

Cell tower vote delayed for location redesign

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The Taos County Planning Commission delayed a vote on a proposed cell tower in Costilla during a Jan. 10 meeting.

Capital Telecom, a company based in New Jersey, proposed to build a 195-foot cell tower in Costilla on behalf of T-Mobile.

Neighbors had concerns about the visual impact of the tower, said Thomas Waniewski, founder and principal of Capital Telecom. The company asked that the commission delay a vote on the proposal to address the neighbors' concerns and revise the proposed site plan.

According to Rudy Perea, planner with Taos County, fewer than 10 Costilla residents attended the meeting. They did not have a chance to address the commission because the company requested an extension on the vote before the public hearing was opened.

Waniewski told *The Taos News* the revised plans will likely place the tower about 150 feet away from the original location within the same property at 50 Jaroso Road in Costilla. The property is owned by Marvin Roybal, according to documents at the Taos County planning office.

Capital Telecom is hoping to bring the revised proposal to the commission during its March meeting, Waniewski said.

In 2013, a cell tower of approximately the same height was built in Costilla at the intersections of State Road 522 and County Road B-052.

In a letter to Taos County, a T-Mobile representative from the corporate office in Albuquerque said the current tower "does not meet T-Mobile's needs." Capital Telecom has been preparing the Costilla proposal for two years, Waniewski said. Capital Telecom is also working to secure leases with three landowners in other parts of Taos County with the aim of bringing cell tower proposals to the planning commission during the spring months of this year, Waniewski said.

The company budgets about \$350,000 for engineering, materials and construction of each cell tower, he said.