

Hi Kathleen,

I read Lori Church' letter to your House Energy and Digital Infrastructure Committee dated January 21, 2026. It was a great letter and very much in line with the thinking and experience of the people in Manchester, VT.

"In the recent case of Vertex/Verizon's application in Rochester, the Vertex representative literally told the town "Your town has no say" and "Your town rules and zoning don't matter" and that he was only there as a courtesy but didn't have to be. He said it all with such authority and condescension that some of our community, including the Select Board and Planning Commission thought it was true. Only when community members brought in outside guidance to the town leaders was the reality made clearer that the town and residents do actually have a say. Not only do they have a say, but "substantial deference" is supposed to be given to the recommendations of the town's plan."

We knew it was a lie- we still do have rights in our towns.

Why have a town if you don't have a say in your own governance? The zoning issue was clear. The siting of the tower next to the Hunter Recreation Park, Red Fox School, the Municipal Buildings - Town Clerk, Fire, Police- the people said- "No Way!" It was a hazard and danger. The Vertex/Verizon guy tried to act like a bully. It was all bluster and baloney. The Select Board and Citizens voted overwhelmingly for their own autonomy.

These corporate folks get paid big money to takeover our local areas. They are seeking to take over our state. ("To make our life so much easier and better,...blah, blah,blah.") Democrats used to stand up against such bullies. Now they support them. Next thing on your docket, as Lori Church pointed out are Small Cells. We know they are coming to get around other regulations. Lori Church writes correctly:

"Vermont has not addressed small cells. These have no regulatory oversight and are built close to houses and schools. Combine that with the concern that the FCC isn't compliant with a federal court order to re-examine health issues, and that translates to endangering the health of Vermont citizens. "

We live in strange times.

Please Sunset 248a so the legislature can get this situation right and protect Vermont citizens from Vertex's Voraciousness.

Thanks,

Steve Berry