

Dear Public Utilities Commission:

I am a retired Air Force Colonel and a current resident of Rochester, Vermont. The proposed cell phone tower by Vertex/Verizon blatantly violates our Town Plan in many ways, and an obvious conflict of interest is ever present with the land owner of the proposed tower site being a member of the town's Planning Commission. This proposed cell tower project needs to be rejected and denied.

This letter may be a bit different from others you are receiving, but I want to testify about another aspect of what we may be facing with a 50 year commitment to Verizon. I was a Verizon customer for 25 plus years in New York State where Verizon was the provider for family cell phones, landline, Internet and TV. However, I recently sold my home in New York and established a termination date for Verizon service. Verizon bills monthly from the 15th of one month through the 14th of the next. However, as I found out firsthand, if you terminate Verizon service any time after the 15th of the month, even 1 day, you are charged for the entire month – NO prorating! Never mind the ongoing rate increases, even with diminished service. A friend of mine in NYS who has a heating and air conditioning business and relies on his Verizon cell phone has been dealing with dropped and lost calls and spotty service for some time now. This negatively impacts his business, and Verizon has been no help to him in fixing the problem.

All this translates to little care and fairness to the customer. This \$500 billion plus corporation is simply not customer friendly and their policies and actions do not fall into what could be viewed as doing “the right and ethical” thing for the public good. Profit overshadows any shred of compassion and concern for their customers. I have also heard from someone who worked for Verizon who said that they DO NOT maintain their infrastructure. Committing 50 years to this company, expecting them to maintain a steep road up a mountain that may be subject to washouts, and all the equipment that is stationed there is a gamble this town shouldn't have to take on. This is the reality of Verizon/Vertex.

Until Vertex found this site owner who agreed to allowing a tower on their land, to my knowledge, NOBODY from this town approached our town government or in any way let it be known that they were hurting from lack of cell coverage. This was a case – as it is all over Vermont and the country – of a giant corporation telling people what they need. They are not doing it for us; they are doing it for their corporate profits. Now that it is an issue, some people say they need this coverage. If this is the case, they should bring it up at regular Planning and Select Board meetings where an open, substantive exchange of ideas on possible solutions can be had. The signal from a cell tower on this mountain wouldn't even reach many of those who say they need it. How many more cell towers should our tiny town house? In fact, there are many other options to be discussed that can fix connectivity issues. This cell tower isn't and shouldn't be the panacea for those issues.

Please deny a Certificate of Public Good to this giant corporation, because it would NOT be for the “Public Good”!

Thank you,

Steven S. Hoffman, Col., USAF, Ret.