



Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)

Tompkins County, New York Public Safety Communications System (PSCS)

Lead Agency:

Tompkins County Legislature
320 North Tioga St.
Ithaca, New York 14850

Contact: Joan Jurkowich, Tompkins County Planning Department

Prepared by:



ENSR International
3495 Winton Place Suite E295
Rochester, New York 14623
Project Manager: Peter Nielsen, PE

with



Environmental Design & Research, P.C.
238 West Division St., Syracuse, NY 13204

and



Panamerican Consultants, Inc.
2390 Clinton St., Buffalo, NY 14227

Accepted by Lead Agency: December 9, 2005

December 2005

CONTENTS

1.0 SUMMARY	1-1
1.1 Introduction.....	1-1
1.2 Project Summary.....	1-1
1.3 Comment Period	1-2
1.4 Public Information Meeting.....	1-2
1.5 Public Hearing	1-2
1.6 Comments and Concerns of the Public	1-3
1.7 Additional Mitigation Measure	1-3
2.0 SPECIFIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES.....	2-1
2.1 Comment Letter: Dantzker, Heather C. and Marc S, November 17, 2005.....	2-1
2.2 Comment Letter: Kiefer, Dooley, November 18, 2005.....	2-8
2.3 Comment Letter: Rich, Lois, November 18, 2005	2-11
2.4 Comment Letter: Steven Trumbull, November 16, 2005.....	2-13
2.5 Comment Letter: Marx, Edward C., November 18, 2005	2-14
2.6 Comment Letter: Susan Beeners, November 15, 2005.....	2-15
2.7 Comment Letter: Don Barber, November 17, 2005.....	2-16
2.8 Comment Letter: Laurene Gilbert, November 17, 2005	2-18
2.9 Comment Letter and Public Hearing Comments: Donald Dingler, November 3, 2005.....	2-19
2.10 Comment Letter: Lisa Nicholas, November 14, 2005.....	2-23
2.11 Comment Letter: Steven J. Uzmann, November 18, 2005.....	2-23
2.12 Public Hearing Comments, November 3, 2005	2-23

LIST OF FIGURES (Cont'd)

3.0 DEIS REVISIONS / SUPPLEMENTS.....	3-1
3.1 Introduction.....	3-1
3.2 Danby North	3-1
3.3 Revised Summary Table from DEIS Summary	3-1
3.4 Text Change Related to DEIS Section 3.2.2 County RFP	3-3
3.5 Addition of Zoning Table 5.1-2.....	3-4
3.6 Text Change Related to DEIS Section 5.3.1.1	3-4

TABLES

Table 1 F - DEIS Summary

Table 5.1-2 - Existing Zoning

FIGURES

Figure 3.1-1 A (2) - Danby North Proposed Tower Site and Alternative Tower Site - E. Miller Road

Figure 7-A - Proposed New Danby North Tower, Sheet 1 of 1, Simulated and Alternative Location Views from Viewpoint 19

APPENDICES

J – Notice of Completion of Draft EIS and Public Hearing

K – Public Hearing Transcript

L – Comment Letters

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

This Final Environmental Impact Statement ("FEIS") has been prepared for the proposed Public Safety Communications System ("PSCS") Project by the Tompkins County Legislature as lead agency pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA"), Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations at 6 NYCRR Part 617. The FEIS includes the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") which was completed on October 19, 2005, and which is incorporated by reference herein, and the following responses to the public comments received during the formal comment period. The FEIS also describes an additional mitigation measure that the County will implement to further minimize or avoid significant adverse environmental impacts of the Project and includes some minor text clarifications and changes to the DEIS.

1.2 Project Summary

The proposed Project is known as the Tompkins Public Safety Communications System (PSCS), which will involve the replacement of an existing public safety radio communication network that is more than 30 years old. The network is used by first responders to emergencies, such as fire, police, sheriff, and ambulance. The following are highlights of the proposed project:

- Construction and installation of facilities for a new public safety communications network.
- Proposed project includes a total of nine transmission tower sites.
- Four of the nine sites proposed will require new construction on sites that have not previously had tower structures. The other sites require upgrades to existing facilities or co-location on existing towers (see Table 1.1-1 of the DEIS).
- New towers will not exceed 200 feet in height (including antennae), will be constructed of galvanized steel, will be free standing (no guy wires) and be without lights.
- Towers will be equipped with a number of various types of antenna and microwave dishes.
- Site facilities will include gravel access drives, precast concrete shelters for emergency generators and electrical equipment, aboveground propane tanks, security fencing, and electrical service.
- Capital costs have been estimated to be \$15-20 million depending on the final design.

The Emergency Response Center (ERC), a consolidated 911 dispatch and radio center that will also serve as the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has already been constructed (opened in August 2004).

1.3 Comment Period

The completion and distribution of the DEIS commenced a 30-day public comment period that ran from October 19, 2005 until November 18, 2005. Copies of the DEIS were made available at Ithaca City Hall, all Town Halls within Tompkins County, the Tompkins County Public Library, the Groton Public Library, the Newfield Public Library, Southworth Library, and at the County Administration office for public review. The DEIS was also posted as a downloadable document on the Tompkins County website. Instructions for providing public comment, written or oral, were distributed throughout the community.

Tompkins County conducted a public information meeting and a public hearing to facilitate the public review and comment process. Notice of the public information meeting, comment period and the public hearing and copies of the DEIS were provided to the City and the Towns in Tompkins County. In addition, Tompkins County published PSCS information and SEQRA notices in newspapers of general circulation and posted information on the Tompkins County website. SEQRA notices were also published in the Environmental Notice Bulletin. Referenced legal notices are contained in Appendix J.

Tompkins County received both written and oral comments on the DEIS during the public comment period. A transcript of the public hearing is provided in Appendix K. Copies of all written comments are located in Appendix L.

1.4 Public Information Meeting

A Public Information meeting on the DEIS for the proposed PSCS was held on Wednesday, October 19, at the Women's Community Building in downtown Ithaca. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the DEIS and details of the project to the community. During the first part of the Public Information meeting, community citizens were able to view maps and other materials describing the project and discuss the project with County representatives. The project was further explained in a presentation on the background and planning of the project. This was followed by a question and answer period. County staff and representatives from ENSR, the County's environmental consultants, were present to answer questions about the project, the DEIS, and the public's role in reviewing it. The public was also informed about the scheduled public hearing and written comment period.

1.5 Public Hearing

A formal public hearing on the DEIS was held in the County Courthouse on Thursday, November 3. Oral comments from the public were recorded by a court reporter. The transcript of the hearing is included in Appendix K.

1.6 Comments and Concerns of the Public

There were several common issues raised throughout the comment period. Most were limited to three specific sites: Danby North, Danby South, and Caroline. These along with other comments addressed the following potential adverse environmental impacts:

- tower site location and proximity to houses;
- property values;
- health effects associated with radio waves;
- visual impacts;
- additional costs to the community; and,
- community character and historic preservation.

1.7 Additional Mitigation Measure

Tompkins County has reviewed the comments and considered feasible mitigation measures, in addition to those identified in the DEIS, to further minimize or avoid the potential adverse environmental impacts of the Project. As a result, the County has determined to reposition the tower at Danby North to a site approximately 450 feet south-south west of the original proposed location. This measure will provide increased buffer to the Dantzker residence and further reduce potential visual and noise impacts, while not generating any additional significant adverse environmental impacts. Section 3 provides more detail of this additional mitigation measure.

2.0 SPECIFIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

2.1 Comment Letter: Dantzker, Heather C. and Marc S, November 17, 2005

1. The DEIS states that proposed tower locations were picked, among other reasons, based on discussions with adjacent property owners. Contrary to this, we who are legal abutters and clearly heavily impacted by the choice of the Danby North site were not contacted by anyone until the August balloon test was less than a week away. By this time the land was already cleared for the test and repeated surveys had been made. Even then, we were not approached by the county or its agents but by our neighbor. Only after we contacted the county did Mr. Lee Shurtleff speak with us. At this time he told us that the location of the tower was already pretty much a forgone conclusion. After this, one of us (Marc) spoke at a county legislature. After this, Mr. Steve Whicher, the county administrator, told us that he personally had recognized and pointed out to the planning group that our home was uniquely impacted and that the tower site was extremely obtrusive to our home. He had suggested that they consider other locations and contact us, but this was not done. Because we were not contacted earlier for comment, our objections meet with the stiffer resistance that momentum affords this location. No other locations in the area that might equally fulfill the signal needs of the project were modeled in any way, nor were any even given systematic consideration. No other landowners in our immediate area were approached to see if they would lease land for this purpose. There has been no analysis of nearby alternative locations with lower proximity to residences. Our interpretation of the facts is that a willing landowner was found for the Danby North lease and no other serious effort was made to notify abutting landowners, solicit input, or identify low impact alternatives. The county should conduct this systematic analysis of other possible locations now to see if impacts could be minimized further without critically endangering the integrity of the communication system.

