

# Proposed Cell Tower: Eagle Harbor Township Planning Commission Meeting, August 10th

written by admin | August 5, 2021

## UPDATE 2021-08-11:

- The planning commission voted to recommend denying the Special Use Permit during their August 10th meeting [ [read more](#) ].

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The Eagle Harbor Township Planning Commission has scheduled a public hearing on the special use permit application submitted by Diamond Towers V LLC for the proposed cell tower across from the Lodge and Brockway Mountain Road. This hearing is **in-person at the Eagle Harbor Township Hall**, with comments accepted in-person, written, and email.

**What:** [Eagle Harbor Township Planning Committee Meeting](#)

**When:** August 10, 2020 at 2pm

**Where:** Eagle Harbor Township Hall

[ **Zoom link for viewing only:** [Join Zoom Meeting](#) – comments be made in-person ]

The planning commission will be reviewing the special use permit for the Diamond Communications proposed cell tower. The public has expressed their thoughts on this tower in past meetings, and should continue to speak up at this meeting about this proposed

tower. As well, written comments can be submitted prior to the meeting via email to [zoning@eagleharbortwp.org](mailto:zoning@eagleharbortwp.org). [ see [announcement letter](#) sent to KML by the Eagle Harbor Zoning Administrator, dated July 21, 2021 ].

Below is an image of what potentially the tower will look like and where it will be located. This is based upon the balloon test that Ramaker and Diamond Communications did in late May. In the picture, you will see the red balloon at the top of the tower.



[ This images reflects the location based upon the balloon test in late May 2021 performed by Ramaker and

Diamond, with a simulated tower as tall as the balloon  
(see the balloon at the top of the tower in the image.  
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The Lodge strongly encourages the public to attend and voice their opinions on the proposed tower. Many members of the public attended a previous Eagle Harbor Township Board meeting on this same permit application that was held on April 12, 2021. At that hearing, the Board voted to send the pending application for the cell tower special use permit back to the Zoning Administrator for further review in order to ensure compliance with the Township's Zoning Ordinance. The permit application is now back before the Planning Commission and, if approved by the Planning Commission, will go to the Board.

**Public input concerning the tower remains extremely important. Balloon and drone tests completed since the April Board meeting have confirmed the significant impact on views that the tower will have on the Lodge and Brockway Mountain (photos can be found in the link below).**

If you are unable to attend the in-person meeting and would like to submit written comments, those may be sent to: Eagle Harbor Township Zoning Administrator, 321 Center St., Eagle Harbor, MI 49950, and/or to [zoning@eagleharbortwp.org](mailto:zoning@eagleharbortwp.org).

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## More details:

The Eagle Harbor Township Planning Commission has scheduled a public hearing on the special use permit application submitted by Diamond Towers V LLC for the proposed cell tower across from the Lodge and Brockway Mountain Road. This public hearing will

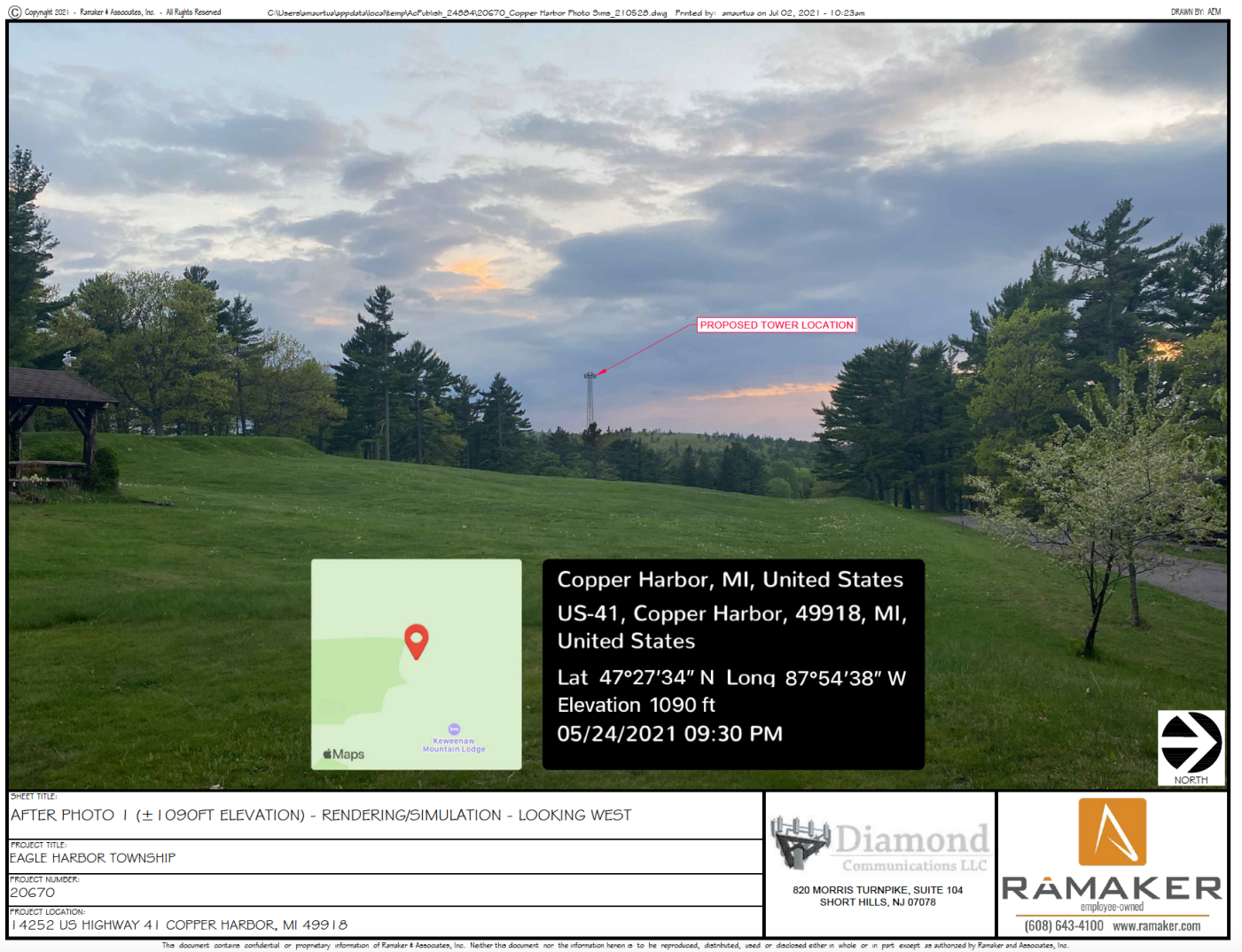
be held on **Tuesday, August 10, 2021, at 2:00pm.** This hearing is **in-person at the Eagle Harbor Township Hall.**

