

Winsted citizens needn't accept cellular tower

The problems surrounding Winsted's cellular tower are not unique. Many towns around the state have expressed frustration over the Connecticut Siting Council's seemingly unchallengeable power to site controversial facilities. The town of Clinton, however, has successfully blocked erection of a second cellular tower from being built by insisting that two competing companies share one tower.

Winsted's lone cellular tower stands at the top of Wallens Hill, 339 feet from the nearest house on Oakdale Avenue. Residents have complained about the tower since it was first erected in 1980. Many citizens and town officials feel that SNET misled residents into thinking that the tower would barely be visible above the tree line.

Last year, selectmen responded to complaints about the tower, but found that they could not do anything since the tower was already built and approved by the Connecticut Siting Council. The new Plan of Development considered these concerns and recommends that historic ridge lines be aggressively preserved.

Now, Litchfield Cellular has the senseless and uneconomical idea that it should build a new, higher tower adjacent to the existing one. Although Litchfield Cellular acknowledges that it could technically share the tower with SNET, the companies have been unable to reach an agreement for a year. If the tower is built, everyone loses.

Citizens in Winsted should encourage these companies to come to an agreement.

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