Response: Section 3.2.3 of the DEIS (p. 3-13, et seq.) describes several alternative site configurations that were considered. Section 3.2.4 of the DEIS (p 3-16, et seq.) describes the factors that were used to select specific sites consistent with the Preferred System Configuration Alternative.

Specifically, with regard to the Danby North site, the Department of Emergency Response looked at alternative sites within a mile to the east (Arsenault Property on East Miller, above Coddington Road) and to the west (Corner of East Miller and Marsh Roads), but in both cases, there would be a reduction in coverage and difficulty in maintaining microwave connectivity.

The County's vendor for the PSCS, Motorola, was also asked to evaluate the potential movement of the tower by up to 1,000 feet northerly and 500 feet southerly of the optioned site. Little coverage impact was anticipated if the tower were kept along the same ridge and at that approximate elevation of 1700 ft.

Placement of the tower to the north side of the road, at or near the same elevation, would require significant tree clearing, utility extension, as well as construction close to four dwellings. There is also a wetland identified in this area on the National Wetlands Inventory Map. In addition, the houses on the south side of East Miller Road would gain a front yard view of the potential new tower.

It was determined that moving the tower southerly was possible without interfering with coverage or microwave connectivity. Tompkins County is proposing an additional mitigation measure to move the Danby North site approximately 450 feet further south. Locations further south of this point experience a significant drop in elevation affecting coverage. In addition, there is a Unique Natural Area further south (UNA-174: Deputron Hollow).

2. Figure 3-1-1A shows that our home is twice as close to the Danby North location as any other uncompensated residence. We are the only nearby home whose primary view shed includes the towers location. This satellite image is out of date. Our home is now substantially larger with more rooms and windows facing the proposed tower location. We submit that the lack of an accurate overhead representation of our home dilutes decision maker understanding of the severity of the impact. The county should obtain a more recent image or provide an accurate overhead survey in addition to the photographs. Section 5.1.2.2, Page 5-8: states that the effect on the county's tax revenue will be minimal, with the private landholders remaining responsible for all current taxes except those on the 100 ft square section leased. This implies that homeowners like us, whose house value will decrease markedly will not see a concomitant drop in our tax liability. If true, this represents an undue burden. The county should describe how landowners uniquely impacted by loss of property value are compensated by the community for their loss.

Response: Section 5.1.2.2 of the DEIS (p. 5-8) discusses the impact of communications towers on property values. It refers to the Generic EIS for the Statewide Wireless Network and reported that it "did not find conclusive evidence of any quantifiable effect of siting of antennae on surrounding properties."

3. Section 5.2.3.2, Page 5-25: states clearly that the extremely high impact score of Danby North should force the county to locate towers farther from the road. The Danby North tower is the only one which gets such a recommendation. We understand from Mr. Surtleff and others that the county is considering moving the location a few hundred feet further from the road, in line with this recommendation. This is a minimal response that we do not consider to be sufficient to a problem so clearly demonstrated in the county's own DEIS. We have been told by Mr. Shurtleff and others that no systematic search has or will be made for alternative site on any other landowner's property. This effort could minimize the impact on our home and the net impact on the residents of this area of Danby. It is not enough to simply move the tower a bit farther from the road. The county should be required to systematically search for alternative locations that might drastically reduce the visual impact but not the signal strength.

We have shown Mr. Shurtleff, using publicly available topographic maps, where such sites exist. When we did this, he was not aware that other high spots existed within a mile which was farther from the road and any homes. He has instead rejected these without any investigation. We submit that the county has an obligation to examine those sites systematically for effectiveness and relative impact.

Response: Section 5.2 of the DEIS (p. 5-9, et seq.) describes the Visual Impact Assessment prepared for this project. The Department of Emergency Response looked at alternative sites within a mile to the east (Arsenault Property on East Miller, above Coddington Road) and to the west (Corner of East Miller and Marsh Roads), but in both cases, there would be a reduction in coverage and difficulty in maintaining microwave connectivity.

Motorola was also asked to evaluate the potential movement of the tower by up to 1,000 feet northerly and 500 feet southerly of the optioned site. Little coverage impact was anticipated if the tower were kept along the same ridge and at that approximate elevation of 1700 ft.

Placement of the tower to the north side of the road, at or near the same elevation, would require significant tree clearing, utility extension, as well as construction close to four dwellings. There is also a wetland identified in this area on the National Wetlands Inventory Map. In addition, the houses on the south side of East Miller Road would gain a front yard view of the potential new tower.

It was determined that moving the tower southerly was possible without interfering with coverage or microwave connectivity. Tompkins County is proposing an additional mitigation measure to move the Danby North site approximately 450 feet further south. Locations further south of this point experience a significant drop in elevation affecting coverage. In addition, there is a Unique Natural Area further south (UNA-174: Deputron Hollow).

4. Appendix E, Figure 4 Sheet 2: Site 19 of the view shed analysis is our front yard and site 20 is at the far end of our driveway. The impact scores of these sites are the highest of any in the entire study. The study does not include a site from our backyard or our upstairs windows. Our entire southern view from the many windows of our home will be dominated by the tower which will appear to loom over us. No study from outside or public property could accurately represent the impact this tower will have on our home. Appendix E, Figure 7 Sheet 3: This image is taken from just west of our driveway. This is the most shocking simulation in this section. If the photo had been taken from 50 feet east, it would show our newly renovated home crouched at the base of this huge eyesore. As shown, instead it looks like no homes are anywhere around. Worse yet, should the county have constructed such an image from our upstairs windows, our living room, or our backyard, the image would engender even greater understanding from our fellow county homeowners. Our home contains a third floor overlook tower at its West end that looks out nearly over the treetops precisely in the direction of the proposed tower. By not including any simulations from our home, the county under represents

the negative impacts of this proposed tower location. We attach here (our Appendix B) a number of such photographs to illustrate our point. Worse, the photographic study was done in summer and neither we, nor the county have images showing how much more disturbing this location will be in fall, winter, and early spring.

Response: Section 5.2 of the DEIS (p. 5-9, et seq.) describes the Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) prepared for this project. The VIA concluded that “from most viewpoints (including visually sensitive sites), both visibility and visual impact of the proposed PSCS facilities will be minor.” (See Section 5.2.4, p. 5-25.) The VIA notes the “high impact score received by the Danby North tower at Viewpoint 19, suggests that it is preferable to site new towers further away from public roads and residences.” (See Section 5.2.3.2, p. 5-25.)

The Visual Impact Analysis (VIA) indicated that there were private residences nearby the Danby North site that could experience visual impacts from the Project. Field review revealed that the base of the tower is largely screened from view at the nearby house and yard. Even without leaves, 100-200 feet of woods will block most of the tower base and shelter. The DEIS also indicated that visual impacts could be further mitigated by moving the tower location if practicable. Moving the tower back 450 feet, as a proposed additional mitigation measure, will reduce the visual impacts overall and specifically for the private residence. The hedgerow along the access road near the house is intended to be left in place to provide further screening.

5. Appendix E has its own Appendix B (Danby North Photo Log) showing a photograph from Viewpoint 20, our front yard. This image is over exposed such that it hides the balloon and does not reveal itself to be the profound impact of unparalleled intrusiveness that it would be. Given that this is a critical photo in the analysis, we cannot help but wonder whether this was done with some amount of conscious neglect, or worse, intent. We attach here, as part of Appendix B, our own version of this photograph, which clearly shows the balloon looming over our home from a similar vantage point. We request that the final EIS include an accurate representation of the visual impact from this angle.

Response: There was no conscious neglect or intent to over expose the photograph. The condition of the photograph did not affect the conclusions reached by actual field study, as described in the VIA and DEIS at Section 5.2.2 (p 5-19, et seq.).

