

## Board sees cell towers as likely

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middletown

The Middletown supervisors at their Monday night meeting took no action on proposed cell phone towers on two township-owned properties, but that doesn't mean the towers won't eventually be erected.

Under consideration are 120-foot towers at Poplar Park on Poplar Street and the Middletown Country Club on Bellevue Avenue. After listening to more than an hour of public comment from people mostly against the towers, board members indicated they would study the matter more and make a decision at a future meeting.

With cell phone use and technology exploding, Supervisor Patrick Mallon said the board is faced with some hard choices.

"I'm not comfortable with making a motion on this tonight," he said Monday. "I think we need to do some additional homework, and maybe there are areas where these towers would be less intrusive. But, be aware that we aren't driving the demand for these towers. Consumers are, and in the litigation I've seen where municipalities are trying to turn down cell towers, the cell companies are winning more than the municipalities are."

A previous board approved an agreement with a company called TowerOne to seek out and market cell phone tower sites around the township, including many township-owned properties. Middletown gets \$10,000 a year from each carrier who places an antenna on a tower on township-owned land.

At Monday's meeting, Supervisor Robert McMonagle repeated several times his contention that the towers will go up anyway, so it makes sense for the township to get some revenue out of it and reduce the burden on taxpayers.

"If a tower doesn't go up at these locations, they'll just go up on private properties really close by," said McMonagle.

Middletown is already getting revenue from two towers put up on township properties, a piece of land adjacent to the University of Phoenix building on Veterans Highway (Route 413) and a small part of the Styer property on Langhorne-Yardley Road. Those two towers upset many residents who said they weren't notified beforehand and that the towers didn't have to meet the normal zoning approval requirements since they were on township land.

The supervisors have since decided to post notices of all proposed cell phone tower sites on the township website, [middletowntwpbucks.org](http://middletowntwpbucks.org), and on the government access cable television stations, channel 22 for Comcast subscribers and 30 for Verizon subscribers.

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