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Inside Towers

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WMAL Towers Site Gets Closer to Becoming Toll Brothers' Million Dollar Homes

Cumulus Media's deal to sell the 75-acre parcel in Bethesda, MD that is home to its four towers broadcasting a butterfly pattern blanketing the nation's capital with conservative talk WMAL-AM (630), inched closer to its end game with a required public meeting last Saturday. About 150 neighbors to the site packed a school auditorium to pelt homebuilder Toll Brothers with the usual questions on how a new settlement of 328 homes would change their lives. Traffic, in a city rated as the worst traffic jam in the nation, is of course their biggest concern.

While those in attendance took little comfort in the fact that the new neighbors wouldn't be bums -- of the 328 homes, 170 would be single-family detached and 158 would be town homes – each priced at a starting price of about $1 million each – the gathering met one of Montgomery County, MD's requirements that such open discussions be held by the developer. When the financially troubled Cumulus put the tract up for sale early last year hoping to pay down some of its enormous debt – estimated by some to be $2.5 billion -- it also put its prized KABC Los Angeles property on the market, hoping to fetch nearly $125 million.

Broadcasters selling the land where their stations' towers stand, and radio groups selling dozens of their towers in a package have become a one-time cash generator for the former titans of the airwaves. Reached by Inside Towers last week, one radio group head acknowledged that he is preparing to cut a similar deal for the company's nearly five dozen stations in a dozen-and-a-half markets. "We are getting ready to make a sale-leaseback deal for our towers. Isn't everyone selling their towers these days?"

Staying Connected While Riding the Rails, Amtrak Builds Tower Network

Last October, *Inside Towers* reported that Amtrak was struggling to keep up with riders' demands for access to the Internet, cellular connections and all the conveniences of a fully wired home in a wireless train. The national rail system

has come up with a handful of solutions, including building its own private wireless dedicated network that stretches for 10 miles across Delaware while working with a radio provider to expand it, reports *FierceWireless*. With its trackside solution, Amtrak can control and optimize the backhaul rather than being reliant on a shared cell tower. The new system will increase bandwidth five to 10 times, and the goal is to deliver 100 megabits per second to trains, reports the news site.

Amtrak expects to have about 40 miles done by the end of October, and continue expansion as funding permits. The railroad is still planning to take another look at satellite, primarily for long-haul trains where there are wide open spaces; the goal is to do a pilot within a year, Lenetta McCampbell, senior director of passenger experience at Amtrak told *FierceWireless*. "There have been great advances in satellite technology," including in the airline industry where they're using Ka and Ku band solutions; the same potential exists in rail. Amtrak is looking at newer solutions but has to determine if it's viable in terms of coverage and affordability, she said.

FirstNet Proposal Deadline Reset

Working on an RFP for FirstNet and need a little more time to pull it together? Your prayers have been answered (again). The First Responders Network Authority has extended the deadline a third time, to May 31, from May 13, giving bidders on the national public safety LTE network another two weeks to get proposals together for the $6.5 billion network. Bids will be unveiled in early November, reports *RCR Wireless News*.

“Our decision to extend the deadline for final proposals was driven by both the volume and nature of the capability statements as well as requests for extensions we’ve received from interested parties,” said FirstNet CEO Mike Poth in a statement. “We believe this date affords prospective offerors the opportunity to fine tune their proposals and finalize any teaming arrangements and/or subcontractors, and we remain on track to award by November 1.”

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NATE Delivers Safety Message to STAC 2016 Two-Day Conference

Canada’s first-ever conference and exhibition of the Structure, Tower and Antenna Council or STAC 2016, got underway this week in Toronto with NATE’s Executive Director Todd Schlekeway playing an important role. He delivered a keynote talk to the more than 200 gathered to discuss safety issues and best practices in the tower and antenna industry. Schlekeway’s “NATE – Transforming Global Wireless Through Safety, Standards and Education” focused not only on NATE’s 21-year history but also the Association’s signature safety resources, priority initiatives and he updated attendees on the current wireless industry legislative and regulatory environment in the United States.