6. Appendix E has its own Appendix C as well (Tompkins County Wireless Visual Assessment) which contains three observers' subjective rating of the visual impact from position 19, the end of our driveway. Reading these shows a few things. First, these three reports are unanimous in their conclusion that the impact here is incredibly high. No other location has reports that read like these. But these reports have problems that underestimate the visual impact for those who live in the shadow of the proposed tower. The average citizen

activity at our home may be 2-3, but OUR activity is 5. We live here. This is also true for our land use. So the average citizen might rank our site as these reviewers did with a 3.0, 4.25, or 3.75. But if you correct their raw data so these impacts reflect on those who live right here, we get an average score of 4.33 which is even farther off the chart. The county must respond to this difference between average citizen visual impact, and immediate homeowner visual impact. In addition, the county must examine the fact that the visual impact study is inherently limited by the time of year when it was conducted. The full leaf out period of summer lasts less than half of Ithaca's year, yet this is when the county did its impact study. Reviewer KAC says location 19 has, "no sense of adjacent residences or businesses." From this angle 400 feet from our ~3,000 square foot home, it is possible that the reviewer did not see our house hidden behind the single row of deciduous trees that lines our driveway. However from early fall until middle spring each year we are naked to this site on the road and nearly as naked to the proposed tower location. It is misleading for the county to do this analysis in midsummer. The county should reanalyze any high impact sites like Danby North now or this winter when scores and results are would certainly be even much higher.

Response: Section 5.2 of the DEIS (p. 5-9, et seq.) describes the Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) prepared for this project. The VIA is based upon representative views from public locations and different (better or worse) views may be available from nearby yards and homes. The views may be closer or elevated, but typically they have more screening in the residential setting. Open views were selected for simulations as "worst-case" studies. In most locations, the visual impact is associated with the upper portion of the tower, above tree line. Therefore, leaves in an "on" or "off" state does not make a difference as ground facilities are not an issue. If the tower base is in a wooded setting, such as Danby North, over 100-200 feet of trees will block the views with or without leaves. The leaf-on, leaf-off conditions makes little difference to these simulations.

7. Appendix F, Health Risks: The science in this section is skewed. Materials criticize methodologies or potential type II (false positive) statistical errors for every study that shows a potential health risk, but cite no methodological problems or risks of type I (false negative) errors in supporting studies. The bias of the authors of these studies is apparent. Also, models do not include specific source/receiver geometry to the locations we live and sleep. It is possible that the transmission loss functions of these specific paths might exceed known levels of health concern. Clearly enough data do not exist to assure adjacent homeowners that we will experience no ill effects to us or children we plan to raise in this home. The lack of data and perceived bias of the authors contribute directly to public perception of human health risks associated with large communication towers. This perception of risk effects property values. This economic cost of perceived health risk is not examined in the DEIS at all. One of us (Heather Clark Dantzker) is a health risk scientist and we find this document woefully inadequate.

Response: Section 5.3 of the DEIS (p. 5-26 et seq.) describes the public health impacts of the proposed project. This analysis relies, in part, on the scientific studies presented in Appendix F – two prepared by the Federal Communications Commission and one by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection.

The referenced studies represent the leading scientific understanding on the impacts from EMF. The fact that studies cited in the DEIS find no problems at much higher radiation levels than those that would occur at project receptors, is not a reflection of bias, but of the current understanding of the science.

8. Appendix G, section 3.2, page 28 contains the only mention of our home in this report. "... and a recently constructed house approximately 100m (328 ft) to the northeast." No discussion is given to the impact on our home. Given the profound and disproportionate impact that this project will have on our home, this impact should appear explicitly in the DEIS so that the county knows to consider other locations. Figures 3.3 & 3.4 (pages 31 & 32) confirm the map we have previously submitted. The satellite image is out of date.

Response: Appendix G of the DEIS is the Historic and Archeological Resource survey. The description of the setting is intended only as a general characterization of the historical land use in the vicinity of the project site.

9. Appendix H, Noise Impact Assessment: It is not possible from the description to know precisely where ML-DN and R-DN are located. We interpret ML-DN to be the base of our driveway and RDN to be the leaser's (Farrell's) residence. One of us (Marc Dantzker) has extensive graduate training as a bio-acoustician with a special research emphasis on the physics of sound propagation in air. There are fundamental flaws in both the measurement and modeling in this section. First, regarding the measurements: The background noise measurements are not done at the times of day or times of year which have the lowest background noise. For a variety of reasons, nighttime is quieter than mid day, and winter is quieter than summer. The report acknowledges two of these reasons. Leaf noise was loud at the time of recordings (Enclosure 2, page 47) but would not be as loud in winter or the still of night. Traffic noise (Appendix H, page 4-5) was significant at the times of measurements but is substantially lower in the evening and night. Therefore, the background sound measurements are skewed toward noisy times and do not accurately reflect the impact on our property. This section is inadequate and both measurements and models should be redone. Clearly, the DEIS is long. This suggests to the casual observer that the county has done a through job investigating the potential impacts. We feel strongly that we have shown that they have not. As homeowners who both work full time, having to scour this massive DEIS to find every point of relevance to our property and concerns is nearly impossible. If we have missed other specific impacts to us and our property that would cause a reasonable person additional concern, we request that we be notified in writing at this time and be allowed to provide further response. In

summary, we request that the Danby North location be moved significantly to an area of lower impact. Multiple alternative locations for this tower and its access road must be thoroughly considered. We request that we be allowed to provide review and comment on these assessments. Moving the tower a few hundred feet is not sufficient. Any new location must have a thorough treatment and evaluation in summer and winter. We anticipate that moving the tower farther back at the same location, as has been suggested, could worsen the impact on portions of our view shed, specifically the south-facing windows of our upstairs living space.

Response: Section 5.5 of the DEIS (p. 5-41, et seq.) considers the impacts of noise from the proposed Public Safety Communications System.

ML-DN and R-DN locations are identified in the Noise Impact Assessment, Appendix H, Section 3.a., as 587 E. Miller Road driveway (400 feet south of East Miller Road) and a residence 450 feet west of tower site. They are also depicted in an aerial photograph Enclosure 1, to the Appendix. Contrary to statements in the comment, ML-DN is located midway along the Farrell driveway and not at the base of the Dantzkers' driveway. The Farrell residence was chosen as the receptor to model sound levels based on the review of the aerial map. The Dantzker residence, though located at a similar distance, has more intervening woods than the Farrell residence. Therefore, predicted sound levels at the Dantzker residence would be the same or less than at the Farrell residence.

Potential noise impacts were assessed for weekly generator tests, noise that will only occur during the daytime. The ambient sound levels used for the assessment were conservative in two areas. First, sound level impact assessment was based on the background ambient sound level (L90 - the sound level occurring 90 percent of the time) which is quieter than the average ambient sound level (Leq). Second, ambient sound levels used for the analysis were based on the quieter sound level of the morning and afternoon sample periods. The morning sample period for ML-DN was conducted at 0807 to 0837 (L90 = 39 dBA). During this period, winds were calm to 4 mph and tree leaf noise was not noted as a significant source of background sound. Background sound sources were, in order of perceived prominence - crickets, distant traffic and birds. Note that tree leaf noise was the most prominent source of background sound at ML-DN during the afternoon sample period when winds were up to 10 mph. Therefore, the background sound levels used for the analysis are conservative and more representative of the quieter periods of the day. For comparison, the 39 dBA used for this analysis is significantly lower than the 45 dBA that NYSDEC suggests may be typical for rural farmland area.

Noise modeling of emergency generator sound was conducted based on hemispherical sound propagation algorithms for standard-day atmospheric conditions and do not attempt to represent the "worst-possible scenario" situation. In general, estimates were conservatively based. Sound level reductions for forested areas were conservatively estimated using the minimum reductions recommended by NYSDEC Program Policy Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Noise Impacts (-3 dBA/100 ft instead of -6 dBA/100 ft). The sound transmission loss, due to the reduction factors used in the prediction model is generally insensitive to small scale source/receptor geometries. Additional

sound level reductions that are specific to certain specific source/receiver geometries, including absorptive ground effects (such as over grassy areas), were conservatively assumed to be zero. Though temperature inversions can significantly affect sound transmission, the effects occur over large distances (up to a couple thousand feet or more) and are insignificant over short distances such as between the Danby North tower and nearest receptor (450 feet). Furthermore, temperature inversions are not a daily event but occur during calm clear conditions and in the evening, night and early morning when generator testing would not routinely be conducted.

