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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Press Release

Borough of Fair Haven Announces Submittal of Land Diversion Proposal with Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that would Allow a Cell Tower in Fair Haven Fields

FAIR HAVEN, NEW JERSEY – January 9, 2007 – The Borough of Fair Haven announced that it submitted a proposal to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for a land diversion. It would provide the DEP with four lots near the intersection of William Street and Hendrickson Place that border on the “Old Chipping Site,” which is part of preserved land in the Borough. The Borough estimated the value of this property to be approximately \$500,000, and there has been current interest in this property from developers. The Borough further proposed to revert both these lots and the “Old Chipping Site” back to their original natural state, and incorporate them into the Fair Haven Fields parkland. The result of the diversion, if approved, would add over 1.3 additional acres to the Fair Haven Fields parkland. The smaller parcel of land in Fair Haven Fields that the Borough proposed to receive in return would be intended as the site for a cell tower in Fair Haven. The Borough also proposed that all funds generated from a cell tower located in Fair Haven Fields would be dedicated to recreation and park maintenance. The Borough has been seeking for a number of years a solution that would provide adequate cellular service coverage in the town, complying with the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996, and meeting the concerns of its residents to distance it as far as possible from homes and schools; this location is the best alternative given the constraints of a 1.7 square mile densely populated town. The property that is being offered to the DEP in the swap is not suitable for a cell tower since it is within a few feet of nearby homes.

Fair Haven Council President Thomas Gilmour, who spearheaded the Borough’s cell tower initiative, said “we feel that we have put something on the table that provides the DEP with additional parkland property and additional funding, and should satisfy the needs of all stakeholders.” Fair Haven Councilman Christopher Walrath, who championed distancing a cell tower from homes and residences, said “This should meet the concerns and needs of our residents; I hope and trust the DEP will approve this.” Fair Haven Mayor Michael Halfacre said “I fully support this proposal and will make it one of my top priorities to resolve this issue.” Assemblywoman Jennifer Beck, R-Monmouth/Mercer, and Assemblyman Michael Panter, D-Monmouth/Mercer have not only supported the application but arranged a meeting with the DEP in September to discuss the application.

A local group “Residents for the Future of Fair Haven” has enlisted public support for the proposed land diversion by developing a website (<http://www.fair-haven.com/celltower>) that provides a

simple mechanism for residents to send email to DEP officials in support of the application and by mounting a petition drive. The site generated over 100 email letters to the DEP and group volunteers secured almost 400 signatures on the petition. Thomas Kirman, spokesperson for that group, said "The Borough Council worked with us and provided us the opportunity to develop the proposal to the DEP. We fully support their efforts."

The Borough will await the disposition of this application by the DEP.

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