

## Duxbury Planning Commission

### Meeting Minutes November 14, 2013

Members present: Erica Campbell, Trevor Cole, Kim Greenwood, Garrett MacCurtain, Brian T. Fitzgerald

Others present: Brian Sullivan, Andrew Davis, Louis Hodgetts (Verizon Wireless); Kane Smart, Tim Whalen (AT&T)

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Brian Fitzgerald

**Minutes:** On motion by Erica/Garrett, the minutes of the October 10, 2013 meeting were approved as written.

**AT&T Wireless Facility:** Kane Smart explained the Section 248(a) process that AT&T is navigating. As part of that process, the company is requesting a letter of support from the Duxbury Planning Commission.

Mr. Smart described the rationale behind the project and why AT&T had chosen this location, using the signal propagation maps included in the pre-filing package. We then reviewed the visual simulations that had been prepared following a balloon test in late October. PC members had several questions about design details, including how the site would be accessed.

During discussion, members noted that this would improve cellular coverage along River Road and in North Duxbury. The project should have minimal visual impacts, and its proximity to existing transmission lines was noted as a plus. Only a short road extension off of the Bolton Falls Dam access road is needed to reach the site. No wetlands will be affected, nor will there be impacts to the Winooski River. There was a concern raised about possible impacts to the canoe portage around the dam, which will require further investigation by AT&T.

Kim made the following motion, seconded by Garrett: The planning commission recommends approval of the project but requests that any impacts to the Bolton Falls canoe portage be mitigated so that the portage remains viable. Passed unanimously.

Brian will file a letter with AT&T on behalf of the planning commission.

**Verizon:** Brian Sullivan explained that this project is also undergoing Section 248(a) review, but it is a bit further along and the application was filed with the Public Service Board in the last few days. Verizon is interested in working with the town, but is not seeking a letter of support.

This project is in a relatively remote location at a higher elevation than the AT&T facility, as Verizon is trying to cover a larger area. The existing coverage is provided by antennas on the WDEV towers, which was never intended to be a permanent installation and is now being replaced.

The PC reviewed the propagation maps and photo simulations. Much of the discussion focused on the long access route, which follows existing logging roads. Access during construction will involve airlifts, so major road construction will not be needed. Utility service will be by buried lines in the roadway. Following construction, access to the site will be via snowmobile or ATV, so the route will revegetate with herbaceous plants. The planning commission recommended that native plant seed mix for higher elevations be used and that care be taken to avoid the introduction of invasive exotic plants.

Members of the PC felt, in general that, like the AT&T facility, the public benefits outweigh the drawbacks and supported the project. Since no formal PC action was requested, no motion was introduced.

**Town Plan:** There was discussion of the status of the plan and the work that remains to be done. Work will continue until the next meeting. During the December meeting, we will identify the high priority recommendations that we will include.

**Other Business:** There were no new items for discussion.

**Next Meeting:** December 12, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in the town garage meeting room.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Minutes by B.T. Fitzgerald