Moreover, relocation of the tower farther away from the nearest receptors, as now being proposed as an additional mitigation measure, would be expected to drop sound levels by an additional -3 dBA due to distance and perhaps -3 to -6 dBA due to reductions from the intervening forest.

10. Clearly, the DEIS is long. This suggests to the casual observer that the county has done a through job investigating the potential impacts. We feel strongly that we have shown that they have not. As homeowners who both work full time, having to scour this massive DEIS to find every point of relevance to our property and concerns is nearly impossible. If we have missed other specific impacts to us and our property that would cause a reasonable person additional concern, we request that we be notified in writing at this time and be allowed to provide further response. In summary, we request that the Danby North location be moved significantly to an area of lower impact. Multiple alternative locations for this tower and its access road must be thoroughly considered. We request that we be allowed to provide review and comment on these assessments. Moving the tower a few hundred feet is not sufficient. Any new location must have a thorough treatment and evaluation in summer and winter. We anticipate that moving the tower farther back at the same location, as has been suggested, could worsen the impact on portions of our view shed, specifically the south-facing windows of our upstairs living space.

Response: Section 5.2 of the DEIS (p 5-9, et seq.) describes the Visual Impact Assessment prepared for this project. Section 3.2.3 of the DEIS (p. 3-13, et seq.) describes several alternative site configurations that were considered. Section 3.2.4 of the DEIS (p 3-16, et seq.) describes the factors that were used to select specific sites consistent with the Preferred System Configuration Alternative. In addition, in response to public comments, the County reevaluated feasible alternatives and determined that repositioning the tower according to the proposed mitigation will minimize or eliminate potential adverse visual impacts to the greatest extent practicable.

2.2 Comment Letter: Kiefer, Dooley, November 18, 2005

1. The summary section ends with a useful chart, but in the first row refers to "proposed 9 site system". According to 3.2.3 (pp. 3-15 - 3-16), the proposed project is really a 10 tower system. The summary chart should be modified for consistency - perhaps by a footnote explaining that the DEIS addresses 9 of the 10 sites, with the South Hill site already being

modified for existing as well as future use with this systems (and environmental review having already been handled?).

Response: The comment is noted and a revised Summary Table is included in Section 3.

2. P.1 last paragraph, last full sentence - Is the Tompkins County 800-MHz system also designed to transition to 700 Mhz once those frequencies are available? (If not, this should be discussed in the alternatives section.)

Response: Section 3.2.1.4 of the DEIS (p. 3-12) states, "The County's system will be compatible, to every extent possible, with the proposed SWN."

3. Last paragraph should be revised to more accurately reflect the actual history of the project. E.g., "There were two responses to the RFP, one from MA-COM and one from Motorola. MA-COM pointed out their interest in TC's RFP but noted that the RFP for New York State's SWN project had a later response date, and they did not want to "tip their hand" to their SWN competition. MA-COM suggested that TC adjust its reply date accordingly. The CommCap Committee decided not to extend the response date and to go forward without having a choice of vendors [New York subsequently chose MA-COM over Motorola for the SWN project]"

Response: Section 3.2.2 of the DEIS (p. 3-12 and 3-13) describes the county's process for selecting a developer for the system. There was only one company (Motorola) that responded to the RFP. The comment with respect to MA-COM is noted and a revision to the text is included in Section 3.

4. I recognize that the DEIS Table of Contents follows the Scoping Document, but seeing all in context now, it would be appropriate to add a "Section 4.6 Air Resources", and to move the description of the additional microwave radiation there, since the air is where the project's EMR is added to the existing radiation soup we all live in. This would still leave the discussion of EMF effects on humans (and other fauna plus flora) to be described and discussed elsewhere.

Response: Section 5.3 of the DEIS (p. 5-26, et seq.) describes the public health impacts of the proposed project. It is true that the EMR waves travel through the air; however, the potential impact is more appropriate under the Health section because it is the reception of the waves that is the potential impact (Appendix F of DEIS).

5. The Visual Resources Section 5.2 is well done. I only take issue with the dismissal of the "tall pine" disguise concept; if used where there are naturally occurring evergreen trees on wooded hills (as in New York's Greene-Bainbridge corridor) it is appropriate and effective -- and almost totemic!

Response: Section 5.2.3.2 of the DEIS (p. 5-24 and 5-25) describes long-term mitigation strategies. It recommends with respect to the "tall pine" disguise concept: "Assuming the height of the towers will be as currently proposed (approximately 180 feet), disguising the towers as pine trees, or other attempts at camouflage, are not recommended. The unnatural height and the need for dish antennae on the towers would make such efforts ineffective/unconvincing." In addition, the dishes required for this project can not be disguised like cell phone panels. The branches can also cause obstruction issues with microwave pathways.

6. Section 5.3 Public Health, 3.3.2 Long-term (Operations phase), p. 5-28, last paragraph "periodically checked" - Once every three years? Weekly? - Please include some clue as to what is intended.

Response: Section 5.3.3.2 of the DEIS (p. 5-28, et seq.) discusses long-term mitigation measures for the system. There is no requirement to perform power density analyses (FCC OET65 analysis) once a site has been reviewed with the exception of (1) when a new transmitter is added to the site or (2) when increases in output power are initiated. As part of a scheduled maintenance program, it is recommended that every six months, the output power of each transmitter and the condition of each related antenna system be measured. If the output has increased from any transmitter, then appropriate adjustments or repairs are to be made and the original level re-established and so recorded. As for the antenna system, its condition must be analyzed and recorded. If the test indicates any failure, corrective action needs to be taken. This is as much, if not more, for assuring system performance than for determining potential excessive RF levels around the tower. There are two levels of concern - passive (or public) and occupational. The passive level is the exposure level that the general public in the vicinity may be exposed. The occupational is the level workers on the site need to be aware of. In conclusion, routine maintenance and documentation procedures after the site becomes operational are essential to proper operation of the system.

7. Section 5.5.1.1 Summary of Scientific Knowledge - I appreciate the inclusion of the statement "The question that remains is whether time-varying electric and magnetic fields can cause health effects"; that question still remains. Studies are inconclusive. It is perfectly understandable that some persons are anxious. I appreciate the inclusion mention of the stricter European standards. I had hoped the appendix would include research results more recent than the 1998 Health Physics article [submitted in 1997], reproduced as Appendix F3. Please correct p. 5-26 reference to Appendix G to be to Appendix F. Please add a sentence repeating the fact that studies are inconclusive to date, so no guarantee of safety can be given.

Response: The referenced studies represent the leading scientific understanding on the impacts from EMF. In addition to those studies identified in the comment, the DEIS also cited and relied upon studies reviewed in the Statewide Wireless Network (SWN) DGEIS which were more current as cited in SWN DGEIS Appendix A, Public Health and Safety. The study was conducted by RAM TRAC Corporation, and entitled: *Potential EMF Health Impacts from Radio and Microwave Transmitters in*

New York's Statewide Network for Emergency Communications, June 2004. The 1998 study was included because of its relevance to the European standards. The correction of Appendix reference is noted. Based on the current leading scientific studies on the issue, the DEIS concluded that there are no adverse environmental or health impacts anticipated from the Project. Therefore, there is no need to make any additional changes to the text of the DEIS regarding this issue.

8. Vol. 2, Appendix F, Appendix F.2, p. 36, para. 3 - For the TC PSCS towers near other towers, have calculations been made to analyze the total contributions to field strength/power density from other RF sources to ensure that such variables as reflection and re-radiation have been considered?

Response: The issue has been considered and generally pertains to AM vs. FM towers. The only tower that is located within a half-mile of any other is Dryden West, which is near the WHCU-AM daytime tower. The new tower at Dryden West will be treated per WHCU specifications to detune this tower from any interaction with the WHCU tower. This is an FCC requirement. The Newfield North site is part of the WHCU-AM nighttime array. At Newfield North, the County antenna systems will be decoupled from the AM towers - again in accordance with FCC rules and WHCU specifications.

2.3 Comment Letter: Rich, Lois, November 18, 2005

1. This only talks about workers. What about the people who live close to the towers?

Response: The referenced document in this comment is one of the NYSTEC reports in the DEIS Appendix B.4. Section 5.5 of the DEIS concerning public health does address both the public and workers. Section 5.3 of the DEIS (p. 5-26, et seq.) discusses both the short-term health impacts (during construction) and the long-term impacts (during operation).

