

Manchester, Vermont

Telecommunications Facility Location Report

January 2, 2025

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Manchester, Vermont Telecommunications Facility location Report

Regarding the Verizon Wireless/Vertex application for a new cell tower located in the town of Manchester, VT, in a Mixed Use 2 ("MU2") location, at 410 Hunter Park Road, we have visited the proposed location and other nearby potential locations on Wednesday, November 6, 2024.

The Town Plan requires that telecommunications facilities be located "in a manner that protects the scenic, cultural and natural resources of the Town." The Selectboard determined that the proposed facility at this location would have an adverse visual impact on views from the scenic recreational areas in and around the downtown areas, and specifically in recreational areas and trails.

The community appears to mostly agree that improved wireless telecommunications service is needed, however, there is strong community opposition to the proposed site as demonstrated by the petition with more than 450 signatures opposed to the location. Additionally, there have been numerous public comments and letters written in opposition to the proposed site. Among the many points of opposition, the most common include:

- The site will negatively affect views or be an eyesore
- The area is for recreational purposes and should not be compromised
- The site does not comply with land use regulations
- The site is too close to Red Fox Elementary School
- The site is too near helicopter landing area

Certain members of the public also contend that the site would only provide non-substantial coverage (woods and fields) or that no proof of coverage improvement has been demonstrated.

A summary of the property reconnaissance is below:

- 1) Currently Proposed Verizon Site: Hunter & Hand Solar (Riley Rink): 15-20-21.00 (ID#3307S):** This location is on the Riley Rink property. This property is in a mixed-use zoning district (MU2). Telecomm facilities are NOT permitted in this zone, therefore it would require a use variance. It would also require a setback variance as it does not meet setback requirements as currently situated.

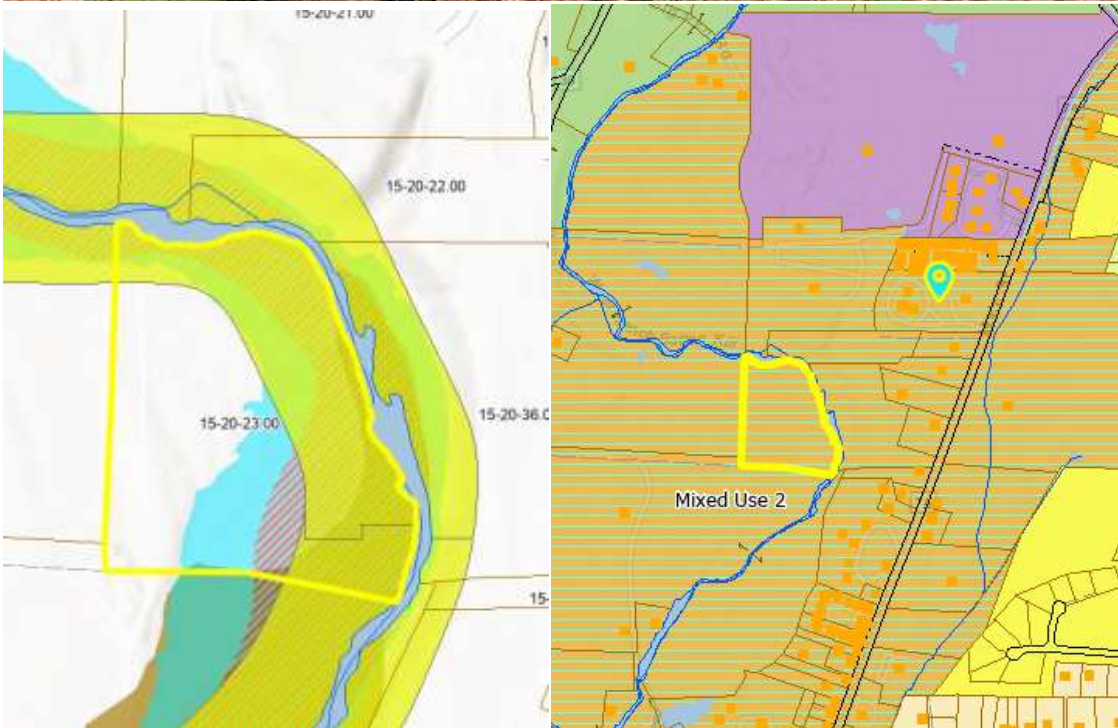
The town believes the proposed facility (the tower) would be prominently visible from numerous locations in and around the town, including from Dana L. Thompson Park, Hunter Park, and sections of Bonnet Street and Main Street as well as other areas. Photo simulations provided by the applicant did not adequately address this.

