

Martha's Vineyard Commission
P.O. Box 1447, Oak Bluffs, MA 02557
Attn: Mr. Paul Foley
Email: foley@mvcommission.org

January 22, 2013

Dear Mr. Foley:

We write to object to the proposed Verizon cell tower to be located off Town Cove on Tisbury Great Pond. Improving cell service is a laudable goal, but this proposed cell tower would forever change Tisbury Great Pond's uniquely pristine environment and vistas enjoyed by all.

We are seasonal residents of West Tisbury and riparian owners on Tisbury Great Pond, where our family has had a home for the past 10 years. Our objections to the proposed cell tower are as follows:

Scenic preservation is a paramount value and policy objective for Martha's Vineyard, and coastal and scenic wetlands are especially sensitive and vulnerable. Tisbury Great Pond and its coves and swamps and neighboring forests and fields, provides irreplaceable views to visitors as well as seasonal and year-round residents that would be permanently marred by the cell tower.

Verizon's cell tower is a tall, permanent, industrial intrusion extending more than 40 feet above a coastal forest landscape, significantly higher than allowable under zoning bylaws. The proposed fake pine alternative would be even more conspicuous and visually incongruous. Either would stick out like a sore thumb from the surrounding low oak forest.

The cell tower, at 80 feet would be highly visible from the publicly accessible Tisbury Great Pond (the much lower West Tisbury church steeple is a visible and noticeable man-made feature). Views from the pond extend for miles across a horizontal landscape of water, fields and trees; the cell tower would be the only structure to project above the level of the horizon.

The proposed tower is incompatible with the nature and character of West Tisbury and its community, and would be contrary to the highly successful efforts of West Tisbury (with its buried lines and strict zoning) to maintain its historic, natural and agricultural character.

Feasible and less visually intrusive alternatives to an 80 foot cell tower (location, technology, much shorter tower, several smaller verses one huge tower) are available and have not been fully evaluated.

If the Verizon cell tower is allowed, MVC would be obligated to allow similar concessions to competitors and therefore would lose its authority to stop other companies from locating cell towers in coastal and Great Pond locations to the permanent detriment of the scenic beauty of Martha's Vineyard.

We thank the members of the MVC for considering these objections to the proposed cell tower, and urge that alternatives be considered and evaluated.

Sincerely,

Alison Yager and Andrew Elmore

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