

CHARLEMONT BROADBAND COMMITTEE

Public Information Meeting about potential pole application from WiValley / Otelco

Wednesday, August 29, 2018 at 6:00 pm at the Charlemont Town Hall

Meeting began 6:05

Attendees

Broadband Committee: Bob Handsaker, Trevor Mackie, Doug White, Mary Ellen Banks, Bill Tucci, Cheryl Handsaker,

Guests: Sarah Reynolds, Charlemont Select Board, Gisela Walker, Charlemont Planning Board Bill Ennen, EOHEd, Lark Thwing, Town of Hawley, Brian Foucher, WiValley, Jonathan Mirin, Resident, Legate Hill Rd.

Proposed details for Legate Hill: Wood pole between 50'- 70' - height of 42'- 60' above ground when installed. Possible second pole (shorter) for power and possible solar panels.

Network is largely within the four towns (Hawley, Savoy, Florida, Monroe). Hawley needs support of Charlemont to reach all residents. Hawley is asking for support from Charlemont to issue a permit from the town to place a single pole (up to 70') within a proposed area on upper Legate Hill Rd.

They are requesting 1 pole on Legate Hill Rd, drawings were presented. The pole will hold 2 large 2' dishes, five smaller 16" dishes, and a single vertical transmitter (sector antenna). Estimated height of the antennas: 60'/65'/55'

The Four Town Network will own all of the permanent network assets, such as utility poles and huts. Charlemont will not have ownership or responsibility for maintenance or removal of the permitted pole. Private poles on private roads would not require town to approve the right of way. When utility poles are condemned, the PUC will require owner to remove the pole unless these are on private property.

At this time, no one in Charlemont will be served. The four town network will not make service available to Charlemont.

Timeline for application - if planning board approval is needed, the special permit process takes at least 2 months. At this time we believe that the special permit application would be needed. The current cell tower bylaw would require this special permit. Charlemont will explore whether

we can combine the special permit process and pole hearing into one hearing. Gisela or Sarah Reynolds will ask town counsel.

MBI-WiValley contract will have four phases. Phase 2 includes the Charlemont pole in the fall.

How does this go forward if Charlemont says no? WiValley indicates that serving Hawley from Charlemont is their first choice. Is there a plan B? There may be a plan B but it would be more expensive for Hawley.

The dish antennas are for point-to-point communication. They use narrow beams of about eight degrees. At a distance of about 2ft from transmitter, the power is about the same as the cell phone. 4 watts out ERP (effective radiated power). This is per channel so the power is not cumulative. The vertical panel is the sector antenna, Targeted 8' beam same as a cellphone- OSHA requires a 2ft distance when antenna is powered on for a safe working environment.

Economics of the Charlemont municipal network. Can Charlemont assess an MLP fee with 4-town network? WiValley has partnered with Otelco. WiValley will build and own the network, 4-town consortium will own the vertical assets. WiValley will operate, maintain and have exclusive use. Otelco will be the ISP. CAF2 funding has been awarded to Otelco for Savoy, Florida, Hawley and part of Charlemont. (WiValley indicated that they have committed to service speeds for 75% of the 4-town network at 25/5, for CAF-2 awarded areas, coverage of 96% at 25/5 is expected). Part of the permitting should include conditions for serving Charlemont. Price and performance and reach are important considerations.

Jonathan Mirin raised an issue that property values could be impacted by the poles. Brian Foucher suggested that home values will rise with access to Broadband.

Mr Mirin asked if the pole output could be measured. Mr Foucher indicated that Warwick may provide measurement opportunities.

Next actions:

- Lark and Bob will discuss Charlemont service.
- Special permit process will be initiated.
- Sarah will check about combining the pole hearing and the special permit process.

Meeting adjourned 7:25