



## **Project Review Committee Meeting**

March 26, 2015 at CVRPC Offices; 4:00-6:00PM

### **ATTENDEES:**

- Bob Wernecke, *Town of Berlin*
- Laura Hill-Eubanks, *Town of Northfield*
- Larry Hebert, *Town of Williamstown*
- Byron Atwood, Chair, *Barre Town*
- Brian Fitzgerald, *Town of Duxbury*
- Gail Aloisio, *CVRPC Staff*

### **SUMMARY:**

In the case of both tower proposals before the committee, staff review had determined that information describing feasibility of collocation was insufficient to make a determination of conformance with regional plan goals. In the case of the Cabot tower, CVRPC had not had access to all materials circulated. Therefore committee deliberations focused only on a determination of substantial regional impact for each project. This determination will clarify the role of the Regional Commission in any involvement in the hearing process, as may be requested by the intervening municipalities.

### **Calais VTel Wireless Telecommunications Tower**

Proposed at 1056 Bayne Comolli Road

- Staff presented the visibility analysis prepared by the applicant and the committee discussed the regional significance of the resources from which the tower would be visible. The tower will be visible in two municipalities, Calais and Woodbury.
- The committee agreed that Nelson Pond is a regionally significant resource. The tower will be visible from its eastern shore.
- There was a discussion about positive impacts being considered in the determination of substantial regional impact. Positive impacts should be considered as well as negative impacts. The committee agreed that improved availability of choices for broadband service is a positive impact that is regionally significant.
- There was discussion of the Lake Tour Bike Route and its development by CVRPC and promotion by the Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce. The committee discussed whether or not the views of the tower would deter bicyclists, and one committee member believed that the views of the tower from the bike route are not of substantial regional impact.
- The committee came to the consensus that the Calais tower proposal is of substantial regional impact.

## **Cabot VTel Wireless Telecommunications Tower**

Proposed at 185 Thistle Hill Road

- CVRPC had not been copied on all materials circulated regarding the proposed project. Staff reviewed information from materials which were provided to CVRPC
- Staff presented the visibility analysis prepared by the applicant, demonstrating that the tower will not be visible outside of a 1.5 mile radius, and therefore will only affect the Town of Cabot in regard to this impact.
- After discussing other impacts such as impeding traffic flow due to a collapse, the committee agreed that the only substantial regional impact associated with this project is the coverage area and service provided by the facility.
- The committee was not comfortable making a final determination regarding substantial regional impact prior to review of all materials circulated among the parties.
- The Committee requested that staff attend the Pre-Hearing Conference for the Cabot tower schedule for Thursday, July 30, 2015, in order to learn more about the status of the project.

A suggestion was also made in the discussion that suggestions could be solicited from the towns regarding which assets they would deem regionally significant. These suggestions would inform decisions of the Regional Commission in determining substantial regional impacts.

**Wrap-up:** Staff will prepare a letter stating the committee's determination of substantial regional impact regarding the Calais proposal. Staff will also attend the Pre-Hearing Conference scheduled for the Cabot proceedings on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

The next Project Review Committee meeting has been scheduled tentatively for Wednesday, August 19<sup>th</sup>. Staff will contact committee members a week prior to confirm the meeting.