2. Why weren't any viewpoints done from Taft/Buffalo Rd or Buffalo/Seventy Six? Or from front locations such as Brooktondale instead of Speedsville? They all see from the side or behind the tower location? I did see where it's mentioned about visual impact - but why are the photos from so far away?

Response: Section 5.2 of the DEIS (p. 5-9, et seq.) describes the Visual Impact Assessment prepared for this project. Photos were taken from these areas and there are simulations from Old Seventy-six Road and Buffalo Road. The simulated views are within 3/4 mile (VP 3) and 1.25 miles (VP 15). Brooktondale was not included as a simulation due to the limited visibility in the view because of structures and vegetation. Photos that are not used for simulations typically occur for the following reasons: (1) no visibility, (2) impaired visibility or screening, (3) not representative, and/or (4) another viewpoint captured the same effect maybe from a more sensitive site.

3. What about the noise to homes that are close to these towers?

Response: Section 5.5 of the DEIS (p. 5-41, et seq.) describes the evaluation of noise impacts of the project. Appendix H of the DEIS (Noise Impact Assessment) provides a detailed description. Noise impacts were predicted at only two sites (Newfield South and Dryden East) and low noise mufflers were recommended at these two sites as well as the Danby North site.

4. What about the waves to homes that are close or below the tower?

Response: Section 5.3 of the DEIS (p. 5-26, et seq.) discusses the public health impacts of the project. The potential health impacts of “waves”, or electromagnetic field (EMF), were evaluated in this section of the DEIS. Appendix F of the DEIS also provides general information about the health impacts of EMF.

5. What about our property value?

Response: Property value impacts are discussed under the Community Character assessment section [Section 5.1.2.2 (p. 5-8)] and are also discussed in the DGEIS for the State Wireless Network (SWN), which reported that it “did not find conclusive evidence of any quantifiable effect of siting of antennae on surrounding properties.

6. Will my taxes be adjusted to reflect the lower property value?

Response: The County assessors update property assessments on a periodic basis. The property assessment process includes a procedure established to dispute or challenge the findings of the property assessment. Property reassessment is not part of the proposed Project.

7. Who is going to help me when I can't sell my home because of this tower? I do not want to live in front of it!

Response: The County assessors update property assessments on a periodic basis. The property assessment process includes a procedure established to dispute or challenge the findings of the property assessment.

8. What about all the excess traffic and damage to our road?

Response: Section 5.6 of the DEIS (p. 5-46 and 5-47) describe the impacts of the project on the transportation system. There will not be a significant traffic increase, nor change in wear and tear on road due to the project. The County will be responsible for repairing any damage to the road caused by construction, as noted on p. 5-47 of the DEIS.

9. How does the town of Caroline benefit financially from all of this?

Response: The Project is intended to benefit all County residents and will provide improved public safety communications capabilities in all areas of the County, including the Town of Caroline. Direct financial benefits to particular Towns are not identified or forecasted for the proposed Project.

10. Why wasn't I contacted about my concerns? I live in Taft Rd and no one has ever talked to me regarding this. Not even the town of Caroline! Is it because I have against this from the beginning? We need a communication system; we just do not want it in our back yard.

Response:

The County has properly complied with all public notice requirements pursuant to SEQRA. See Appendix A. In addition, there were numerous public meetings prior to the SEQRA review concerning the planning and development of this project. Initial meetings were held in each town in 2000. Additionally, county staff has made numerous presentations over the past four years at public meetings of the County Legislature and the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council. County staff has also met with individual fire departments and the Tompkins County Municipal Officials Association to discuss this project. County representatives also met with several Town Boards as design of the project has progressed. The most recent meeting with the Town Board in Caroline was on August 2, 2005.

2.4 Comment Letter: Steven Trumbull, November 16, 2005

1. The town of Dryden has in effect a local law with the express purpose of regulating telecommunication towers within the Town. In Section 5.1.1.2 the DIES states that "...the County's Project is not subject to local laws..." This statement is only partially true. The Town of Dryden's Local Law No. 2 (1998) exempts from regulation under such local law telecommunication towers used exclusively for fire, police and other dispatch telecommunications. The proposed project is therefore exempt from the compliance with such local law by definition. However, the use of such tower by a commercial or other enterprise to comply with the requirements of the Town's special use permit process.

Response: Section 5.1.1.2 of the DEIS (p. 5-2) notes that this project is not subject of local zoning regulations. The DEIS does not address compliance with local zoning laws by commercial or other private enterprise because the proposed Project entails construction of County facilities only.

2. In Section 3.1.9 Permits and Approvals, the applicant states that it will comply with the DEC's Stormwater Regulations. Under state law municipalities are authorized to issue their own stormwater regulations which may be more stringent than the state's. This section should be revised to state that the county will comply with local stormwater regulations, if applicable.

Response: Section 3.1.9 of the DEIS (p. 3-8) identifies additional approvals and permits that would be needed for this project. It is acknowledged that municipalities are authorized to issue their own stormwater regulations; however, no such local regulations applicable to the proposed Project currently exist.

2.5 Comment Letter: Marx, Edward C., November 18, 2005

1. Table 5.1-2 on page 5-49 actually addresses community demographics. (This table is listed as 5.1-3 in the table of contents.) We recommend that the referenced zoning table be added to the final EIS.

Response: The referenced zoning table has been included in Section 3 of the FEIS as Table 5.1-3.

2. On page 5-5 the DEIS discusses the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan. The DEIS specifically references the Natural Features Focus Areas delineated in the plan. We have reviewed the tower locations and found that three of the tower sites are located within the generalized boundaries of the Natural Features Focus Areas (NFFAs): Newfield South (Wildlife NFFA), Danby South (Forest Lands NFFA), and Dryden West (Forest Lands NFFA). Of these sites, Newfield South and Dryden West involve redevelopment of existing tower sites. The Newfield South and Danby South sites are very near the edges of the NFFA boundaries. It is important to recognize that the NFFA boundaries are generalized to be inclusive of the resources warranting protection. The Comprehensive Plan calls for development of a program to protect the natural and recreational resources within the NFFAs using tools appropriate to the functions of those resources. A review of the specific tower sites indicates that, based on our analysis to date, these tower locations would not be expected to adversely impact the functions of the natural and recreational resources that led to the designation of the relevant Natural Features Focus Areas in the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan.

Response: Section 5.1.1.3 of the DEIS (p. 5-2, et seq.) describes the compatibility of the proposed project with existing and proposed comprehensive plans. The information provided by Edward Marx in regards to the Natural Features Focus Areas is acknowledged

3. As is also stated on page 5-5 of the DEIS, the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan calls for implementation of the Public Safety Communications System project. The DEIS is a positive step toward completion of this project.

Response: The comment is acknowledged.

2.6 Comment Letter: Susan Beeners, November 15, 2005

1. This section notes that 'the high impact score received by the Danby North tower at Viewpoint 19, suggests that it is preferable to site new towers further away from public roads and residences.' This site clearly adversely influences the Dantzker property and others in the vicinity. We look forward to finding out if alternative sites will be explored. Our earlier conversations with Lee Shurtleff indicated that the County is amenable to moving the tower site several hundred yards to the south.

Response: Section 5.2 of the DEIS (p. 5-9, et seq.) describes the Visual Impact Assessment prepared for this project. The Department of Emergency Response looked at alternative sites within a mile to the east (Arsenault Property on East Miller, above Coddington Road) and to the west (Corner of East Miller and Marsh Roads), but in both cases, there would be a reduction in coverage and difficulty in maintaining microwave connectivity.

The County's vendor for the PSCS, Motorola, was also asked to evaluate the potential movement of the tower by up to 1,000 feet northerly and 500 feet southerly of the optioned site. Little coverage impact was anticipated if the tower were kept along the same ridge and at that approximate elevation of 1700 ft.

Placement of the tower to the north side of the road, at or near the same elevation, would require significant tree clearing, utility extension, as well as construction close to four dwellings. There is also a wetland identified in this area on the National Wetlands Inventory Map. In addition, the houses on the south side of East Miller Road would gain a front yard view of the potential new tower.

