

Small cell infrastructure - CFA meeting July 19, 2018

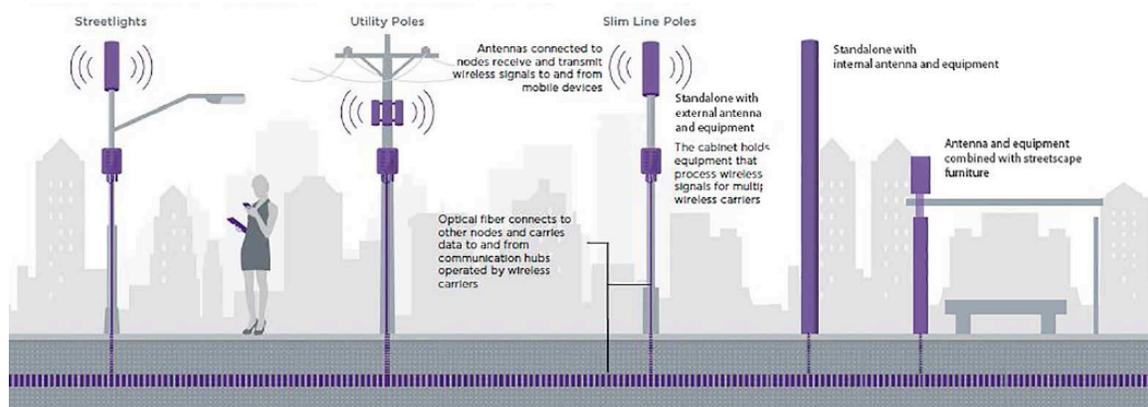
Background: NCPC recently received an information .

Presentation to CFA: On July 19, 2018 there was an informational presentation to CFA. John Fondersmith and Beth Purcell attended. The presentation was very similar to the NCPC presentation.

What it does & how it works

Small cell complements cell towers; small cell is useful for high density, high demand areas. 5G service is coming. There are 2 parts: antenna and equipment (including a power source). See discussion below on the dimensions.

What does Small Cell Technology Look Like?



There could be thousands of small cell installations, several per block, on streetlights, buildings, plus the stand-alone poles, 15- foot tall (2 types). Clutter, effects on viewsheds and historic districts are issues.

Guidelines are being developed by NCPC, SHPO and CFA. Issues: spacing, design, distance from boxes, number of poles per block. ¹

DDOT will issue permits for small cell on DC land; NPS will issue permits for federal land.

¹ DDOT's standards on public realm design, and streetlights may be relevant to the small cell design guidelines. They are attached to the July 20 email. Note: these documents were not discussed on July 19,2018.

Testimony:

Citizens Assn' of Georgetown: Each carrier can put up its own equipment - there is no requirement for sharing cell infrastructure (aka "hotelling"). The power source may be as large as a mailbox, depending on the equipment. Pending federal legislation would preclude design review.

DDOT response: the cabinet may be 5 ft 7 inches x 1 foot, placed on the pole. Carriers' equipment can vary, unclear if DDOT can enforce hotelling; possible signal interference is a concern.

Joe Gibbons, ANC commissioner, Georgetown: What is the number of carriers? The master contract between DDOT and carriers says nothing re: design review -- DDOT decides. The master contract allows vaults: concern re: tree boxes, other impacts. The master contract call fro a 10 foot setback from buildings unless DDOT decides that it's ok to place the equipment closer.

Comments and questions from Commissioners:

Will this equipment be miniaturized in the future? Do we need "refrigerators in the air" that will soon be obsolete? US DOT has context-sensitive guidelines; are they also needed here? Suggest using alleys, not streets, to place this equipment.

This is privately operated infrastructure. Designers and architects should be added to the committee preparing guidelines. A design competition would be a good idea.

Why should hotelling be at the option of the carrier?

What is the process for finalizing DDOT guidelines? DDOT: Design guidelines to be sent to ANCs for review, then DDOT's public space committee will see if it can adopt the design guidelines.

Next steps: CFA plans a hearing in September on the guidelines.

What is the process to participate in drafting the guidelines?