



**HOWARD COUNTY  
STATE AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**March 28, 2016**

Staff Report

- Owners:** Shirley Fleming  
601 West Watersville Road  
Mt. Airy, MD 21771
- Farm Location:** South side of West Watersville Road, just south of Carroll County line.  
Tax Map 2, Parcel 10; 171.5+/- acres.
- Easement Designation:** MALPF easement #13-82-06e
- Request:** Review and recommendation to the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) Board by the Howard County State Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board to approve the construction of wireless broadband antenna equipment on an existing silo on the property.
- Recommendation:** Recommendation to the MALPF Board to approve the construction of the wireless broadband antenna on the existing silo.

**Summary:**

Shirley Fleming is the current owner of the subject property, which was placed in the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) Program on May 20, 1985. The request is to create a wireless broadband antenna apparatus on an existing silo on the property, also known as a 'silo mounted access point'. The proposal includes mounting two sector broadband antennas that would support a Backhaul Dish and Omni Unit. The proposed antenna structure will signal the nearby Century Water Tower in Mt. Airy, and strengthen the wireless broadband network of Western Howard County and surrounding areas. The silo structure that is subject to the request would remain operational for agricultural use, once the antenna is mounted.

**Staff Analysis:**

Per the Maryland Agricultural Code, §2-501, the legislative intent of the MALPF is “. . . to preserve agricultural land and woodland in order to: provide sources of agricultural products within the State for the citizens of the State; control the urban expansion which is consuming the agricultural land and woodland of the State; curb the spread of urban blight and deterioration; and protect agricultural land and woodland as open-space land.” MALPF’s counsel has determined that the MALPF Board has the authority to allow nonfarm commercial uses as long as they have no effect on the property’s open-space land or its ability to produce agricultural products. In previous cases similar to the current request, it has been determined that the commercial use of a silo


mounted antenna is permitted as long as it does not violate any of the preservation values described in §2-501. In particular, the Foundation should insure that the antennae or equipment does not occupy a farm field or in any way interfere with the agricultural operation of the farm. Since the wireless apparatus will be mounted to an existing silo that will retain its agricultural function, it appears that the proposal will not interfere in any way with the farming operation on the property.

As indicated on the diagram provided by Freedom Broadband, the proposed Silo Mounted Access Point would be placed on the easternmost silo out of the twin silos, adjacent to the existing barn structure on the property. The wireless equipment includes two sector antennas (B and D on diagram); one with a Backhaul Dish with a diameter of 25.59 inches (A), and the other with an Omni Unit with a height of 54.72 inches (C). The existing silo structure stands at 90 feet. Together, the silo and antenna equipment will total 94.56 feet. Once mounted, the silo will remain operational for agricultural production on the farmland.

Per Section 128.0.E.4 of the Howard County Zoning Regulations, "Commercial Communications Antennas Attached to Structures," the proposal on the subject property successfully meets the required zoning standards. In general, the existing silo structure and proposed antenna meet height and coloring requirements, and do not include any lights or signals. Overall, the proposed structure complies with the current Howard County Zoning Regulations for the Rural Conservation Zoning District.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends a recommendation of approval to MALPF of the request to construct a wireless broadband antenna on the existing silo.

