



Project Review Committee Meeting

January 21, 2015 at CVRPC Offices; 4:00-6:00PM

ATTENDEES: Bob Wernecke, *Town of Berlin*; Laura Hill-Eubanks, *Town of Northfield*; Kim McKee, *CVRPC Staff*

SUMMARY:

Act 250: Update on Berlin Mall, LLC (Kohl's) project, Berlin: Additional changes expected in a forthcoming revised site plan were discussed, including:

- Reduced parking spaces from 294 to 247,
- A new sidewalk running along the westerly side of the Kohl's store, and
- A bus stop on-site.

GMTA is proposing to serve the Kohl's store with public transit and a bus stop is now planned to be included. GMTA forwarded what we assume to be a revised site plan to Steve Gladczuk last week. Committee members questioned whether the proposed bus pull-off/stop location on the east side of the building (around the corner from the Kohl's entrance, facing the wetland) was ideal – as riders may feel uncomfortable waiting there in the dark. Hopefully the applicant will have a revised site plan at the upcoming hearing so we can confirm the Plans to serve the store with public transit and pedestrian access.

Staff is planning on circulating the CVRPC letter as previously written and attending the hearing on Feb. 3 at the Central VT Chamber.

Section 248: VTel Wireless Telecommunications Facility, Fayston: Committee members in attendance agreed that CVRPC should respond to VTel's 45-day notice filing noting "disapproval" of the project. Lack of conformance with Regional Plan language that discourages conspicuous development on locally prominent landscape features will be cited as well as the lack of conformance with the local plan. It was also noted that VTel also has yet to provide any results from the balloon test that was scheduled to occur on Jan. 15. Without this evidence, the RPC cannot make an informed decision regarding conformance with the Regional Plan.

There was discussion as to what the distinction is between the 4G LTE wireless services provided by a VTel, AT&T or Verizon are vs. the internet services provided Waitsfield-Champlain Valley Telecom. It was noted that we should research this distinction and see what resources are available to aid us in determining whether this area of Fayston is still "underserved" in relation to the type of service VTel is proposing.

Staff will circulate a draft letter reflecting the RPC's position and research on service provision using tools available at: <http://www.broadbandvt.org/map/index.php>

Committee's Operating Guidelines and Procedures: Committee members debated the merits of the proposed thresholds for Substantial Regional Impact in the revised operating guidelines. For example, is a threshold of 30,000 sq ft new or expanded commercial too small? Or should the quantified criteria outlined in #2.a-d of the Operating Guidelines stand alone in characterizing a development proposal as having SRI when they don't really speak to the impacts of the proposal? It was determined that Committee members wanted to look back to the definitions of SRI from other RPCs and revisit the discussion at the next meeting. The new definition doesn't ultimately need to be adopted until CVRPC adopts the new Regional Plan in 2016.