

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of)
Annual Assessment of the Status of Competition) MB Docket No. 12-203
in the Market for the Delivery of Video)
Programming)
)

**COMMENTS OF
White Plains Community Media, White Plains, New York**

White Plains Community Media (WPCAM) submits these comments in response to the above-captioned Notice of Inquiry (“NOI”), released July 20, 2012, seeking “data, information, and comment on the state of competition in the delivery of video programming.” WPCM is a P& G Access Center in the City of White Plains, New York. We provide the public and government channels to 20,000 subscribers served by Verizon and Cablevision.

We have been operating these two channels since 1982 for a variety of cable TV providers.

Currently, both providers offer the access channels in digital format only. Neither company carries, analogue channels anymore. Verizon never offered them, but Cablevision, moved their PEG channels to digital transmission while still offering an analog tier, violating the NYS mandate to have the PEG channels on the lowest service level.

A digital converter is needed to view the access channels at their designated channel numbers—Verizon 45, 46, 47, Cablevision 75, 76, 77. If a subscriber has a new TV with a QAM tuner, the PEG channels can be tuned in without a cable box but at channels no one would expect to find them—Cablevision 99.915, 99.916, 99.917, and Verizon 128.12845, 128.12846, 128.12847, and these numbers vary depending on the brand of television they are displayed on.

The PEG channels are still under technical assault. Both Cablevision and Verizon have reduced the bandwidth of the PEG channels, and compress the video feed from our facility, which is already in a compressed digital format. The resulting picture is worse than the old analogue signal and it becomes tremendously pixilated when there is any motion in the video.

Both Cablevision and Verizon only offer the PEG channels in standard definition. PEG channels need to migrate to high definition to survive. Neither cable provider has any plan to transmit PEG channels in HD. It seems as though both companies want PEG access channels to look terrible on their systems so that people don’t watch them. Then they can point to statistics showing that “no one watches access channels” so they are not worth the expense.

PEG channels have always struggled to survive, not because people don’t watch, but because the cable providers have worked very hard to dissuade local governments to ask for them in their franchise agreements and to degrade the signals to the bare minimum “FCC standards” so the channels don’t look like the other channels in the system line up.

James D. Kenny
Executive Director White Plains Community Media
4 Martine Avenue
White Plains, New York 10606
914-422-1419
jkenny@whiteplainsny.gov

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