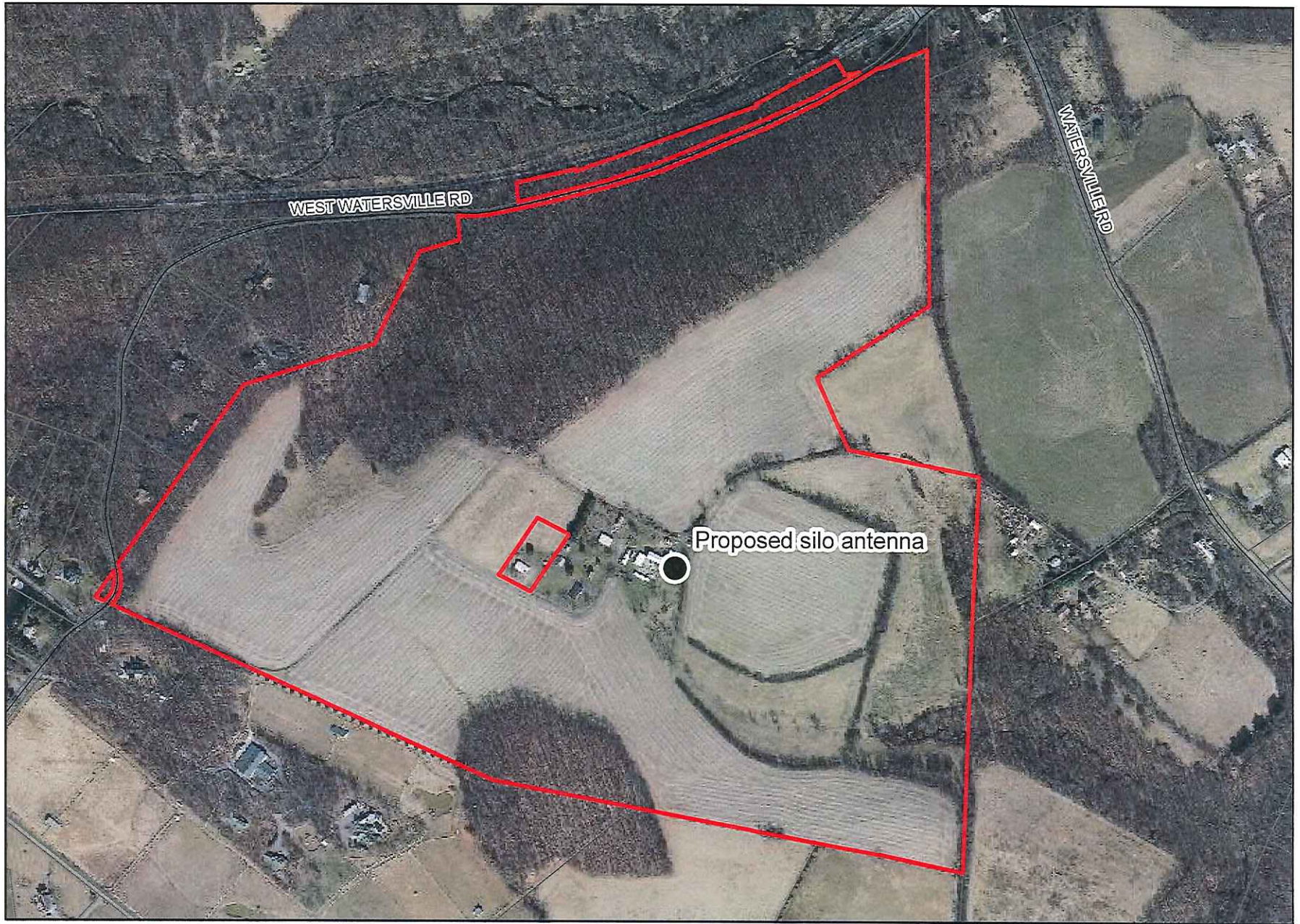
Prepared by:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 3/22/14 \_\_\_\_\_

Joy Levy, Administrator  
Agricultural Land Preservation Program

Attachments:

- Aerial Photo
- Preservation Map
- Soils Map
- Freedom Broadband Silo Mounted Equipment Diagram
- Request letter from Shirley Fleming



