

**From:** Julie Smith <[townclerk@rochestervermont.org](mailto:townclerk@rochestervermont.org)>

**Sent:** Thursday, August 21, 2025 2:29 PM

**To:** PUC - Clerk <[PUC.Clerk@vermont.gov](mailto:PUC.Clerk@vermont.gov)>

**Subject:** Rochester Planning Commission Advanced Notice Comment PUC 25-1056-AN

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Dear Ms. Anderson

Attached please find comments from the Rochester Planning Commission regarding the proposed cell phone tower at 1030 Route 100 South in Rochester, Vermont -PU 25-1056-AN. We were not able to upload the attachment through ePUC system. Please let me know if you have any questions, concerns, or difficulty opening this document.

Best wishes,

Julie Smith



**Julie Smith**  
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## Rochester Town Office

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August 21, 2025

William Cooper Hayes  
MSK Attorneys  
275 College Street  
Burlington, VT 05401  
E: [chayes@mskvt.com](mailto:chayes@mskvt.com)

RE: PUC 25-1056-AN – Vertex Towers, LLC (“Vertex”) and Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems, LLC  
d/b/a Verizon Wireless (“Verizon”) Construction of a Wireless Telecommunications  
Facility, 1030 Route 100 South, Rochester, VT 05767

Dear Mr. Hayes,

After a review of the documents filed by the applicant in PUC 25-1056-AN in relation to our Town Plan, the Rochester Planning Commission has the following initial questions and concerns:

*Forests* – The Planning Commission may request specific mitigation measures in the forest management plan, including but not limited to: prohibiting any future clear cuts adjacent to the tower that might increase the tower’s visibility; and requiring a buffer of trees along the road to provide camouflage, shade, or otherwise make the tower and road less visible.

*Wetlands* – It is unclear if or how the project will affect wetlands and streams. The Planning Commission will ask the Agency of Natural Resources to determine if there are any mapped or unmapped wetlands affected by the project and, if so, identify ways to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any adverse impacts on them. In addition, on page C1 of the site plans, there is an intermittent stream mislabeled as Rogers Brook.

*Habitat and species* – It is unclear if or how the project will affect habitats, especially for rare/threatened/endangered species. The Planning Commission will ask the Agency of Natural Resources to determine if there are any rare, threatened, or endangered species affected by the project and, if so, identify ways to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any adverse impacts on them.

*Flooding* – It is unclear how the project will impact erosion and flood risks, especially in vulnerable areas not specifically included in mapping on river corridors or flood maps. Because both the town plan and the drafted Local Hazard Mitigation Plan specifically call for attention to managing the risks of fluvial erosion and flash flooding risks in unmapped vulnerable areas, the board has additional concerns about how the project identifies and plans to manage these risks. The Planning Commission will likely ask the Agency of Natural Resources for a complete stormwater analysis.

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*Roads and drainage* – The Planning Commission has questions about compliance with stormwater rules, the steepness of the slope, and the characterization of the aggregate substrate as permeable. The Planning Commission will ask state agencies for assistance with this, possibly as part of but not limited to, a complete stormwater analysis. The Planning Commission will also likely request a detailed final road plan, including measures for erosion control and long-term maintenance.

*Visibility and aesthetics* – Given the expressed concerns of community members about the visibility of the project from Route 100, the Planning Commission may request additional studies from the Department of Public Service and/or the Department of Historic Preservation to determine if the project will have an undue adverse impact on aesthetics and historic sites, and recommend measures to minimize or mitigate those, if so.

*Colocation* – The advance notice includes no evidence of any efforts by Verizon to collocate its telecommunications facilities.

*Bond for removal* – The town of Rochester will ask that the applicant be required to post a tower, structure, and equipment removal bond.

Sincerely,

Dan McKinley, Chair  
Rochester Planning Commission

cc: Holly Anderson, Clerk, Vermont Public Utility Commission  
Sarah Amatruto, ANR Office of Planning and Legal Affairs  
Elizabeth Peebles, Vermont Division for Historic Preservation  
James Porter, Director of Public Advocacy, Vermont Department of Public Service  
Bryan Kovalick, Planner, Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission