

INTRODUCTION

Discussion of Cell Phone Tower for the Regional Campus

The Regional School Committee (RSC) will discuss and define next steps related to the construction of a cell tower on campus at its regularly scheduled meeting on November 4, at 6:30 pm in the middle school library.

The Other Tower Application

In spring 2014, Bay Communications II, LLC, acting on behalf of AT&T, submitted an application to the Dover Town boards for the construction of a cell tower on a private parcel of land in Dover accessed via Evergreen Way (in Medfield), approximately 670 feet from the High School. Bay Communication's tower application on private land has been put on hold pending the outcome of the Region's discussions.

RSC Actions and Responses

In response, the RSC voted to investigate building a tower on the regional campus, which would: 1) allow the tower to be sited further away from the school, which appealed to many constituents, 2) give the district more control over exposure monitoring or technology changes, 3) generate revenue to the towns, including money for ongoing EMF monitoring and 4) provide full cell coverage for enhanced emergency response procedures and more reliable communication with parents/guardians after school hours.

To explore fully the opportunity, the RSC voted to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) at its May 21 meeting and discussed the project at its regularly scheduled June 10 meeting. Part of the process was to hire a Radio Frequency engineer to better understand issues surrounding exposure. The RFP process evolved over the summer as the RSC held three public meetings dedicated to cell tower discussion. After careful consideration of all aspects of this proposed project, the RSC voted at its September 9 meeting to continue the process with two possible sites on the Regional Campus, 870 and 1250 feet from the nearest campus building. Discussion ensued at the RSC's October 7 meeting, with both proponents and opponents expressing their views. The Committee ultimately voted to defer further action on the issue until November 4.

If the RSC says "no" to a tower on the Regional Campus, Bay's application will be evaluated by the Dover planning committees, and to our knowledge, it is possible that a tower will be built significantly closer to campus buildings. Federal law prohibits a town regulatory organization, such as the Dover Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals, from rejecting a cell tower application for concerns over health effects.

Next Steps

Administration and the RSC seek to continue being transparent and collaborative throughout this process. The next public forum will be the November 4 RSC meeting at 6:30 pm in the middle school library. Constituents are encouraged to attend. In the interim, feel free to email your Regional School Committee representatives, a list of who can be found at (<http://www.doversherborn.org/index.cfm/page/Regional-School-Committee-/pid/10228>).