The Lodge strongly encourages the public to attend and voice their opinions on the proposed tower. Many members of the public attended a previous Eagle Harbor Township Board meeting on this same permit application that was held on April 12, 2021. At that hearing, the Board voted to send the pending application for the cell tower special use permit back to the Zoning Administrator for further review in order to ensure compliance with the Township's Zoning Ordinance. The permit application is now back before the Planning Commission and, if approved by the Planning Commission, will go to the Board.

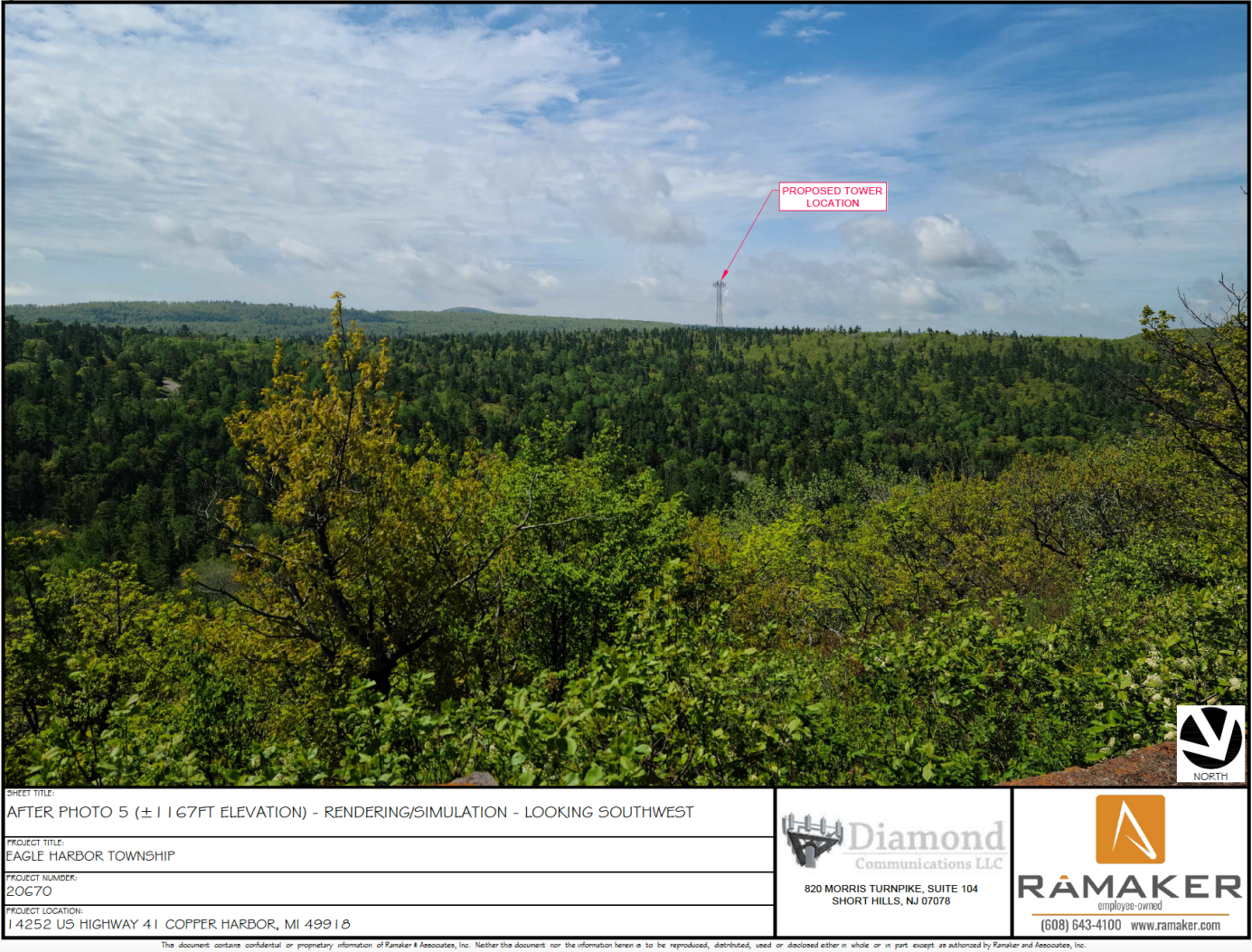
**Public input concerning the tower remains extremely important.**

