

**RE: H.527**

Good Afternoon All,

I would greatly appreciate your time and consideration of my thoughts on this proposed bill. I served 6 years as a Representative in the early 2000's, so I know your time is valuable, and thank you for being a legislator. I will try to be brief, but think you should hear about the current process from a Town's viewpoint.

Tinmouth first adopted and has had a Town Plan since 1974, our zoning regulations were adopted in 1977 and have been updated as the town plan has evolved. We are very proud of our efforts and the sense of community that has been generated. We have less than 600 people, and our yearly budget for legal work is \$1,000 - most years it not used. We have fiber-optic Internet service.

The Town received an advance notice of a proposed radio tower early last year. We were pretty clueless about what the Town's role should be. We sought guidance to help us navigate the process, and thankfully found someone with experience. The Select Board and Planning Commission held a joint meeting for ITW to present its case and answer questions from townspeople. A number of people were dismayed by the answers - or lack thereof - and that when ITW finally filed its 'petition' (an application in our minds) there were several discrepancies between what was filed and what was assured by them at our meeting.

The Select Board and Planning Commission reviewed our town plan, zoning and telecommunications bylaws, and determined that the project did not comply with them, and recommended that the CPG be denied. Our understanding was/is that the Town would/should be given "substantial deference" because we do have a town plan and bylaws in place. As this is an ongoing process, I will leave it at that.

I found the ePUC website not very user friendly and had difficulty finding where our filings should go and/or be called. Once I kind of got the hang of it, I was able to help others in town who also had trouble navigating it. And I fully acknowledge that many of the State's websites are more like a spider's web and not easy to use. An issue for another day, but a cause for concern for those wishing to participate. Suffice it to say, that we were very thankful to be able to hire an attorney to provide guidance and legal advice. Now we have to find funding!!

I am hoping that your committee will see fit to address some of the issues that towns and neighbors are encountering to make this easier and clearer for the

petitioner (applicant) as well as those who wish to participate in the process and be allowed input and review. Should the process need lawyers on all sides?

I was hoping to be able to testify, but I have a prior commitment on May 5<sup>th</sup>, a medical appointment I've had to wait 4 months for. If you have another time you will take additional testimony, I would very much like to speak directly with you. I hope my small insight might provide a bit of a reason to pause to try to understand some of the missing guidance needed for this process and think about how it could be addressed.

Thank you again for your time and consideration,

Gail Fallar

Town of Tinmouth

Town Clerk/Treasurer/Zoning Administrator/Select Board Assistant