

MEMORANDUM

TO: Cape Elizabeth Town Council
FROM: Ordinance Committee
DATE: July 20, 2021
SUBJECT: 5G Wireless Amendments/Wima RFP

Introduction

At the May 10, 2021 meeting, the Town Council referred to the Ordinance Committee a request to propose amendments to add wireless infrastructure as a use to the Zoning Ordinance. The Ordinance Committee recommended Wireless Amendments which the Town Council received at the July 12th meeting. During its deliberations, the Ordinance Committee decided to make additional recommendations to improve wireless infrastructure service.

5G Wireless Amendments

At the June 23rd and July 14, 2021 meetings, the Ordinance Committee noted the years of demand for better wireless services. The committee is recommending the 5G Wireless Amendments to proactively streamline regulatory review when 4G and 5G antenna installation arrives in Cape Elizabeth. The amendments allow the attachment of wireless antennas and supporting equipment to *existing* telephone poles with no further review. (See attached)

Wima proposal

Based on research and an informal conversation with a wireless provider, there is little expectation that these wireless amendments will catalyze wireless infrastructure improvements to the service level that Cape Elizabeth residents and businesses are requesting. Regulatory streamlining is a factor, but will not attract wireless providers to invest in Cape Elizabeth until market conditions make it profitable.

For this reason, the Ordinance Committee is asking the Town Council to fund and authorize a consultant study to develop alternatives where the town would financially partner with a private wireless provider(s) to augment wireless infrastructure supported by the market. Telecommunications is a technically dense topic and the town should obtain expert advice before considering the second step, which would be an infrastructure financial commitment.

A draft Wireless Infrastructure Market Augmentation (Wima) Study Request for Proposals is attached initiate Town Council discussion.

Recommendations

At the July 14, 2021 meeting, the Ordinance Committee voted 3-0 to submit the 5G Wireless Amendments to the Town Council.

The Ordinance Committee also voted 3-0 to forward for Town Council discussion a proposal to seek consultant expertise for a Wireless Infrastructure Market Augmentation study.