

Contribution to the conversations on planning for The 707 Community Park, May 28, 2009:

One of the aspects of the controversy about radio towers that disturbs me is that all too often the proponents of erecting them argue that the electromagnetic radiation from them is perfectly safe and that they therefore should be allowed. Now I've worked all my professional life as an engineer around electromagnetic radiation—four research labs in all, including BC Hydro's in Surrey--so I have some ability to read the technical literature as opposed to some of the pseudoscientific nonsense one sees on Internet sites, and I am persuaded that although not all is known, the risk of there being harmful effects from the radiation from towers is very slight. However, what I do not accept is the conclusion that because they are safe, they are OK. To me they are powerful symbols of the modern technological age, an age that one often visits parks to forget for a while. There is also some evidence that people claiming to be hypersensitive to radiation are in fact responding to the perceived presence of radiation rather than its actual presence, so in a sense, although there may not be any health risks, they do in fact make some people sick. Let's be very clear in the 707 management plan—there will be no radio towers.