Schlekeway also devoted time during his remarks to discuss the prominent, global role that NATE and STAC

members will play in deploying next generation technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT) and 5G networks around the world. He thanked STAC leadership for inviting NATE to participate in its inaugural conference." Schlekeway said afterward, "I was honored to speak at STAC 2016 and came away thoroughly impressed at the commitment to industry safety and quality that existed among the event attendees. NATE looks forward to continue to collaborate closely with the STAC organization in order to ensure that the North American wireless infrastructure industry continues to be the global leader in safety, quality and innovation."

Schlekeway also promoted the NATE STAR Initiative Program which recognizes companies that embrace the highest standards of safety for their employees, conducts and submits site safety audits for 10 specific areas as defined by the Advisory Committee on Construction Safety & Health (ACCSH), and promotes the Official STAR Initiative Smartphone APP to Streamline Field Reporting in "real time. "

Schlekeway delivering the keynote address at the inaugural STAC 2016 Conference in Toronto, Ontario

L to R: Keith Ranney (Bell), Clay Parchewsky (WesTower), Todd Schlekeway (NATE), Bernard Lord (Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association), Nicholas Kyonka (Structures, Tower & Antenna Council)

Gordon Lyman and Dominique Valdez from eSystems Training Solutions exhibit at the STAC 2016 Conference & Expo in Toronto, Ontario

Tower, Carrier and Wireless Communities Give Back in Nashville

Who said conventions are just for having fun and meeting new and old friends over cocktails? CCA's Mobile Carriers Show kicked off its three-day expo in Nashville yesterday but not before doing good work in the community. Dozens of show-goers participated in a five-hour volunteer marathon with Hands on Nashville to help improve school-in-need Napier Elementary, near the J.C. Napier Homes public housing project off Murfreesboro Road. The volunteers worked inside and outside the school mural painting, landscaping, and renovating the playground and more for lunch and tee shirts in return.

The event was sponsored by American Tower, Appalachian Wireless, Atlantic Tele- Network, Bluegrass Cellular, Brightstar, Carolina West Wireless, Cellular One, Chat Mobility, DISH Network, GCI, Huawei Technologies, IDI Billing Solutions, Interop Technologies, iWireless, Northwest Missouri Cellular, nTelos Wireless, OSG Billing Services, SouthernLINC Wireless, Thumb Cellular, and Velleros.

Inside Towers is in Nashville attending the event and will be filing reports. Stay Tuned!

Damaged SC Weather Antenna Forces Reliance on Back-Up Warning System

An Aynor, SC weather radio transmitter will not be repaired in time for the summer storm season. The National Weather Service has advised residents of Aynor to register for CodeRED, Horry County's free emergency system. The system will notify residents of severe weather, instead of the damaged antenna from the radio transmitter.

Myrtle Beach Online reports the 800-foot antenna was last replaced in 2002. Steve Pfaff, warning coordination meteorologist for the National Weather Service said that it lasted a long time before needing to be replaced. The national Weather Service found out about the damage from public reports that weekly test tones failed to broadcast.

Fishermen and boaters rely on weather radio to warn of sudden storms. The absence of the antenna will be dangerous if boaters do not pay attention to forecasts before venturing out. According to Pfaff, the process for replacing the antenna will run nearly six months.

