

# But company unlikely to budge Homeowner wants cell tower removed

By LISA TALLYN  
Staff Writer

A Ballinafad man believes a cellular tower erected near his home has devalued his property significantly, and he'd like to see it taken down.

Brian Funk, who lives on Trafalgar Rd., has been upset about the 180-ft Clearnet tower since it went up late last year about 20 feet from his rear property line. He believes the tower has devalued his property by at least \$50,000.

Ideally, the frustrated man said he wants the tower taken down. He also may be seeking financial compensation from Clearnet, the town and the owner of the land where the tower sits.

Funk said he was planning to build a large home at the rear of his property before he sold it, as the five-acre lot is more suitable to a bigger home. Unfortunately, the tower is very visible from the location where he was planning to build.

He is also upset with the town's planning department because he feels he should have been notified about the plans to erect the tower.

Town planner Marsha Paley said a notification sign was put up, but at the actual tower site and not on Trafalgar Road as it should have been. She didn't know the sign wasn't visible from the road.

Paley said Funk wasn't notified personally by the town because before they had a chance to do that, the tower was erected. It went up before site plan approval was granted.

Brian Murdoch, the town's manager of zoning, said cellular companies are exempt from the town's building and zoning requirements as the installation of towers are federally regulated so they are not required to go through the town's site plan process, but often do so as a courtesy.

However, Ron Wheeler of



**Brian Funk of Ballinafad is upset about the Clearnet cell tower that was put up near his property line. He wants the tower taken down and if that doesn't occur he intends to seek financial compensation. Funk believes the tower has devalued his property by \$50,000.**

Photo by Lisa Tallyn

Industry Canada, which regulates the licensing of the radio spectrum, said building the tower without site plan approval "doesn't follow with our policy."

He said cellular companies are to notify municipalities when they want to put up a cellular

tower and receive concurrence on the location.

Wheeler said there is no specific penalty for not waiting for the town's approval but Industry Canada could make a cellular company take a tower down.

He said Clearnet is working with the town on providing some landscaping to block the view of the tower for Funk and on getting site plan approval, and at this point Industry Canada isn't requesting the tower be dismantled.

Funk also said the neighbour who owns the property where the tower was built showed total disregard for him by putting it so close to his property, and he has been voicing his feelings through a big sign on his front lawn.

George DeKleer, an owner of the property where the tower was erected who lives in Georgetown, said he didn't want to get involved in the matter but added Clearnet chose the location for the tower.

Financial compensation doesn't look likely for Funk according to Clearnet spokesperson James Kennedy.

"He'd like an envelope of cash," said Kennedy. "We don't give out envelopes of cash."

"Nobody has a right to a view and it's not part of your property value," said Kennedy.

He said Clearnet, through the Town of Halton Hills, is working on providing "visual mitigation" for Funk which could include some trees or plantings around his deck.

He said Clearnet only deals with views that exist today, not the view Funk is referring to from the house that isn't built yet.

Funk is also worried about the health effects he has read cellular towers can cause—such as cancer, birth defects and sleep disorders.

Kennedy said the output of radio waves from the tower is 10,000 times below the limit set by Health Canada.

He said the tower emits 10 times less radio waves than a television, and five times less than a baby monitor.





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