This proposed site location is next to an existing solar energy facility, and it is bordering an industrial zoned property. The property is located approximately 1,796' from the main thoroughfare (Main St, VT Rt 7A), 1,243' from Red Fox Elementary School and approximately 2,410' from the Parks and Recreation Office at Dana L. Johnson Park. The location also sits on a high point of the parcel and the proposed site would accommodate additional carriers as well.

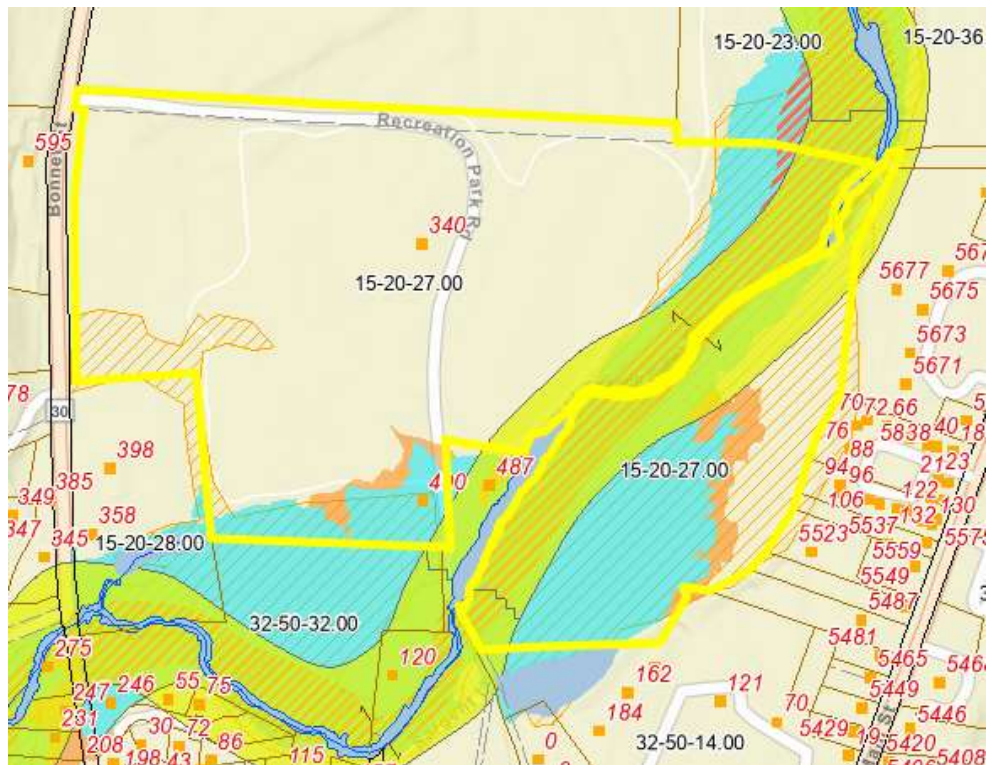
TOWN PROPERTIES:

- 2) Parcel 15-20-23.00 (parcel ID: 9219):** This 10.8-acre property is owned by the Town of Manchester. It is in the northeast section of Dana L. Thompson Park (but it is a separate parcel from the main park property). It is currently used for recreational purposes and consists of mature forest land with walking and biking trails.

The property contains wetlands and flood hazard areas according to the GIS wetland Map (below, left). There is no currently designated vehicular access road to the property, so an access road would need to be constructed. Power and transport would need to be run as well. The property is zoned MU2, Mixed Use 2. This property was donated to the town in 1997. We do not know if any restrictions for use are in place.



