



December 22, 2020

Brian J. Sullivan  
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Re: NRPC Comments – Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems, LLC d/b/a Verizon Wireless – Fairfax – #20-3049-AN

Dear Mr. Sullivan,

The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) Project Review Committee has reviewed the 60-day Notice of Application from Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems, LLC d/b/a Verizon Wireless for the construction and installation of a wireless telecommunications facility located off of Fletcher Road in Fairfax, VT. Upon review of the Notice of Application, the NRPC has the following questions about the project:

1. **Site Selection.** The Northwest Regional Plan contains a policy that “consolidation of new telecommunications facilities on existing sites is preferred over the development of new sites” (p. 35). The Notice of Application states that co-location was not feasible. Can you provide additional detail on your analysis?

The Northwest Regional Plan states that “new telecommunications equipment and towers shall be sited in the least obtrusive and least ecologically sensitive areas possible” (p. 35). What other sites were evaluated for this proposed facility? Can you provide more information on how the chosen site is the least obtrusive and least ecologically sensitive area possible in Fairfax or the surrounding communities?

The Northwest Regional Plan also states that telecommunications shall “fit within the character of the area as defined by the local and regional plans” (p. 35). Can you provide additional information about how the proposed project meets the character of the area defined in the Northwest Regional Plan? Please see the Northwest Regional Plan and review the Land Use chapter (p. 88 to p.98). Specifically, please review the proposed Land Use map and the description of each land use planning area.

2. **Cellular Coverage.** NRPC requests additional information about the proposed facility’s impact on cellular phone coverage. How much more additional cellular phone coverage will

the proposed facility provide? What areas will be served that have not been previously or will have improved service as a result of this tower. Please provide a map showing the areas with improved coverage. Will the applicant allow other service providers to co-locate on the tower and what level of service (3G, 4G or 5G) will the tower provide?

3. **Aesthetics/Landscaping.** NRPC requests additional information about the visual impacts of the tower. Can the applicant provide the results of a balloon test and visual impact analysis?

NRPC requests more information on the trees at the project site. The Emerald Ash Borer, an invasive insect, has the potential to devastate ash trees in the region over the next decade. How much of the tree cover within a ½ mile of the proposed site is made up of ash trees? If there is a massive die off of ash trees within the next 10 years, how will this impact the visibility of the proposed facility?

NRPC also requests additional information what steps will be taken to mitigation stormwater impacts from the project, especially along the access road.

4. **Other Considerations.** NRPC requests additional information on the drop zone for the tower and whether the 100 ft by 100 ft lease is large enough to accommodate the 130-ft tower. NRPC also requests additional information on the noise generated by the project under normal operations and when the generator is running.

These questions and comments are based on the information currently available and the NRPC may have additional comments as the process continues. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Bethany Remmers  
Assistant Director

Cc:

Judith Whitney – Vermont Public Utility Commission