

Paul Foley

From: Tracey Braun [tracey.braun@exim.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2013 3:38 PM
To: foley@mvcommission.org
Subject: West Tisbury Cell Tower

Resending with corrected email address -- thanks, Tracey

From: Tracey Braun
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2013 3:04 PM
To: foley@mvcommission.com
Cc: zba@westtisbury-ma.gov
Subject:

Martha's Vineyard Commission

P.O. Box 1447

Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

Attention: Mr. Paul Foley

Re: Objection to Proposed Cell Tower on Tisbury Great Pond

I have been a seasonal resident of West Tisbury since 1985, when I first fell in love with the Vineyard and Tisbury Great Pond. Last year, my husband and I bought a home at 21 Runner Road (near the house that my in-laws built on Town Cove in the late '60s). The house itself is not on the water, but has rights to access the cove where I kayak, paint, bird, and throw sticks to the dog. This quiet part of Tisbury Great Pond -- with its marsh and birdlife -- is a truly special spot; I am heartbroken that this may be marred by huge industrial cell tower. Given the flat topography and low trees, I suspect an 80' tower would be visible from the second story deck as well. (And by the way, my Verizon cell phone works just fine.)

I accept that cell phones are a way of life, and no one likes dead zones. But that must be balanced against the preservation of West Tisbury's agricultural and natural character, and protection of its gentle landscape of water, fields and trees (where there is not a pole or power line to be seen). The church steeple can be seen from many locations on the pond, so an eight-story cell tower --projecting above the horizon -- would be a highly visible blight on the landscape.

Verizon appears to have chosen the most expedient option in deciding on a single tall tower (one lease, one fee, one facility to maintain) in one already-secured location, and was not truly interested in offering alternatives (despite its statement that more expensive alternatives are preferable if they have a smaller environmental impact). There are feasible low-impact alternatives that can -- and should -- be explored, preferable with the advice of objective professional consultants, before irreversibly damaging West Tisbury's viewsapes. These include emerging technologies that some think will render cell towers obsolete -- such as the rubik's cube-sized small cell antenna technology -- as well as more traditional considerations of siting and height. Verizon has not provided convincing evidence that it can't put antenna in existing structures such as the town hall, agricultural hall or church steeple (providing economic benefit to the town or church), or that gaps in service could not be filled by two or more tree-height towers or co-location on existing towers

(such as those at the airport), or use of DAS technology, or (least desirable) a new tower in a lower-impact alternative location (found through truly diligent inquiries) – or some combination thereof. Might a better option for West Tisbury be semi-permanent COW or SatCOLT units as an alternative to a permanent (and possibly soon-to-be-obsolete) cell towers -- and bridge to emerging near-invisible technologies?

This is important not just for residents near Town Cove, but for all of us who want to protect and preserve the Island for future generations. I urge the Martha's Vineyard Commission to require complete, objective and accurate information on alternatives and visual impact be presented to allow a fully considered decision on this important and precedential issue.

Sincerely yours,

Tracey Braun
West Tisbury and Washington, DC

cc: West Tisbury Zoning Board of Appeals

P.O. Box 278

West Tisbury, MA 02575

Attention: Julie Keefe, Board Administrator

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