It was determined that moving the tower southerly was possible without interfering with coverage or microwave connectivity. Tompkins County is proposing an additional mitigation measure to move the Danby North site approximately 450 feet further south. Locations further south of this point experience a significant drop in elevation affecting coverage. In addition, there is a Unique Natural Area further south (UNA-174: Deputron Hollow).

2. At the Danby South tower site, please be reminded that special consideration will be needed related to adequate access for both the construction phase and long term project operation. As was indicated in my August 25, 2005 letter to Lee Shurtleff, the proposed access drive to this site is around 890-feet south of the end of the year-round portion of Curtis Road. This 890-foot section of Curtis Road is classified as a Minimum Maintenance (seasonal) road, and is a natural soil road, 10-12 feet in width. The relevant laws are Danby Local Laws No. 2 of 2002 and 2 of 2003 related to Minimum Maintenance Roads. Both of them were provided to Mr. Shurtleff. Local Law No. 2 of 2002, Section 8, provides a manner for persons to petition the Town Board to discontinue the minimum maintenance designation.

Response: In regards to Local Laws No. 2 of 2002 and No. 2 of 2003 (Minimum Maintenance Roads), the County will take this information into consideration during the final design and implementation phases of the PSCS project and will work with the Town Board to address this concern.

3. This paragraph recommends several actions to help mitigate fiscal impacts on local communities using the County system, such as identifying and obtaining alternative sources of financing. We look forward to understanding specifically what actions are planned. With respect to making efforts to comply with existing zoning and municipal ordinances, please be reminded that if the tower sites are ever used for commercial purposes, an application to the Danby Planning Board for a Special Permit will be required.

Response: The County intends to pursue alternative funding and or grants to help with the implementation costs of the PSCS project. No specific proposals are developed at this time. The comment in regards to commercial use of the Tower is noted.

2.7 Comment Letter: Don Barber, November 17, 2005

1. I am concerned that technology innovations will make this system obsolete before it is paid for. I realize that doing nothing is not an option, but a discussion of this potential chain of events should be recognized and discussed.

Response: Basic infrastructure of tower site facilities and towers structures will be adaptable to changes in technology. Section 3.1.1.1 of the DEIS (p. 3-1 and 3-2) describes the project and the funding proposal: "infrastructure such as towers, equipment shelters, and site work will be bonded for 20 years. Equipment, which has a shorter effective life span, will be bonded for 5 to 10 years."

2. I am concerned about the compatibility of this system with the State Wireless Network (SWN). The DEIS mentions a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State. I received a copy of the MOU from Ms. Jurkowich. I have read it. It states that a Partnership Development Team would be convened within 60 days which would have been in May 2005. No mention of this team nor the results/status of their deliberations was mentioned. I recommend that the County request reimbursement from the State for any structures or apparatus that the SWN uses. I believe a discussion of this situation with the SWN is appropriate and importation to the taxpayers of Tompkins County.

Response: Section 3.2.1 of the DEIS (p. 3-9, et seq.) describes alternative technologies considered for this system. This section concluded (on p 3-12) "The County's system will be compatible, to every extent possible, with the proposed SWN." Arrangements for equipment integration or sharing are still in planning stages but it is intended that resources would be shared to the benefit of both the County and State to the greatest extent practicable.

3. Fall zone: The County should own, or lease any property where their tower could fall. By not doing so, neighbors to the tower sites may not develop their land for fear of a potential loss if the tower were to fall on it. This impact should have been discussed in the DEIS.

Response: Section 5.3.3.2 of the DEIS describes issues related to fall zones (p. 5-29):

“Although the towers are thoroughly engineering against structural failure, there may be unusual conditions that develop that could cause a failure. Thus for additional safety, it is common to maintain fall zones for around tower sites especially for guyed towers. There are two existing County guyed towers that will be upgraded. Any trees that could fall on guy wires will be removed. The new self supported towers do not rely on any guy wires and are inherently stronger near the bottom, thus the failure mode for these types of towers is typically for the top thinner portion to fold over on itself. The tower sites are selected and located to provide clearance around the towers and avoid adjacent structures.” Therefore, based on equipment design, the County has determined that it has adequate buffer lands to accommodate unlikely tower failure.

4. Security: Towers present a challenging apparatus for brave youths. How will the tower sites be secured to prevent or at least deter entry by unwanted intruders? This impact should be addressed in the DEIS.

Response: Section 5.3.3.2 of the DIES describes site security (p. 5-30):

“Tower sites will be surrounded by a 10-foot high chain link fence. The top of the fence twisted ends to help deter persons from using the top rail to climb over the fence.”

5. Tower Removal: At some point in time the tower will become unneeded, due to new technologies or the SWN or old age. This project is not over until the tower is removed. This part of the project should have been considered and discussed in the DEIS. What happens to the land after the removal?

Response: The properties are under lease and therefore would likely revert back to pre-project uses. As owner of the tower and associated equipment, the County is responsible for maintenance and removal of the tower after it is no longer being utilized. This scenario will be resolved on an as need basis in the future. If the County no longer has a need for a particular facility and cannot identify any other uses for the tower, then the County would remove it.

6. Similarly, will there be annual inspections of the towers and maintenance?

Response: The towers will be inspected on a frequency needed to properly maintain reliability and to perform preventive maintenance. The tower sites will be visited regularly in order to check access to

the tower, to conduct regular testing of the generators, and to ensure facilities are maintained. This will include regular on-going maintenance of the tower, site buildings, fencing and surrounding grounds. The County Department of Emergency Response will allocate staff and budget on an annual basis. The tower and supporting facilities are designed for low maintenance.

2.8 Comment Letter: Laurene Gilbert, November 17, 2005

1. Are there any profit making advantages for the landowners whose land is being used for this purpose?

Response: As part of the standard lease for the tower site parcels, there is a provision that a percentage of any co-location revenue would go to the owner. However co-location is not a primary use for the towers and actual viability or plans for such uses have not been determined at this time. Therefore, there is no guarantee that such will occur or that any revenue will be generated from such uses in the future.

2. Will the towers be used as co-locations for other private companies? If so, who benefits?

Response: The system is being constructed for County public safety purposes. It may be possible in the future for co-location of private/municipal facilities; however no specific plans are in place and the current project was not designed with such uses in mind. These would be evaluated on a site-specific basis. In such an event, the County would potentially benefit from revenue to offset operating costs and a portion would go to the underlying property owner.

3. What types of deals have been made in advance with cell tower companies for these towers?

Response: No deals have been made in advance other than Memorandum of Understanding with the State Wireless Network (SWN) to mutually cooperate to improve public safety communications, as noted in Section 3.2.1.4 of the DEIS (see page 3-12).

4. How will a cell tower on, or next to someone's private property effect land values and assessments?

Response: Property value impacts are discussed under the Community Character assessment section [Section 5.1.2.2 (p. 5-8)] and are also discussed in the DGEIS for the State Wireless Network (SWN), which reported that it "did not find conclusive evidence of any quantifiable effect of siting of antennae on surrounding properties.

5. If land values are lowered as a result of the towers, will it be reflected in tax assessments?

Response: Property values are not expected to decrease as a result of the Project. However, the County Assessment Department conducts property assessments periodically and residents have a right to appeal property assessments. Property reassessments are not a part of the proposed Project.

6. What research has been conducted regarding health issues for those living under or near cell towers of this sort? What was the outcome of that research?

Response: Section 5.3 of the DEIS (p. 5-26, et seq.) describes the public health impacts of the project. Current studies have shown no evidence of health risks from EMF Electromagnetic Fields. See DEIS Appendix F, Public Health References – FCC Guidelines.

2.9 Comment Letter and Public Hearing Comments: Donald Dingler, November 3, 2005

1. Why are you only looking at Taft Rd. in Caroline Center? Why can't you look at a less populated area such as Bald Hill, Blackman Hill, or South Road?

Response: Section 3.2.3 of the DEIS (p. 3-13, et seq.) describes several alternative site configurations that were considered. Section 3.2.4 of the DEIS (p 3-16, et seq.) describes the factors that were used to select specific sites consistent with the Preferred System Configuration Alternative.

Specifically, with regard to the Caroline site, this site sits at the apex of a hill, approximately 1830 ft. in elevation, with significant drops in elevation occurring in all directions within a few hundred feet, or less. The Bald Hill site (as well as others) provided less coverage the Taft Road site. A suggestion to move the tower southward (to the Camp McCormack area) was in fact evaluated, with a loss of elevation nearing or exceeding 100 feet, and a diminishment of coverage to the north and east of Taft Road and Buffalo Hill Road as it descends toward Slaterville. Duplicate microwave paths could not be established to other system sites because the signals would be unable to clear the hills to the west and north, with a tower of less than 200 ft.

