



LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVES
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Preservation, Restoration, Education and Recreation

DATE: March 6, 2017

MEMO TO: Carol Calabresa, Chair
Planning Committee

FROM: Alex Ty Kovach,
Executive Director

RECOMMENDATION: Provide Policy Direction regarding a request from Central States Tower III, LLC to construct and operate a cell tower at Countryside Golf Club and to authorize staff to negotiate agreements.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION SUPPORTED: Public Access and Connections

FINANCIAL DATA: At this time there is no financial impact.

BACKGROUND: The License and Easement Ordinance cites Section 6 of the Downstate Forest Preserve District Act, which states the Lake County Forest Preserve District (the “District”) has the "power to grant licenses, easements and rights-of-way for the construction, operation and maintenance upon, under or across any property of [the] District of facilities for water, sewage, telephone, telegraph, electric, gas or other public service...”

The District has been approached with a request to construct and operate a cell tower at Countryside Golf Club. In preliminary discussions, staff delivered to Central States Tower III, LLC the Committee-approved list of terms by which the District is willing to consider new cell tower agreements. Central States Tower, which specializes in developing, building, acquiring, owning, leasing, operating, and managing wireless telecommunications towers, is willing to negotiate a license or easement agreement based on those terms, with Verizon as the initial carrier utilizing the tower.

In light of efforts to broaden the District’s revenue base as a result of the declining Equalized Assessed Value and other financial challenges, staff sees potential benefits in creating a new license or easement agreement for this proposed tower. Policy direction on the establishment of new cell tower agreements was brought before Committees on October 31, 2016. Consensus at that time was that cell towers would be considered by Committee on a case by case basis. Staff would like to obtain committee direction on whether to engage in further due diligence, discussions and negotiations with Verizon Wireless regarding a new tower and license under its current proposal. If negotiations proved fruitful, staff would present a license or easement agreement to the Committees for further review and recommendation.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: Policy Direction is required in accordance with District policy.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Executive Director, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Planning and Land Preservation, Director of Finance, Corporate Counsel