do not have an alternative plan. We are in June and many parents have already pulled their children out. 16 teachers with no jobs for next year, and many families immensely upset that this amazing school is closing and our children cannot benefit from it.

2. With the school leaving, Aish loses almost \$8000 in rent per month, which is 4 times more than what Rogers is paying Aish.

3. Aish has received massive bad PR throughout the local community, which no doubt is impacting their fund-raising and membership base.

4. The neighbors are extremely upset with the towers being in their backyard for all the reasons you are very well aware of.

Here is the position you have put Aish in: If they leave the towers on, they lose the school money, terrible PR and lose members. Certainly this goes against the wonderful educational services they have provided for so many years. If they turn them off, they claim you will Sue and basically bankrupt them because they simply don't have the means to pay the exorbitant fees you will charge to take it down. So who wins here? Not Aish. Not the community.

Again this seems to go against your CSR tenants, as well as IC guidelines in Section 6 and its CSR overview. So when I get to my first point and put myself in your shoes, I am sure high-level decision makers there would not have approved this site had they known the impact. That is simply NOT conceivable, is it?

So what can we do? Many have tried to communicate with Rogers to discuss the matter and simply are disregarded. I was able to communicate briefly with Mark Rausa, Vice-President, Network Implementation, but email content was largely disregarded and finally to emails dated Apr 10, 2012, simply no response was forthcoming even though repeated attempts to communicate were attempted. Simply, we requested a meeting with the community and school members to discuss the matter. Don't we have a right to decide matters where we live? These rights are basically spelled out in the HC guidelines; however they seem to be disregarded.

It's never too late to do the right thing. Just because the towers are physically installed does not mean a change can still occur. We the community, do not even know who the towers service. There is no new construction in the area; the houses here have been in place for over 25 years. There is Rogers antennae coverage at all the major corners of the neighborhood so why put one right in the middle of it?

We fortunately have a very resourceful neighborhood, so the following items are in motion.

1. Press – we have contacts at all the major TV stations, newspapers, & radio show, and we will begin to contact them to explain what is going on
2. The community will be mass migrating off of the Rogers service. Agreements have been put in place with other service providers and each residence on Rogers now has the opportunity to move services over at no cost, plus at a cheaper monthly rate to what they are paying now.
3. Discussions over public demonstrations are underway.
4. Discussions at the municipal level as to long term changes to the LU and overall installation guidelines are underway.
5. Contacts with our MP, the Honorable Peter Kent, our being established with people close to him to bring to IC on our behalf.

Obviously we don't want to do this, but we feel there is no choice. While this may not deter Rogers, we feel that some message must be sent out that this is simply not an appropriate way to conduct business.

I am sure there is a better alternative that satisfies all, and I look forward to your response in a timely manner.

Simply, what we want is the towers removed please, for the good of our children and the community at large.

Thank you for your attention to this serious matter, and I look forward to your response in a timely manner.

- Aaron Posner