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GPIA Position on Telecommunication Towers

The subject of cellular towers in our community has continually evoked concerns of health risks and community aesthetics. More people have expressed their opinion on this matter than on any other. They have written letters, signed petitions and registered their protest of feeling placed at the mercy of Government and the FCC.

Community groups have been placed in the middle of this debate. Although it's understood that cellular communication equipment dispersed throughout our community is a given, we feel common ground and an area for reasonable discussion could be achieved if basic guidelines were put in place, made widely known, and followed.

Cellular towers have some flexibility in choosing appropriate locations and are also capable of a variety of design styles. And although the FCC has stated that there are no health concerns at the emission levels allowed, certain precautions would still be advised.

We therefore suggest that telecommunication companies:

- *Be required to supply a book of their creative designs that would enable the towers to be more adaptive to their environment.
- *Provide maps of their current and proposed locations within a one-mile radius and that all information regarding current cellular tower locations and all proposed new locations be collected in a grid map and made readily and easily available to the community through the pre-established communications with District Council offices and Neighborhood Councils.
- *Prove their inability to co-locate on a pre-existing structure.
- *Be refused to locate atop or directly alongside a residential building.

We further suggest that the Department of Planning create a master plan to coordinate all locations of telecommunication towers and to minimize their visual impact as suggested in the Northeast Community Plan. Cell tower placement should be considered in a revenue enhancing relationship with locations on city, county, and state properties to be evaluated in a standardized contract.