

From: Angie Rutherford
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 10:43 AM
To: Kim Billimoria
Cc: Wendy Danielson

Thanks Kim. We have received the letter from Silver Star.
Angie

Angie Rutherford
Planning Administrator
Teton County, Idaho
208 354-2593

From: Kim Billimoria
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 10:39 AM
To: Angie Rutherford
Subject: Silver Star letter for tonight's P&Z hearing

Dear Angie/Wendy-

Please find attached Silver Star's letter regarding the proposed code amendment regarding utilities. We respectfully request that the letter be read into the public record.

Can you please confirm receipt of this letter by replying to this email?

Thank you,

Kim Billimoria
Marketing Coordinator

SILVER STAR COMMUNICATIONS

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September 10, 2012

Dear Ms. Rutherford and members of the Planning and Zoning Commission,

After reviewing the Utilities Code Change Application for Teton County, Idaho, Silver Star would like to submit the following points of consideration to be read into the public record. We believe that what is at stake with this amendment is whether Teton Valley builds homes ready for the next generation of technology and supporting the economic development potential that comes with broadband capacity. For example, the City of Driggs is investing in fiber optic infrastructure downtown as a means of attracting economic development.

1. Although wireless internet service is widely available, buried fiber to the home is the wave of the future because of the faster connection speeds it provides as well as much higher carrying capacity. Currently wireless service maxes out at 3Mb whereas with fiber to the home up to 50Mb is available. As the use of the internet and video streaming expands, including for distance learning and telecommuting, homes are consuming much greater bandwidth. Fiber allows for homes to seamlessly adopt future generations of technology – just think about how the digital landscape has changed in the last 5-10 years. Fiber lays the groundwork, literally, for the advances of the next decade in terms of economic growth, job creation, global competitiveness, education, energy management and a better way of life.
2. The FCC has a new mandate requiring 98% of homes to have broadband service by 2020. According to the FCC order:

Every household and business location in America should have access to affordable broadband service with the following characteristics:

- *Actual* download speeds of at least 4 Mbps and *actual* upload speeds of at least 1 Mbps
- An acceptable quality of service for the most common interactive applications

...This represents a speed comparable to what the typical broadband subscriber receives today, and what many consumers are likely to use in the future, given past growth rates (<http://www.broadband.gov/plan/8-availability/?search=broadband>).

Silver Star is already working to establish a network that can accommodate these plans and at the current time the wireless services available do not meet this requirement.

3. Even if wireless is sufficient for some people at this time, there are many places in Teton Valley with insufficient wireless coverage due to geographic constraints. Silver Star has had many requests to build out fiber services to these developments. If Teton County doesn't require the developer to place facilities within the subdivision when it's built, the burden of getting those homeowners fiber is now left up to the individuals themselves. This is going to make subdivisions without fiber less attractive to potential buyers – especially for those who may be re-locating from metropolitan areas or those whose

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work from home is reliant on broadband access— such as free-lance photographers, designers, and those in the finance sector. In short, this code change could represent a loss in economic development potential.

4. If this change is allowed it will remove the cost of placing facilities from the developer/speculator and place the burden on the new lot or home owners. This leaves the home owner without the choice of whether to have wireless or wired broadband service.
5. Relying solely on wireless internet and phone service will force wireless providers to build more wireless sites, and even then will not be able to reach every residence. Will the cost of these sites be incurred by the developer or will this be at the expense of existing community members?
6. If the lot/homeowners are burdened with the cost of getting a high bandwidth connection to their own homes after the developer has come and gone, the correct easements may not be in place and the homeowner has to get approval from everyone in the development to get the fiber placed. The developer has control over all property and correct easements can be received at the time of placing the facilities prior to any individual purchasing the lots.

Silver Star has been a part of the community for many years and plans to be for many more. Silver Star works with developers to bring cutting edge technology to each lot. Silver Star places part of the cost burden on the developer/speculator with the possibility of a refund if the development is built out within a certain number of years. That way if the development is successful we give the developer a 90% refund for placing the broadband facilities in place. If the development is not successful it prevents the cost burden from being placed on other community members – essentially ensuring that development pays for itself.

While we understand that a telephone may not be a requirement for everyone, we know that Broadband access is quickly becoming a necessity. We would ask you not to remove the provision of the developer providing telephone to each lot, but possibly change it so that the lot owner still has the option to have high bandwidth connection over fiber facilities. This will still give the homeowner options and will bring your requirements up to date- since fiber can carry telephone, video, audio, TV and any other digital data.

Please contact me with any questions.

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President and COO
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307-883-6622

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