- 3) **Dana L. Thompson Park**, Parcel 15-20-20-01 (parcel ID 3214), 340 Recreation Park Rd. This is the main parcel of the 95-acre Dana L. Thompson Park. It is developed parkland and used for multiple recreational and athletic activities. Potential locations for new telecommunication facilities could include areas along the northern border of the property or the currently unused and undeveloped eastern portion, although the eastern portion contains significant wetland and flood areas according to the GIS map. There is an existing dog run on the northern border of the property. Other location possibilities could include installing/attaching small-cell facilities to existing light poles and/or the recreation center. A location on the property may take away existing recreational space, unless a site were developed in the eastern portion, which is currently a mixture of thick shrubbery wooded area. It contains wetlands (VSWI Wetlands, VTR ANR) and Flood Hazard Overlay according to GIS mapping (see below). There would need to be some construction for access and power and transport.



4. Town Hall, Parcel 16-20-15.00 (parcel ID: 9201), 40 Jeff Williams Way: This 9-acre parcel is the Town Hall/Police Department location. It is zoned MU₂, Mixed Use 2. Required setbacks would not likely be met. Height limitations and lighting would likely be required due to proximity of helicopter landing area. Construction for access, power and transport would be limited.

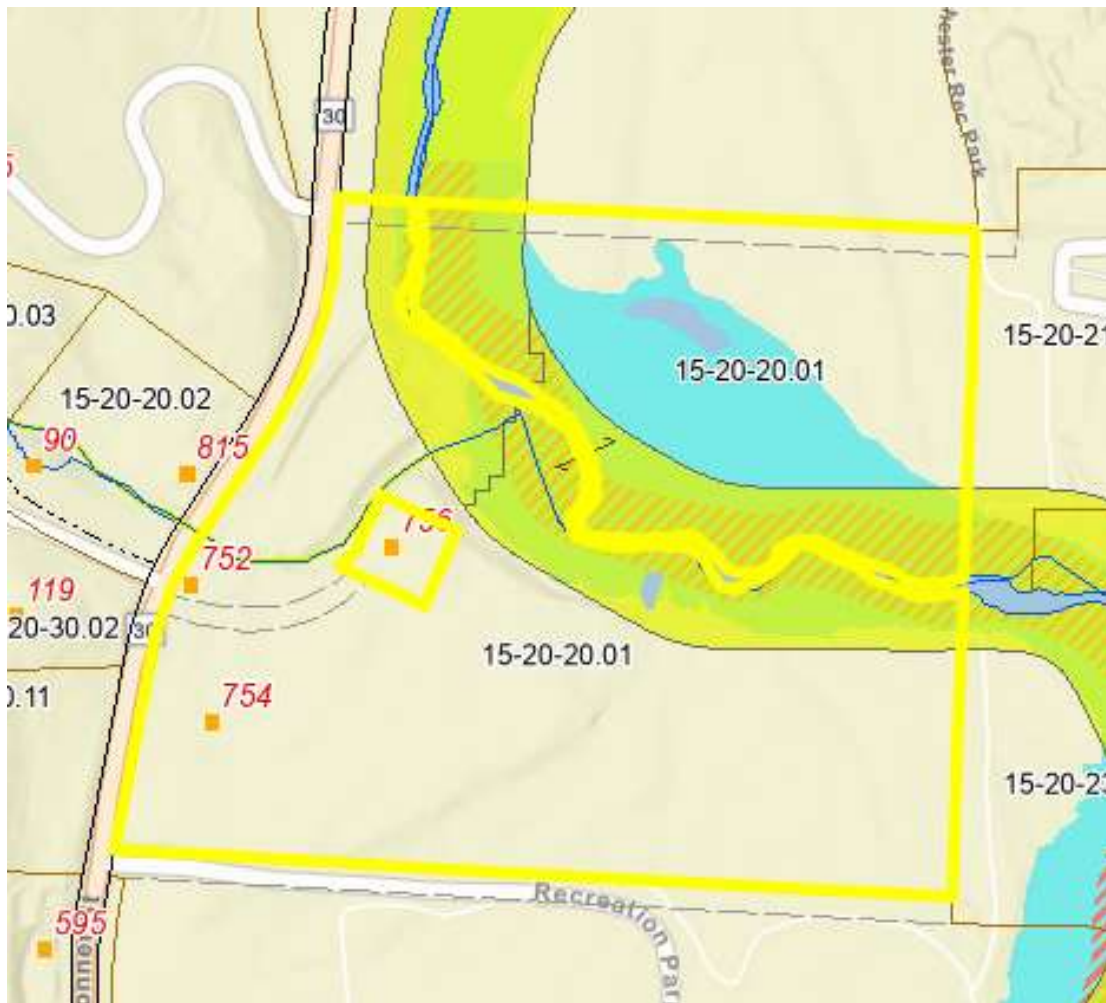


Private Property

5. Dailey William E Inc., Parcel # 16-20-07.00. 46 Hunter Park Rd. This is a 76.4-acre parcel zoned **OI, Office Industrial**. Telecommunication facilities are permitted within this zoning district; therefore it is recommended that efforts to locate here be exhausted if the location is technically acceptable to the applicant from an RF perspective. If it is not acceptable to the carrier, or if a lease cannot be procured, written documentation confirming such should be provided. The property appears to be used for gravel distribution and/or concrete manufacturing, although there appeared to be no activity at the back (western portion) of the property on the afternoon of Wednesday, November 6, 2024. The main office area appears to be at the eastern side of the property. In addition to the main eastern access entrance, there is an existing access road on the western portion of the property. Construction for access, power and transport would be minimal.

