

Greetings Senate Finance Committee Members,

I am a resident of historic Manchester and our community now faces the possibility of an AT&T 140 foot cell tower in the heart of our downtown district, a stone's throw from Orvis's flagship store, Maple Street School, an assisted living facility Equinox Terrace, the Equinox Hotel and other commercial properties and residential neighborhoods.

The area in question is also in close proximity to the west branch of the Battenkill River. The proposed site is slightly set back from the main thoroughfare of Rte 11/ 30 and would be within three hundred feet of a trailer park. The town received notice roughly two weeks ago on March 15th after the launch of a test balloon.

We apparently have sixty days to respond (approximately 45 days now).

This feels like an assault by the telecom industry on an unsuspecting public. Few people are aware of this proposal and 60 days is not enough time to inform the public and assess the project's potential impact in terms of visual blight and environmental effects, whether an alternative site might be more suitable, or if a tower is needed at all. AT&T has not demonstrated the existence of any widespread gaps in service to justify this project.

The character and charm of our small town is now under fire.

It's extremely stressful to face the onslaught of AT&T and the wireless industry with its teams of lawyers and experts, especially while under a time constraint.

Our town is a tourist destination known for its beautiful surroundings, its historic sites and for Ben Hauben's innovative creation of Manchester Designer Outlets, the first, upscale outlet mecca of its kind.

From Robert Todd Lincoln's Hildene, skiing at nearby Bromley and Stratton mountains, the Vermont Summer Horse Festival in East Dorset, we value the beauty of our town, its outdoor recreational pursuits and its historic nature.

AT&T's cell tower will mar this idyll.

I implore the Committee members to establish a protocol that provides safeguards for communities such as mine, now facing this type of aggressive, town altering industrial cell tower complex.

We live here, pay taxes, and seek to preserve the beauty of our town for future generations. Our welfare and happiness must be the top priority, not the last.

Sincerely,

Martine Victor