Property along the Buffalo Hill Road, just south of Slaterville Road, was offered to the County as a site for co-location with a private venture. This site was evaluated as well. An elevation difference of approximately 300 ft. was determined, ruling out microwave connectivity in any direction, and there would have been a loss of coverage to Speedsville and areas south of Taft Road. The Fire Tower Road in the northeast corner of Caroline was evaluated early on, and again, the inability to send line of sight signals across the hills (over Taft and Buffalo Roads) was evident.

2. Why has there only been 1 meeting in the town of Caroline regarding this tower?

Response: The County has properly complied with all public notice requirements pursuant to SEQRA. See Appendix A. In addition, there were numerous public meetings prior to the SEQRA review concerning the planning and development of this project. Initial meetings were held in each town in 2000. Additionally, county staff has made numerous presentations over the past four years at public meetings of the County Legislature and the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council. County staff has also met with individual fire departments and the Tompkins County Municipal Officials Association to discuss this project. County representatives also met with several Town Boards as design of the project has progressed. The most recent meeting with the Town Board in Caroline was on August 2, 2005.

3. Why not state land? Is it true that it's easier to take people's land, than get the State to give land?

Response: Section 3.2.3 of the DEIS (p. 3-13, et seq.) describes several alternative site configurations that were considered. Section 3.2.4 of the DEIS (p 3-16, et seq.) describes the factors that were used to select specific sites consistent with the Preferred System Configuration Alternative. The location of the proposed towers was first and foremost based on coverage and microwave connection to the system as a whole. Secondary siting considerations included potential environmental impacts and land availability.

4. What about the petition? Where is the original petition that was given to the individual in charge of the meeting held back in early 2000, when the news of the tower locations first came out? How does Town of Caroline benefit from this tower?

Response: Thanks to the commenter, we now have a copy of the referenced petition. This petition was apparently previously submitted during a PSCS Public Forum, at the Women's Community Building on June 12, 2000. Throughout the planning and preliminary design, alternative system and site configurations were studied.

The petition asked 'you reconsider the location of the Tower' on Taft Road. Section 3.2.3 of the DEIS (p. 3-13, et seq.) describes several alternative site configurations that were considered. Section 3.2.4 of the DEIS (p 3-16, et seq.) describes the factors that were used to select specific sites consistent with the Preferred System Configuration Alternative. After evaluation of the alternative tower site locations, coverage and microwave links were best provided at the proposed Caroline location.

The benefit to the Town of Caroline will be improved public safety communications for its residents, fire departments and emergency medical services.

5. Will the tower be able to add cell phone companies to lease on the tower?

Response: The system is being constructed for County public safety purposes. It may be possible in the future for co-location of private/municipal facilities; however no specific plans are in place and the current project was not designed with such uses in mind. These would be evaluated on a site-specific basis.

6. What are the prolonged health risks?

Response: Section 5.3 of the DEIS (p. 5-26, et seq.) describes the public health impacts of the project. Current studies have shown no evidence of prolonged health risks from EMF (electromagnetic fields). See Appendix F, Public Health References – FCC Guidelines.

7. What happens when our health declines, who's going to help us?

Response: Section 5.3 of the DEIS (p. 5-26, et seq.) describes the public health impacts of the project. Current studies have shown no evidence of health risks from EMF (electromagnetic fields). See Appendix F, Public Health References – FCC Guidelines.

8. What will our property be worth? Will our taxes be adjusted for worthless property?

Response: : Property value impacts are discussed under the Community Character assessment section [Section 5.1.2.2 (p. 5-8)] and are also discussed in the DGEIS for the State Wireless Network (SWN), which reported that it “did not find conclusive evidence of any quantifiable effect of siting of antennae on surrounding properties. The County conducts property assessments on a periodic basis. Residents have a right to appeal property assessments through existing appeal processes.

9. Is it going to be commercial property in Caroline Center now?

Response: The proposed Project does not involve commercial development.

10. How come the web pages are not kept up to date? Why haven't people's comments been addressed?

Response: The County website for the project has provided all of the committee meeting minutes and project planning related documents. The updating is done whenever new information is generated.

11. I live on Taft Rd. and no one has ever come to talk to me about this tower?

Response: The County has properly complied with all public notice requirements pursuant to SEQRA. See Appendix A. In addition, there were numerous public meetings prior to the SEQRA review concerning the planning and development of this project. Initial meetings were held in each town in

2000. Additionally, county staff has made numerous presentations over the past four years at public meetings of the County Legislature and the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council. County staff has also met with individual fire departments and the Tompkins County Municipal Officials Association to discuss this project. County representatives also met with several Town Boards as design of the project has progressed. The most recent meeting with the Town Board in Caroline was on August 2, 2005.

12. What about the family with 5 children that live just in front of the tower?

Response: Section 5.3 of the DEIS (p. 5-26, et seq.) describes the public health impacts of the project. Current studies have shown no evidence of health risks from EMF. See Appendix F, Public Health References – FCC Guidelines.

13. What about Taft Rd. - will it withstand the construction equipment and constant travel? Who's going to pay for the damage to the road?

Response: Section 5.6 of the DEIS (p. 5-46 and 5-47) describe the impacts of the project on the transportation system. There will not be a significant traffic increase, nor change in wear and tear on road due to the project. The County will be responsible for repairing any damage to the road caused by construction, as noted on p. 5-47 of the DEIS.

14. How often will the tower need to be painted and who is going to do that, how much will it cost?

Response: Section 3.1.3 of the DEIS (p. 3-2 et seq.) provides a brief description of the proposed facilities. The tower and supporting facilities are designed using low maintenance materials, such as concrete and galvanized steel for the towers. The towers will not need to be painted. Towers will be regularly inspected as needed to properly maintain reliability and perform preventive maintenance. The County Department of Emergency Response will allocate staff and budget on an annual basis. The County will also have the system vendor provide a maintenance contract for the equipment. Terms are still under negotiation.

15. What about the farmland - crops and animals?

Response: Agricultural impacts were discussed in the DEIS at Section 4.5 and discussions on health impacts can be found in Appendix F in DEIS.

16. Where are the electrical lines going to be run for the tower?

Response: Electrical services to the tower sites will be underground from the nearest power pole serving the area of the tower.

2.10 Comment Letter: Lisa Nicholas, November 14, 2005

1. General conclusions of the DEIS have found no impact to the City.

Response: Comment acknowledged. No response necessary.

2.11 Comment Letter: Steven J. Uzmann, November 18, 2005

1. No Comments

Response: No response required.

2.12 Public Hearing Comments, November 3, 2005

The following are additional comments from the Public Hearing that were not covered by written comments.

Public Hearing Comments: Donald Dingler, November 3, 2005

1. *I have lived in the town of Caroline for 43 years. There has been a 220 year old church for my neighbor for all those years. It's a landmark that I am proud of. And I would like to see it continue to be that landmark. But instead you are insisting on putting a 200 foot tower next to it, within visible sight of this 200 year old church.*

Response: Section 5.4 of the DEIS (p. 5-30 et seq.) reviewed the impacts of the project on historic resources. The impacts from development of the Caroline site are summarized in Section 5.4.2.2 (p 5-36) of the DEIS. The church referred to in this comment (the Caroline Federated Church), while undoubtedly a local landmark, is not listed on the State Register of Historic Places. The church is located approximately 200 feet in elevation below the proposed tower location. Given the topography of the area, if the tower were visible at all, no more than the highest point of the tower would be visible.

2. *"...these (current) towers are not in that good of shape, and yet you want to propose to take care of five more when you can't take care of the ones you have."*

Response: The towers will be inspected on a frequency needed to properly maintain reliability and to perform preventive maintenance. This will include regular on-going maintenance of the tower, site buildings, fencing and surrounding grounds. The County Department of Emergency Response will allocate staff and budget on an annual basis. The tower and supporting facilities are designed for low maintenance.

3. “...And we know, we’re probably thinking it isn’t so much for the communication of the two or three fire halls that are in the town of Caroline, that it’s more for cell phone use. We’re thinking that it’s probably more like 90 percent cell phone use. And the revenues that this thing is going to create, is that going to make the taxes go down cheaper in the immediate area of the town of Caroline for supporting this tower?”