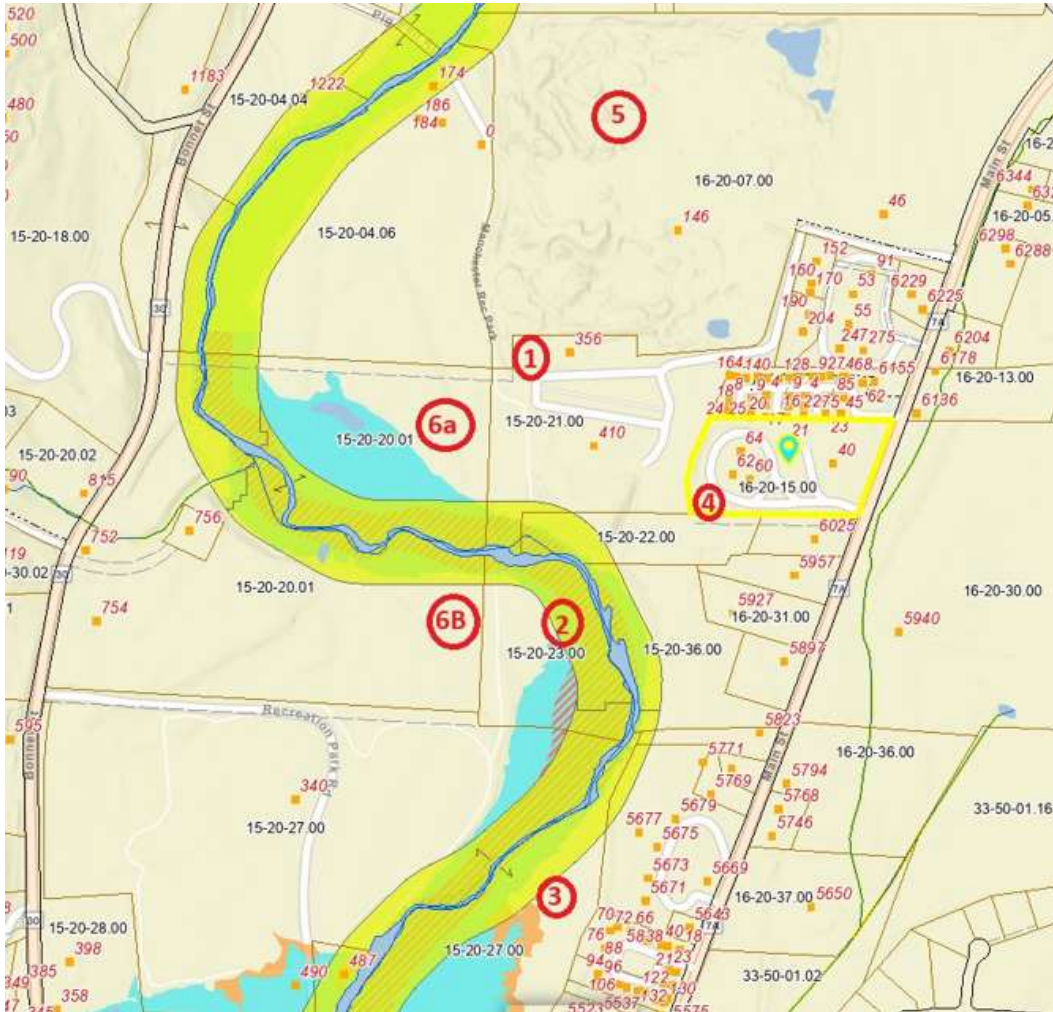


6a and 6b). Dorr Property, Parcel # 15-20-20.01. 752 Bonnet ST. This 65-acre property is also zoned MU2. It has large open fields that may be suitable for a site if the property owner is willing. A portion of the property is in a flood overlay area but much of it is not. A tower on this property would likely be visible from multiple locations throughout town. This property would not take away any public recreation space and it could meet setback requirements (it would still require a use variance). Construction for access, power and transport would be needed.



The below map shows the described locations:

- 1) Proposed Verizon/Vertex site
- 2) Town property (NE section of Dana L. Thompson Park)
- 3) Dana L. Thompson Park property
- 4) Town Hall Property
- 5) Dailey William E property (Zoned Office Industrial, OI)
- 6) 6a. Dorr Property (north)
- 6b. Dorr Property (south)



Conclusion:

Based upon the existing town requirements for locating a telecommunications facility, and based on our review of the area and the lack of collocation opportunities, the following recommendations are advised:

- Applicant should **provide colored coverage plot maps** demonstrating current service and proposed Improved service with a new facility at the proposed

location and height, as well as at other possible locations. Maps should be for each technology frequency being utilized. For comparison and justification purposes, plot maps should also be provided to show the coverage at a height 10' below the proposed height so the difference can be seen and the proposed height justified. **These plot maps should be provided on mylar overlays for easy comparison.**

