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# Neighbors oppose cell tower

## Location at park in Anderson Township draws objections from nearby subdivision

BY STEVE KEMME | [SKEMME@ENQUIRER.COM](mailto:SKEMME@ENQUIRER.COM)[E-mail](#) | [Print](#) | [digg us!](#) | [del.icio.us!](#) | [Click-2-Listen](#)

**ANDERSON TWP.** - A proposal to build a 170-foot-high cell tower at Johnson Hills Park has provoked strong objections from people living near the park.

The Anderson Park District's board of trustees has signed a contract with Arcadia Communications in Mariemont to lease space for the tower in the park, which is on Bridle Road. The park district would receive a minimum of \$20,000 a year, or \$600,000 over the 30-year term of the contract from Arcadia Towers, said Ken Kushner, park district director.

But because the 136-acre park is in a residential zone, the cell tower proposal requires Anderson Township Board of Zoning Appeals approval. No hearing date has been set yet.

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The proposal incensed many residents, including those in the Sanctuary of Ivy Hills, a subdivision of \$500,000 homes and higher near the park's north side, and those on Bridle Road.

"This tower is going to be able to be seen from miles around," said Scott Rudy, who has lived for 12 years in the Sanctuary of Ivy Hills. "It clearly will have an impact on my yard and everybody's yards that border this property. There's no way to conceal a 170-foot tower."

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Opponents say it will lower their property values and mar the park's appearance.

Barry Peterson, a resident of the Sanctuary of Ivy Hills, said in an e-mail that the park board is betraying the neighborhoods and taxpayers in order to make money. "What's next," he said, "billboards?"

Dale Bartholomew, park board president, said he could not comment on the neighbors' concerns because one of the neighbors had threatened to file a lawsuit.

Kushner said opponents overestimate the tower's visual impact.

The tower, which would be in the park's southwest portion that is bordered by Bridle and Little Dry Run roads, would have a width of only 2 feet and would be "in a remote part of the park," he said.

"Everybody thinks of the towers as big metal structures with everything hanging off of them," Kushner said. "This tower is a monopole. It looks like a broomstick coming out of the trees. There's nothing hanging off of it."

The park board authorized the construction of a similar 150-foot cell tower at Beech Acres Park on Beechmont Avenue. The project will be complete within three weeks. That cell tower, built by T-Mobile, will generate a minimum of \$20,000 a year for 10 years, Kushner said.

Bartholomew said the only resident who objected to the cell tower at Beech Acres failed to show up at the Anderson Township Board of Zoning Appeals hearing.

Kushner said the cell towers provide the park board a way to increase its revenue without raising taxes. About \$2.3 million of the park district's \$3.7 in annual revenue is tax revenue.

Initially, the district plans to use the revenue from the tower to develop and maintain Johnson Hills Park, which is dominated by a wooded, hilly

terrain.

The district acquired the property from Marian Johnson in 2000 through her generosity, the sale of park district bonds and the partnership of the Hamilton County Park District. The park opened last year and will serve as a nature preserve for hiking, picnicking and more-passive activities.

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Possible future amenities include improved hiking trails, picnic shelters, gardens, nature observation areas, rustic camping cabins, Frisbee golf and a facility for nature education and children's day camp programs that could be rented for parties and other events.

Privately owned Bridle Run Stables leases space in the park.

Rudy said the board's tower proposal violates the wishes of Marian Johnson, who is deceased. He also said the park board notified very few residents before approving the proposal.

"The approach taken by the park board was wrong in every single way," Rudy said.

Kushner said Arcadia Communications has verified a need for a cell tower in the vicinity of Johnson Hills Park.

"If it's not in our park, it would go on some other property up there," he said. "Then, the money would go to a private individual instead of to the public."

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