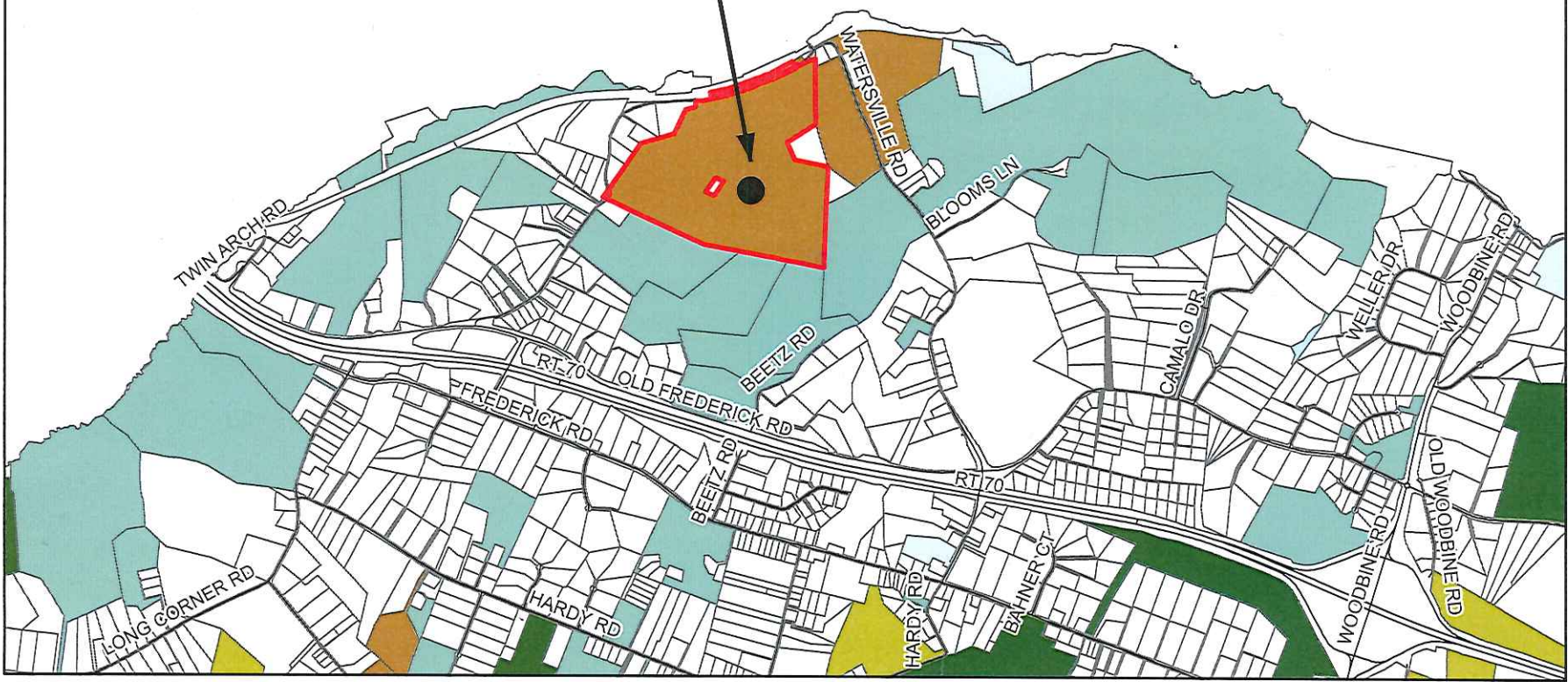
Fleming, Tax Map 2, Parcel 10

Aerial

By: Joy Levy  
Office: Resource Conservation Division  
Map Width: 5,400 ft.  
Print Date: 03/14/2016



