

AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING WITH FAIR POINT COMMUNICATIONS

October 13, 2008

Present:

Town of Shelburne - John Gralenski, Lucy Evans, Stan Judge, Ken Simonoko

Fair Point Communications - Diana Larose, Kevin Shea, Ed Jensen, Leo Wallin, Roy Lamphere

Public - Senator John Gallus, John Cosgriff, Michael Ryan, Debbie Ryan, Katie Stuart, Tim Buxton, Mary Jo Landry, Brian Lamarre, Ray Danforth, Joan Chamberlain

Stan Judge convened the meeting and gave the history of the ad hoc committee. The committee has met several times. They reviewed the proposed poles and made comments and gave several options. Stan said that he feels that we need to work on an administrative level now.

The infrastructure (phone lines) needs to be upgraded. However after reviewing the Master Plan, the Route 2 Corridor study, etc. The project did not totally fit with them.

Introductions were made around the room. Stan then turned the meeting over to Fair Point to elaborate on the project.

Kevin Shea explained that it is Fair Point's goal to build & upgrade infrastructure in the State of New Hampshire. He said that they are planning to offer fixed wireless or DSL in Shelburne by June/July 2009 but before that can happen they need to have Gorham up and running (the switching center in Gorham).

Kevin Shea explained that under ground installation is not Fair Point's first choice. Aerial construction is their first choice because it is less expensive and allows easy access. He also explained that fiber optic lines must be spliced in a dust free environment. So the lines must be able to be accessed by the van used to splice the fiber optic lines.

Kevin Shea said that fiber optics will bring survivability. It will also be used to service other communities beyond Shelburne.

John Cosgriff asked what type of trucks Fair Point has. Kevin Shea explained that all their trucks are 2-wheel drive. They do not have any 4-wheel drive trucks. John Cosgriff asked about Fair Point's track record on repairs. Kevin Shea explained that more issues arise with aerial lines but they are much easier to fix because the lines are

accessible. He said with buried lines there can be problems with moisture getting in and freezing. If the conduits are destroyed the lines must be dug up to repair them. It is hard to find the problem and this results in a longer fix time.

With the preferred method of overhead lines repairmen can see the problem and fix it quicker. Kevin stressed that overhead lines are the preferred method of installation in New England and that underground installations are more expensive. Kevin said that he did not have these statistics available at this time.

Brian Lamarre asked if a portion of the line work could be skipped and use wireless. Brian said that there is no need for the line to serve beyond Shelburne. Kevin Shea said that eventually Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont will all be connected.

John Cosgriff asked why new poles must be set. Kevin explained that some of the poles are located in the woods and it is difficult to work with fiber optics in the woods. A clean environment is needed. Kevin Shea said that Fair Point will need to set 39 poles to fill in the gaps and get out of the woods.

Michael Ryan questioned setting poles in the Shelburne Birches. He said that this is a famous spot and there are pictures of the Shelburne Birches all over the world. Mike said it would be a shame to lose the Birches. Ed Jensen explained that the line needs to be moved out of the woods so that it can easily be repaired.

Senator John Gallus said that Verizon had no plans to do anything in the North Country. He said Fair Point is willing to work with the North Country. Senator Gallus also urged Fair Point to work with the community to save its beauty.

Diana Larose said that Fair Point wants to work together with Shelburne.

Katie Stuart asked if Fair Point can build extra capacity like they did through Pinkham Notch.

Kevin Shea said that they are responsible for poles setting in Shelburne. He said that Fair Point may eventually approach Time Warner and PSNH about using these poles. He said Fair Point will have more maintenance than PSNH.

Mary Jo Landry said that she has 5 utilities in her backyard – 2 oil lines, one natural gas line, PSNH lines and phone lines and she said that she knows that there are ways to test for underground problems. She said that she would be willing to help push permitting for underground installation. She said some of the right of ways behind her house has been taken care of but Fair Point has not. Mary Jo also said that the field by the Inn has been used as a helicopter landing area. It was used to fight a forest fire by the forest service and the state and it was used to air lift people with medical emergencies. She said that will be lost if poles and an aerial line are installed.

John Cosgriff said that he appreciates the increased service but he loves the area and wants to keep it beautiful. He told Fair Point to treat us well and we will treat you well.

Joan Chamberlain thanked Fair Point for being willing to upgrade Shelburne's service.

Ken Simonoko asked if the town maintained a right of way to the lines behind Mary Jo Landry's house would Fair Point consider leaving the lines where they are.

Stan Judge said that he has been reviewing the Route 2 Corridor study and it is the town's job to look ahead and protect the area.

Debbie Ryan said that she feels Fair Point needs to try to stay on existing poles.

Stan suggested that the committee and representatives from Fair Point walk the route together to get a better feel for some of the questions.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 PM and Stan Judge, John Gralenski, Ken Simonoko, Senator John Gallus and the representatives from Fair Point departed to view the proposed route.