- Applicant should **provide clear and accurate photo simulations** with the tower location and point of view locations clearly labelled. Metadata from the images from the balloon shoot should be provided to the town as focal lengths are not provided in the visual report. It is hoped that the town has provided input on the locations for this report. The town should advise the carrier(s) on specific locations if they so desire. Where balloons are not readily viewable applicant should utilize a red arrow indicating location of the balloon on the photograph and simulation.
- Applicant should attempt and exhaust all opportunities to procure a location within a property where telecommunications facilities are permitted (OI, FC, RA; see attached zoning map attached for reference). **It is highly recommended that the neighboring OI property directly to the north be pursued diligently.** If good faith efforts with that property owner fail in an attempt to locate there, written documentation should be provided to confirm that.
- Applicant should attempt to meet town code requirements including setback requirements and height requirements, whenever possible.
- Applicant should confirm with the FAA if the tower needs to be lighted or painted due to the proximity of the town helipad.
- Applicant should indicate distances from residences and schools and attempt to meet required setbacks.

As directed by the town, we have reviewed the application documentation and visited the proposed site as well as other potential nearby sites (both town owned and private properties). It appears likely the proposed site, as well as nearby locations will achieve the coverage objectives of the applicant. However, we believe that the property to the north of the proposed site is better suited for a site as it is in a permitted zone, and depending upon placement, could meet setbacks. If the town prefers to have the

applicant locate on town property, we have presented nearby town-owned properties that could be considered for such an opportunity.

