

Subject: H.110

“I don’t want Vermont turned into a giant pincushion with 200 foot towers sticking out of every mountain and valley. We’re not asking that Vermont be left out of the telecommunications age. But we Vermonters want to be able to determine where the towers are located”. Senator Leahy 1998

In December 2021 Worcester was notified that Industrial Wireless Technologies proposed to build a 200 foot cell tower on a pristine ridge line overlooking historic Worcester village. The town welcomed improved cell service but not at that height or that site. The proposal was unacceptable in several ways.

- it violated town ordinances
- it was not in keeping with the town plan
- the Worcester Selectboard (of which I am a member) was unanimously opposed to the proposal
- the Worcester Planning Commission was unanimously opposed to the proposal
- the Worcester citizenry was overwhelmingly opposed to the proposal

June Tierney from DPS recently said telecommunications rollout must involve a “robust community engagement process because we know this should be a collaborative process with local voices involved”. Yet Worcester was never given a chance at collaboration. We were not informed of any tower plans until after a site and design had been finalized. Contrary to telecom spokesperson’s assertions, most large tower proposals are being contested. These disputes are unnecessary. If towns were included in planning BEFORE leases were signed, then tower siting and design would be “owned” by both town and telecom provider assuring a much easier, less contentious approval process.

The 1996 Telecommunications Act suggests the adverse effects of radio frequency radiation (RFR) are limited to the warming produced by microwaves directly adjacent to towers. That act and the studies on which it was based are nearly 30 years old. I am a retired emergency physician. When caring for a heart attack patient, if I had used 30 year old treatment protocols, I would have been committing malpractice and patients would have died. Yet, regarding RFR, we are governed by 30 year old science. In August 2021, the US Court of Appeals for Washington D.C. ruled the FCC had failed to respond to evidence that exposure to RFR at levels below the FCC’s current limits may cause negative health effects. The medical literature is replete with compelling articles demonstrating adverse health effects from RFR. Until that literature is used in an evidence based manner to update archaic Telecommunications RFR guidelines, we should, at the very least, set standards for 500 meter setbacks from habitable structures as is proposed in New Hampshire.

Please renew H.110 for only one year, that will allow further study to be completed and considered.

Thank you, John Kaeding