

**Steven Gorelick <isecvt@igc.org>**

Tue, Dec 8, 12:06 PM (2 days ago)

to  
me

To the Hardwick Planning Commission:

As a Hardwick taxpayer, I urge you to reject the AT&T proposal for a telecom tower on Buffalo Mountain.

In addition to the arguments raised by others about the adverse affects of a tower on one of our prime scenic and natural areas, I find the “bait-and-switch” tactics of telecom applicants in general, and AT&T in particular, insulting to the intelligence of Hardwick’s public officials.

When Rinker’s Bridgman Hill tower was being considered, the applicant argued that there was no alternative location available, since the main alternative – Buffalo Mountain – was clearly too important to the town to allow a telecom tower there. But after that argument was used to ram through the Bridgman Hill tower, AT&T has come back with a proposal for a tower in the same location previously described as “off limits”.

A second bait-and-switch tactic, used on both the Rinker’s application and the AT&T proposal, is to submit “artist’s renderings” of what the tower will look like when built. Rinker claimed that the tower was needed for his pager service, and the rendering showed a single antenna. But once a tower is permitted by the town and PUC, the tower owner can add antennas at will, greatly increasing the visual impact. One need only look at the Bridgman Hill tower today to see how different its appearance is from what was originally presented to the town. AT&T is doing the same thing today, with the “simulation” of the tower’s appearance accompanying its April 2020 application.

Antennas appear only at the top – not bristling with antennas on every inch of the tower above tree line, as will surely be the case if the tower is permitted.

Municipal officials and town residents can be forgiven for being fooled the first time. By trying to fool us again with the same tactics, AT&T insults the intelligence of Hardwick citizens and their representatives.

Steven Gorelick

**Suzanna Jones** <[Suzanna.Jones@igc.org](mailto:Suzanna.Jones@igc.org)>

Tue, Dec 8, 12:17 PM (2 days ago)

to  
me

To the Hardwick Planning Commission,  
I urge the Commission to reject the AT&T proposal for a telecommunications tower on Buffalo Mountain, for the following reasons:

1. The proposal does not comply with Hardwick's Municipal Plan. The Municipal Plan specifically describes Buffalo Mountain as "an important scenic resource" (pages 11 and 12), and lists it among Hardwick's "Natural Areas and Wildlife Resources" (pages 23 and 24). The clear intent is that these areas should be protected from development.
2. The ruling by Vermont's Supreme Court in the Bridgman Hill tower case also refers to the Municipal Plan's inclusion of Buffalo Mountain as a scenic resource important to the town, and refers to public opposition to a previous attempt to develop the site. See Rinker's Supreme Court decision (attached, page 5).
3. The proposal does not comply with Hardwick's Bylaws. The "Telecommunications facility" section of the Bylaws (Section 4.17) supports the language of the Town Plan, including a requirement to "protect the scenic, historic, environmental and natural resources of the town" (page 45). While it also states that these goals are to be met while still allowing "adequate services and coverage to be developed", it would be inappropriate to allow telecom developers to determine what is "adequate". Until the AT&T application was filed, there was no clamor in town for increased cell service and coverage, implying that both are already adequate.

The PUC gives substantial deference to citizens as represented by their Planning Commissions and Select Boards. I urge the Planning Commission to support the Motion to Dismiss filed by Julie Gregonis at the PUC, based on the multiple deficiencies of the application.

Thank you.  
Suzanna Jones