Proposed silo antenna



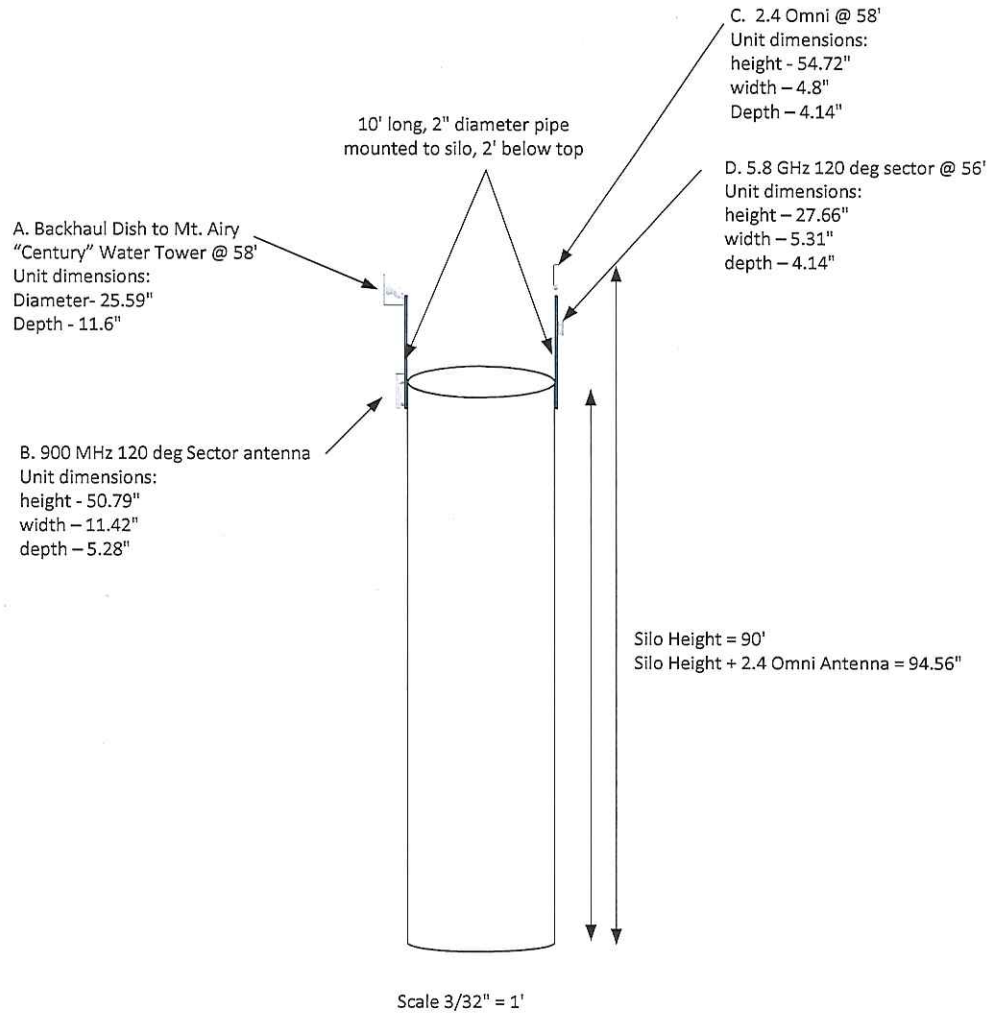
Fleming, Tax Map 2, Parcel 10  
Land Preservation

By: Joy Levy  
Office: Resource Conservation Division  
Map Width: 4.8 miles  
Print Date: 03/14/2016



## Proposed Wireless Equipment to be Mounted on Silo

Qty	Description
2	10' 2" electro-metallic tubing (EMT)
8	Pipe to Pipe Mounting Clamps
1	UBNT AF-5X with AF-5G23-545 radio
1	AM-5G19-120 Sector antenna with M900 Rocket Radio
1	AMO-2613 Omni Directional antenna with M2 Rocket Radio
1	AM-V5G-11 120 deg Sector Antenna with M5 Rocket Radio



All information contained herein is proprietary to Freedom Broadband and provided for review by Elm Lee Farm, its agents, and relevant regulatory agencies. All parties agree to treat as confidential information and not to disclose to other parties without prior written consent by Freedom Broadband.

		Silo Mounted Equipment Drawing		
		Silo Mounted Equipment for Wireless Access Point		
25 Liberty Street Westminster, MD 21157	SIZE	FSCM NO	DWG NO	REV
866-808-0523 • fwbn.net	SCALE	Not to Scale	D-1	2 OF 7

Mrs. Shirley L. Fleming  
601 West Watersville Road  
Mount Airy, Maryland 21771

March 11, 2016

Joy Levy, Administrator  
Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning  
Agricultural Land Preservation  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

RE: Having a Broadband Antenna Installed on Silo

The purpose of the letter is to provide the necessary documentation of a broadband antenna installed on the Elm Lee Farm silo. We have had one meeting with Freedom Broadband, and the packet of what's going to be installed and what it looks like.

This coincides with Howard County Government in a partnership with Freedom Broadband to provide high speed internet to the citizens of western Howard County.

If further information is needed, feel free to contact my son Stephen Fleming at 443-250-1529 or by email at [Fleming.Steve@verizon.net](mailto:Fleming.Steve@verizon.net)

Sincerely,



Shirley L Fleming