



Project Review Committee Meeting

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

Agenda:

1. Recommend adoption of Draft Project Review Committee Procedures
 2. Section 248a: VTel Telecommunications Tower, Cabot (see attached Project Information)
 3. Discussion of Berlin Mall LLC/Kohl's and Friend of the Commission/Developer Contributions to Traffic Improvements
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Section 248a: VTel Telecommunications Tower, Cabot:

Application Information: VTel filed its petition for a Certificate of Public Good for construction of a 90' wireless telecommunications tower on April 17th. The deadline for CVRPC to respond to this filing is **Friday, May 8th**.

- This tower will provide wireless internet service, not cell phone service
- It is proposed to be a 90' single carrier metal communications pole with panel antennas to be installed at 70'-82' above ground level and two dish antennas at 88', one 4' and one 2'.
- CVRPC submitted a letter on March 27th requesting further information on the feasibility of co-location, as VTel's 45-day pre-filing notice did not address this topic. The extent of VTel's response in its petition is as follows:

"VTel analyzed collocating on an existing silo structure approximately 2.5 miles away at Bothfeld Hill Road, Cabot, containing an AT&T facility. VTel's RF engineer evaluated the silo and determined coverage from said silo would have a significantly reduced coverage footprint than the proposed site at Thistle Hill Road. The analysis shows a dramatic coverage drop to the west, southwest towards Marshfield, and along Route 2. It also reduced contiguous coverage among VTel's neighboring sites, particularly an existing co-location install on a tower to the north on Bridgeman Hill Road, Hardwick, an existing co-location on a silo to the east on Bolton Road, Cabot and the planned site to the west in Calais."

Additional Relevant Information:

- The tower is sited approximately 60' away from Thistle Hill Road. Concerns have been raised that this could pose a traffic safety and travel access hazard if the tower were to fall across the road. The tower is engineered to break at a predetermined height which would not allow the length of the tower to fall across the road. Thistle Hill Road is functionally classified as a Local Road, and were the road to be blocked temporarily, it would not impede regional traffic flow.
- Visibility of the tower is limited to points within the Town of Cabot and within 1.25 miles of the site. The balloon tests and visual simulations demonstrate that the tower is extremely difficult to discern at this distance, and effectively imperceptible beyond that distance. There are no resources or assets "widely used or appreciated by people outside of the locality" within the viewshed of the tower from which the tower would be visible.
- Although a response from Vermont Fish & Wildlife and the finalization of the Nat'l Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Threshold Screening are pending, the draft NEPA review and staff review do not indicate natural resource impacts. Staff reviewed all pertinent data available in from the ANR Natural Resources Atlas. The only features noted within several hundred feet of the site are deer wintering area and a pond of less than 1 acre.