Tower Ticker

April 12, 2016 at Close

SYMBOL	TIME & PRICE		CHG & % CHG		DAY'S LOW & HIGH		VOLUME
AMT	04:00pm EDT	106.17	+0.16	+0.15%	105.26	106.49	1,464,544
AMX	04:01pm EDT	15.54	+0.50	+3.32%	15.02	15.58	2,930,934
CCI	04:01pm EDT	87.68	+0.17	+0.19%	87.08	88.03	1,003,071
CTL	04:01pm EDT	32.00	-0.08	-0.25%	31.94	32.42	3,193,664
DY	04:02pm EDT	67.10	+2.38	+3.68%	65.14	67.94	572,861
ERIC	04:00pm EDT	9.90	-0.15	-1.49%	9.82	9.94	2,836,380
FTR	04:00pm EDT	5.3400	+0.1000	+1.91%	5.21	5.40	13,380,304
LVLT	04:01pm EDT	52.52	+0.77	+1.49%	51.69	52.72	2,496,011
S	04:00pm EDT	3.4900	+0.0600	+1.75%	3.36	3.50	11,185,531
SBAC	04:00pm EDT	100.41	+1.64	+1.66%	98.62	101.37	1,161,391
T	04:00pm EDT	38.67	+0.28	+0.73%	38.38	38.79	17,110,256
TMUS	04:00pm EDT	38.89	+0.25	+0.65%	38.45	39.19	3,280,958
VZ	04:01pm EDT	51.95	+0.34	+0.66%	51.60	52.19	12,081,985
ZAYO	04:01pm EDT	24.68	-0.05	-0.20%	24.48	25.06	1,528,891

Real-Time

Zoning & Moaning

Pittsburgh Suburb Committee Denies Tower Exception

Attorneys for SBA Towers and Palmer Place Development residents asked for a special exception to allow a 150-foot tower off Palmer Drive in the Unity Township area of Pennsylvania, but the zoning hearing board voted 2-1, denying the exception at the April 11 meeting.

The exact spot was proposed at a picnic site at Pershing Park, owned by the Knights of Columbus, but the board told *TribLive* that they were concerned about “a hazard for air traffic at the authority’s nearby Arnold Palmer Airport.” They believed testimony from Verizon Wireless that “explored using alternative nearby sites was inconsistent.”

SBA Towers has 30 days to appeal, according to *TribLive*.

Verizon Tower Application Meanders Through New Hartford, NY’s Process

The town of New Hartford, NY in central New York State, just outside of Utica, has been processing an application for a 125-foot tower submitted by Verizon Wireless in January. A date for a public hearing has not been determined, even as the application is under review with state agencies.

"At this time the application is going through State Environmental Quality Review, (and) through a list of interested and involved agencies. These agencies have until April 15, to respond with comments," New Hartford's Town Planning Secretary, Dory Shaw, wrote in an email and reported in the *Utica Observer-Dispatch*.

Although state agencies are involved in some aspects of the review process, the local planning board and town council will ultimately decide whether Verizon's application will be approved. FCC regulations state new towers require approval from the state or local governing authority, and must comply with environmental standards and historic preservation statutes if applicable.

Cell-ebration

N.E.W. Lutheran Begins Tower Construction

Equipment and fencing has arrived on the controversial project tower site at N.E.W. Lutheran School. After months of objection, residents are surprised that the SBA Communications project is moving forward in the Wilder Park neighborhood of Green Bay, WI.

WeAreGreenBay.com reported SBA Communications proposed the cell tower project for Verizon about a year ago on school grounds, and *Inside Towers* has reported that the residents that live near the area have objected to the tower and the proposed 50-year lease with the school. The school sent out flyers to current residents keeping them aware of the tower plans, but "the neighborhood had no say in the matter," and additionally the city council wasn't able to "do anything" because of a state law. The news site reports that the neighbors hired a lawyer to help in the opposition, but the placement of the tower already was decided.

"I understand where they're coming from," resident Pete Lenss told *WeAreGreenBay.com*. "But for them to not even be willing to sit down and talk with a concerned group of citizens and good neighbors—that's the most frustrating part. And really quite honestly, I cannot understand that."

International

Russian VimpelCom Spawns National Towers Company

Shareholders of Russian mobile provider VimpelCom, which operates under the Beeline brand, have reportedly

approved plans to spin off the operator's tower infrastructure into a separate subsidiary, according toTelecompaper.com. Shares in the new company, National Towers Company, will be distributed to existing shareholders.