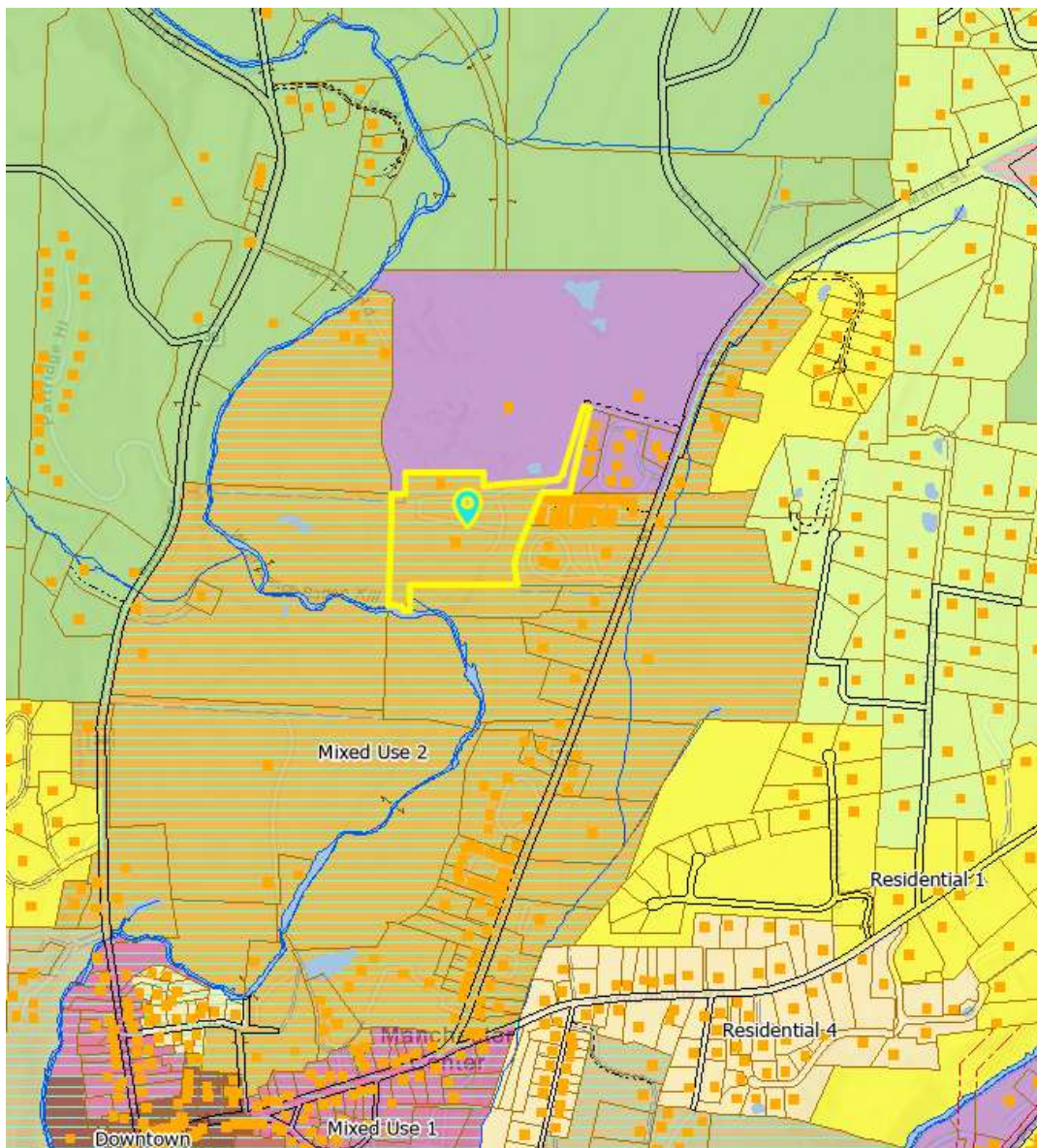
Respectfully submitted,

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**Attachment:
Zoning Map**

Manchester Zoning Map



Outlined parcel is Subject Property (410 Hunter Park Rd)
Parcel in purple is zoned OI.