Response: The system is being constructed for County public safety purposes. It may be possible in the future for collocation of private/municipal facilities; however no specific plans are in place and the current project was not designed with such uses in mind. These would be evaluated on a site-specific basis.

4. *Is the county going into commercial business of leasing towers to cell phone companies?*

Response: The system is being constructed for County public safety purposes. It may be possible in the future for co-location of private/municipal facilities; however no specific plans are in place and the current project was not designed with such uses in mind. These would be evaluated on a site-specific basis.

Public Hearing Comments: Marc Dantzker, November 3, 2005

1. “Our primary remaining concern . . . has to do with the road access to the location; which would literally run within I think what did we say 40 feet, 30 feet our site our living room, our view shed. And we think even in and of itself, external of the tower, that the property value adversely will be affected.”

Response: Section 3.1.6 of the DEIS (p. 3-4, et seq.) describes the various tower site locations. Figure 3.1-1A (p. 3-20) shows the Danby North site. As can be seen in the referenced figure, the proposed access driveway to the tower site does run along the property line of the Dantzkers.

In a subdivision map of the property, a driveway is shown along the property line intended to serve Tax Parcel 12.-1-5.22. This subdivision was approved by the Town of Danby in September 2004 and filed with the Tompkins County Clerk on September 23, 2004. The proposed access driveway would use the driveway identified on that plat.

The County will take special steps in development of the driveway in the vicinity of the Dantzkers house to reduce the visual and ‘snow drift’ impacts identified by the Dantzkers. This will be accomplished through construction techniques, landscaping, and placement of the access driveway,

3.0 DEIS REVISIONS / SUPPLEMENTS

3.1 Introduction

In addition to the foregoing responses to public comment, the FEIS provides the following additional clarification of the Project and the DEIS and details additional mitigation measures for the Project.

3.2 Danby North

As discussed in Section 2.0, several comments were directed at the proximity of this proposed tower to a private residence. In part, based on the concerns raised, the County is proposing the additional mitigation measure of relocating the tower 450 feet south-southwest of its currently proposed location. This new location is identified on the attached site map Figure 3.1-1 A(2). The new location remains technologically feasible and compatible with the proposed system due to the existing topography. The new location will require a longer access road. Figure 7-A shows the visual simulations from viewpoint 19 of the original tower location compared to the proposed alternative location. Based on the visual impact criteria, including reduced exposure above the tree line, the new location does help to reduce the visual impact. The other viewpoints were also reviewed. For the distant viewpoints VP 6 and VP 23, a noticeable change is not expected. For viewpoint 47 on Marsh Road the alternative location is no closer these houses.

In addition to the reduction in visual impacts, the alternative location will also further minimize or avoid other potential adverse environmental impacts, including noise impacts as well as eliminating additional concerns raised such as the fall zone, real property values and health impacts. For example, based on the increased distance from the Dantzker property, noise levels will be further decreased, as discussed previously in Section 2; sound levels would be expected to drop by a minimum of an additional -3 dBA due to distance and possibly even -3 to -6 dBA due to reductions from the intervening forest.

3.3 Revised Summary Table from DEIS Summary

The following Table 1-F is a replacement table for the summary Table 1 from the DEIS. The revision to the former table was made in consideration of the comment submitted by Ms. Dooley Kiefer to clarify that the DEIS addresses 9 tower sites used for the Public Safety Communications System due to the completion of the environmental review for other sites.

Table 1-F DEIS Summary

Category	Relevant Issue or Concern	Assessment/Study	Results /Mitigation Measures
<i>PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES (SECTION 3)</i>			
Alternatives (Section 3.2)	Have reasonable alternatives been considered	Studies completed by NYSTEC, Motorola, SSI Inc. and the County	Alternative technologies, tower configurations and tower sites have been considered. Proposed 9 site system is recommended in preliminary design. Environmental review is based on this. ¹
<i>NATURAL RESOURCES (SECTION 4)</i>			
Geology, Soils, Topography (Section 4.1)	Site design, grading, disturbance during construction	Review of site designs and proposed construction along with research of existing conditions	No significant impacts, temporary soil disturbance each small in scope and area
Water Resources (Section 4.2)	Impact to surface or groundwater	Research of existing conditions, review of construction activity and any water use or wastewater generation by the project	Erosion control measures to be used during construction, small sites with minor temporary impact, no water used or wastewater generated by project
Wetlands (Section 4.3)	Impact to wetlands	Research and site investigation for identification of wetlands related to site locations	No significant water resources, or wetlands in vicinity of project sites
Biological Resources - Flora, Fauna, & Habitat (Section 4.4)	Impact to plants and animals and their habitat	Research and site investigation for understanding of habitat disturbance, check for presence of rare, threatened or endangered species	No significant impacts, temporary habitat disturbance each small in scope and area, no known rare, threatened or endangered species identified in database search
Agricultural Resources (Section 4.5)	Impact to farming by changing land use	Research and site investigation for identification of wetlands related to site locations	No significant impacts

¹ The Public Safety Communications System will, in fact, use several other towers, some of which are already developed, for which no environmental review was conducted at this time, and some of which have already been subject to an environmental review, for which no additional environmental review was conducted at this time.

Category	Relevant Issue or Concern	Assessment/Study	Results /Mitigation Measures
<i>HUMAN RESOURCES (SECTION 5)</i>			
Community Character (Section 5.1)	General community concerns such as zoning, compatibility with land use, environmental justice, costs	Research of land use, zoning, demographics, related to site locations	No significant impacts
Visual Resources (Section 5.2)	Visual impacts to viewshed, including sensitive sites	Comprehensive visual impact assessment, field studies, identification of viewshed and sensitive sites, simulation of viewpoints for tower sites	Towers kept below 200 ft to minimize impact, also avoids FAA lighting, open lattice type towers less visible
Public Health (Section 5.3)	Safety issues and FCC standards	Research of applicable standards and understanding of electromagnetic fields generated by the communication system	Recommended short-term worker safety procedures in accordance with accepted practices
Cultural Resources (Section 5.4)	Archeological and historic impacts	Phase IA Cultural Resources Survey conducted along with historic architectural survey	No significant impacts. Phase IB protocol recommended.
Noise (Section 5.5)	Noise generated by the project	Background noise survey at site, assessment of noise sources and prediction of impacts	Main noise source is emergency generators, however housed in shelter; routine operation is only short duration testing once per week. Higher performance noise reduction mufflers recommended for 3 sites.
Transportation (Section 5.6)	Impact to roads and traffic	Assessment of construction and operations activity as related to roads and site access	No significant impacts

3.4 Text Change Related to DEIS Section 3.2.2 County RFP

The following paragraph is included as a footnote to the first sentence of the final paragraph of Section 3.2.2 on page 3-13 in regards to the original responses to the PSCS RFP:

“One potential responder, MA-COM, expressed interest in Tompkins County's RFP but noted that the RFP for New York State's SWN project, which both it and Motorola were also pursuing, had a later response date, and it did not want to disclose proprietary information to its SWN competition prior to

the close of the SWN RFP process. As the County was not in a position to extend the RFP deadlines, MA-COM did not submit a formal proposal.”

3.5 Addition of Zoning Table 5.1-2

In response to the comment by Mr. Edward Marx, the following zoning table has been included as Table 5.1-2:

Table 5.1-2 Existing Zoning

Site Name	Type of Site	Jurisdiction	Zoning (within a 1-mile radius)
Danby North	New	Town of Danby	100% LD
Caroline	New	Town of Caroline	No Zoning
Danby South	New	Town of Danby	100% LD
Enfield	New	Town of Enfield	No Zoning
Newfield South	Existing	Town of Newfield	No Zoning
Dryden West	Existing	Town of Dryden	100% R-B-1
Groton	Existing	Town of Groton	74% Rural/Agricultural; 17% Medium Intensity; 2% Special Purpose
Newfield North	Existing	Town of Newfield	No Zoning
Dryden East	Existing	Town of Dryden	52% R-B; 48% Unknown (Cortland County)

3.6 Text Change Related to DEIS Section 5.3.1.1

On page 5-26 of DEIS in Section 5.3.1.1, the references to Appendix G.1 and G.2 should be Appendix F.1 and F.2.