

Dear State of Vermont PUC Personnel,

I understand your job is challenging and often thankless. But I want to thank you for working in service to the citizens of Vermont.

It is your responsibility to represent the State with regard to the Public Good, which is of course a complex concept that must take into account not only reception via cell phones for use in emergencies but also the increase in distracted driving accidents cell reception has increased the frequency of - now called a "public health epidemic" by several national agencies. The Public Good must also regard the watershed health of our valleys such that flood events are not made more acute by the increased runoff from road conveyances caused by new and widened steep roadways on steep ground.

The language pasted below is directly from our **Rochester Town Plan** and shows how the **proposed tower violates it**. Given our town officials have clarified this fact, I and other citizens Rochester expect the PUC to follow through on its requirement for substantial deference to town plans and deny this project.

The incongruence of Verizon/Vertex's project with the Town Plan is clear in numerous specifics bulleted in petitions (which over 100 residents and dozens of visitors have signed) and in the spirit and intent of the Plan which is to protect what makes Rochester unique while carefully guiding economic development within the guardrails of sustainable land and energy use, flood resilience and watershed protection.

Best,  
Ben

**"For all telecommunications facilities, the following policies shall apply:"**

**"3. Significant Areas: All new telecommunications facilities shall be sited and designed to avoid or, if no other reasonable alternative exists, to otherwise minimize or mitigate adverse impacts to the following:"**

- **"Public parks and recreation areas, including state and municipal parks, forests and trail networks.**
- **State or federally designated scenic byways, and municipally designated scenic roads and viewsheds."**

No alternatives have been proposed by Vertex, thus their proposal is incongruent with our Plan.

**“5. Natural Resource Protection: New telecommunications facilities must be sited to avoid the fragmentation of, and undue adverse impacts to the town’s working landscape, including large tracts of undeveloped forestland, open farm land, and primary agricultural soils mapped by the US Natural Resource Conservation Service.**

This proposal by Vertex for the Martin tower is not sited to avoid fragmenting forest forestland – in fact it’s proposed deep in a currently roadless area a mile from the grid.

**6. Protection of Wildlife: Designers must gather information about natural and wildlife habitats that exist in the project area and take measures to avoid any undue adverse impact on these resources.**

**Consideration shall be given to the effects of the project on: rare, threatened, and endangered species; the impacts of human activities at or near habitat areas; and any loss of vegetative cover or food sources for critical habitats for rare, threatened or endangered species.”**

No consideration to these species have been made in the proposal, thus it violates this part of our Plan. The designers have not shown they have assessed any of this adequately.

**\* “shall”, “shall be”, and “must” are regulatory terms that are binding**

Thank you,  
Ben Falk

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