Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

Project Review Committee Meeting

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

Agenda:

1. Agenda Adjustments (if necessary)
2. Review of VTel Wireless Telecommunications Tower proposal for Calais

Section 248a: VTel Telecommunications Tower, Calais:

Application Information: On May 15, 2015 VTel filed its petition for a Certificate of Public Good for construction of a 140' wireless telecommunications tower at 1056 Bayne Comolli Road. A Pre-Hearing Conference has been scheduled for August 6th, 2015.

- This tower will provide wireless internet service, not cell phone service
- It is proposed to be a 140' multi-tenant monopole with panel antennas and 4' microwave dishes to be installed between 130' and 140' above ground.
- Will provide 25 Mbps upload and 10 Mbps download speeds, with the potential for rates up to 50 Mbps.
- 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 adequately.

Additional Relevant Information:

- The VTel Coverage Objective is to serve as many of the 1,170 unserved rooftops west of VT 14 and east of VT 12 as possible (as identified by the USDA Rural Utilities Service)
- VTel maintains that the two proposed collocation alternatives, the Cloud Alliance Tower in Woodbury and the Robinson Hill Rd barn in Calais, will not meet VTel's coverage objectives. Specifically, each of the alternatives moves the geographic coverage away from the target coverage area, and neither provides the same distribution of signal strength or continuity of coverage as the Bayne Comolli site.
- DPS's RF expert finds that the coverage analyses conducted by VTel are accurate, however sufficient information regarding a clear coverage objective is lacking. Without this information DPS cannot reach a final conclusion as to feasibility of collocation.
- Experts retained by the Town of Calais assert that the assumptions made by the VTel propagation analysis for the Bayne Comolli site do not allow it to be compared to other locations. VTel's coverage analysis is based on hand held mobile technology vs. coverage that could be achieved using high gain rooftop antennae "fixed wireless" technology. If using fixed wireless technology, the Cloud Alliance collocation site could possibly provide equal coverage to the Bayne Comolli site.

.