

Request for Extension of WFMZ-TV Channel Sharing Construction Permit

Maranatha Broadcasting Company, Inc. (“MBC”), licensee of digital television station WFMZ-TV, Allentown, Pennsylvania, hereby requests a three month extension of its outstanding construction permit (LMS File No. 0000038348) authorizing facilities to implement its channel sharing arrangement for WFMZ-TV. The CP expires July 23, 2018. MBC seeks an extension of the CP through October 23, 2018.

By way of background, MBC is a party to a Channel Sharing Agreement with Sonshine Family Television, Inc. (“Sonshine”), licensee of WBPH-TV, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, which is the sharer station, and Lehigh Valley Public Telecommunications Corp. (“LVPTC”), licensee of WLVT-TV, Allentown, Pennsylvania, another sharee station. LVPTC’s second noncommercial educational television station, WPPT(TV), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is also a sharee station in this four-way channel sharing arrangement.

This requested brief extension would serve the public interest in facilitating the move of the channel sharing stations to the final facilities which the parties have planned and are currently being constructed for the channel sharing arrangement, but there will be no delay in the actual commencement of channel sharing, as the parties will implement shared operations by July 23, 2018 at FCC-approved auxiliary transmission facilities.

Each of the channel sharing stations has a construction permit to implement its channel sharing arrangements at a broadcast tower owned by MBC and now used for WFMZ-TV. The parties had anticipated that the appropriate facilities would be constructed and operational at that site by July 23, 2018, which is the deadline for WLVT-TV and WFMZ-TV to cease operations on their pre-transition channels and commence channel sharing. Due to delays in delivery of equipment, however, it is now apparent that the new facilities will not be ready by that date. The parties are confident, however, that they will be ready prior to October 23, 2018.

The parties plan to satisfy their obligation to commence channel sharing on July 23, utilizing auxiliary transmission facilities on the nearby tower owned by Sonshine, which facilities have just been authorized by the Commission for the Sharer in LMS File No. 0000055342. Thus, WFMZ-TV will cease operation on its pre-transition channel and begin operating on the shared channel on July 23.

Additional information concerning any of these matters can be provided at the request of the Commission.