Since the last Township Board meeting, balloon and drone flights were completed. The attached images, which were provided by Ramaker & Associates, consultants for Diamond, were generated during and as a result of those balloon and drone flights. On the positive side, these tests have finally allowed us to get an accurate sense of what the Tower would look like, and we have simulated images that show us what we'll be seeing if this tower goes up. On the negative side, the tests and resultant images paint a very dismal picture of the future views if this tower is put in place. Picture a white strobe light during the day and a red beacon at night coming from the top of this tower in the locations shown, and you'll start to understand the significant impact of this tower location on the views from the Lodge and Brockway Mountain. Eagle Harbor Township Supervisor Rich Probst stated the following in a written communication to Diamond's consultant, Ramaker & Associates, after the balloon and drone tests were complete: "While initial photo simulations downplayed the position of this tower, the recent balloon and drone test that was performed has revealed that this tower will extend far above the tree height, and create an adverse effect on the views

from this historical drive.”







In order to approve the special use permit application, Section 10.5.1 of the Eagle Harbor Township Zoning Ordinance mandates that compliance with various standards must be found, including the following:

1. The Special Use shall be designed in a manner harmonious with the character of adjacent property and the surrounding area.
2. The Special Use shall not change the essential character of the surrounding area.
3. The Special Use shall not be detrimental to the welfare of property through the excessive production of light.

It is our position that the tower's height and lighting are not

harmonious with the character of the surrounding area. The surrounding area here consists of Brockway Mountain and the Lodge. Brockway Mountain Drive and the Lodge both have scenic views that are unparalleled in the area – those views are a significant part of what got the Drive and the Lodge listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This tower would significantly and negatively affect those views. It would also change the essential character of the surrounding area. Notably, the dark skies which the mountain and the Lodge are known for would be impacted and efforts to obtain dark sky certifications by Eagle Harbor Township would be negatively affected.

The proposed tower would be placed on property that is zoned Conservation Environmental Protection district. The zoning ordinance provides that the district has been developed for conserving land areas which are, among other listed items, **“to protect scenic viewsheds and ridge-tops that define the wilderness and waterfront beauty of the Township.”** Allowing for tower placement in this location goes completely against that stated purpose. Additionally, it appears that the proposed tower will be located within the Scenic Heritage Highway overlay district (as found in Section 6.4 of the Zoning Ordinance). The ordinance states the following about the purpose of this district: “A Scenic Heritage Highway District is an overlay district created to protect the natural appearing landscape along major thoroughfares and any scenic or historic side trip route identified in the Copper Country Trail Corridor Management Plan in Eagle Harbor Township. Since Township residents are so dependent on tourists for economic sustenance and since tourists, like existing residents, cherish the natural landscape of the Township, it is critical to protect it as development occurs.” Again, granting of the permit allowing this tower close to and clearly visible from US Highway 41 and Brockway

Mountain Drive is completely inconsistent with the purpose laid out for establishment of the Scenic Heritage Highway District.

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Previous blog posts about the proposed cell tower:

- [Update on the Proposed Cell Tower: Drone and Balloon Test](#) (May 20, 2021)
- [Results of Eagle Harbor Township Board Meeting; Proposed cell tower to be reviewed again by the Planning Committee](#) (April 15, 2021)

And our projects page focused on addressing the problem of cell phone communication:

- [Improving Mobile Phone Communication](#) (at the top of the Keweenaw)