IHS Picks Flexenclosure to eSite Power to 1,000 Tower Sites in Africa

African tower management company IHS has selected Flexenclosure, a designer and manufacturer of intelligent power management systems to provide its eSite power systems to 1,000 of its towers in Abuja, Nigeria, according to *Telegraphy.com*. The eSite solution is a hybrid power system for base station sites in areas where the power grid is either unreliable or unavailable, and combines battery, solar and diesel generator power sources, cutting diesel-related costs by up to 90%. Flexenclosure also said the eSite solution is designed to be used in a shared tower environment, where it can provide power to several mobile base stations.

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Small Cells

Latest Wireless Coverage, Capacity Solutions at 2016 DAS, Small Cells Congress

For close to a decade, the DAS & Small Cells Congress has brought together the key players in the wireless coverage and capacity ecosystem to explore the advances and opportunities available in this dynamic industry sector. This year, the event will be held at Aria Resort in Las Vegas, May 16-18.

Each year, the agenda evolves to keep pace with market trends. In 2016, as the industry adapts to the shift away from carrier-funded in-building wireless solutions, the event has an increased emphasis on the enterprise end-users – property owners and managers – with a need to develop or advance their mobile strategy. Continue Reading

Tower Trends

Analyst Kagan: Wireless Industry is 'Center of the Universe'

By Benjamin Horvath

In case you haven't noticed, the wireless world is undergoing a period of change that is moving forward at a seemingly breakneck pace. In his or her daily life, the average person is interacting with more forms of wireless technology than at any other time in history, and these interactions will increase dramatically in coming years. This innovation, however, has not stayed contained to the wireless industry, but the ubiquity of wireless technology has spread to other large industries, catalyzing innovation outside of the traditional wireless world, as well.

Such is the central theme of wireless analyst and consultant Jeff Kagan's recent opinion piece published in *RCR Wireless*. In article titled "Changes are coming to the wireless world," and published days before CTIA's April 11, report that found America's wireless world accounted for $282.1billion of the U.S. GDP in 2014, Kagan wrote how

wireless technology has transformed enormous industries like education, healthcare, entertainment and manufacturing—just to name a few. Continue Reading

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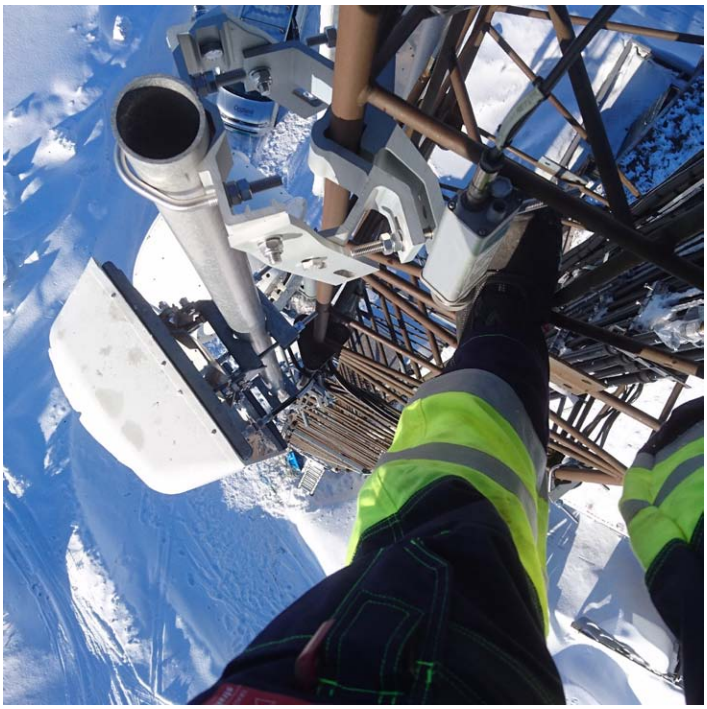

Tower shots from Morten Kristiansen in Eastern Norway.

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