

To CVRD EASC Directors

Re TELUS Robinson Lake Cell Tower Proposal

As an owner of the property at 3478 Macaulay Road, Black Creek, I strongly object to this proposal as submitted.

The proposed compound location is directly across the road from my property, approximately 35 metres from my property line and a few metres from the road allowance.

The negative effects on the neighbourhood are obvious. The hedonic value of my property will be diminished by the visual pollution of the tower and compound. The public's perception of health and safety issues (whether valid or not) will also impact future rental or resale price, as well as development potential.

The ability to provide good infrastructure and service is surely not dependent on siting the tower this close to the road, destroying the streetscape and negatively affecting adjacent properties.

I have submitted my comments to the planning consultants, requesting that they move the tower site farther from Macaulay road and make an effort to screen the street level view by retaining existing tree coverage on the property.

The "buffer of mature trees" referred to in the site selection rationale, is not on the subject property, but on the road allowance, so there can be no guarantee that it will remain in the long term. Secondly, it provides very little screening as is, which will be further diminished by site development. The proposed compound siting would require removal of the few remaining trees that would actually provide screening on the property, much of which has been cleared already.

Locating the tower farther from the road would be easily accommodated on this substantial property. There is an existing rough driveway along the western property line, directly across from the hydro pole on the road, which could provide easy access for the driveway and power line with little additional clearing required.

Although I was not able to connect to the Area C APC meeting, I did review the application description and minutes.

I was disappointed to see that the APC members did not have the opportunity to consider my comments directly, but relied on the planner's summary, which did not, in my view, accurately represent my concerns.

I refer to the document "Public Consultation Summary & Land Use Concurrence Request" provided by the Telus planning consultant. I challenge several sections of this document.

Under the description of the proposed site:

“The subject property was selected for the following reasons:

“Rural Location: The proposed facility is on the fringe of Robinson Lake in an area with lower population density and large lots while still being centrally located in the area needing service improvements.”

- Why is the “lakefront area”, a small neighbourhood of fine homes around a private lake, the focus of concern here? Are less affluent homeowners considered collateral damage?
- I have repeatedly pointed out that there will be very little screening from the road, but the planner continues to claim otherwise.

“Minimal View Impacts: The proposed facility is setback from the lakefront area and will be partially screened by trees, minimizing view impacts to the extent possible.”

- Minimize view impacts for whom?? It is quite possible to minimize view impacts from the road and nearby properties by moving the tower farther from the Macaulay, behind existing trees.

“Access: The proposed tower is located in close proximity to Macaulay Road. This will mitigate the need for TELUS to clear more land for a longer access road as TELUS will be able to extend a short access driveway into the proposed compound.”

- The pictures that I have provided show that there is an existing driveway that could be utilized without clearing more land.
- The proposed parking lot is right on the property line. There is no “short access driveway” to be extended.

“Power: There are nearby distribution power poles that TELUS can tie into on Macaulay Road. This will mitigate the need for TELUS to develop a lengthy power line and will minimize disturbance to the land”

- The site drawing shows 17 metres between the hydro pole on the street and the proposed location on the site. Since the maximum distance between poles would be 30 metres, locating the tower farther from the street would require one or two poles – hardly a “lengthy power line”.
- There is more disturbance of land with the current siting .

Further justifications for the tower siting included:

Not encroaching on the wetland. The provincial Riparian Area regulations require that structures be 30 metres from riparian area. According to the CVRD imap, the wetland is 185 metres from Macaulay Road. That leaves a considerable buffer before any encroaching would be happening. This is a non issue.

Not impacting ALR land. The subject property is 230 acres. The tower compound would be 225 square metres. That represents .024 of one percent of the property. The area of the compound is still the same if it is sited farther from the road. If it significantly impacted ability to farm, why put it there at all?

Minimizing clearing: Telus's claim to want to save trees just doesn't bear out, since they are ignoring the possibility of making use of areas already cleared, in favour of clearing what little coverage there is.

The planner's presentation to the Advisory Planning Commission included a summary of public comments. I want to reiterate that the proponent is not the best person to represent public concerns. Firstly, my submission of March 16 – part of the public process – was OMITTED from the summary. In it, I provided pictures of the site to substantiate my concerns about the lack of screening.

Here is an excerpt from my omitted document: "I am **NOT**, as you claim, suggesting or expecting that the tower be relocated completely."

And yet, the planner states:

"We acknowledged that the commenter is opposed to TELUS' tower and that we would share this input with the CVRD and endeavour to make reasonable concessions around landscaping but that relocating the tower entirely would be more complex and require TELUS to start from the beginning with a new consultation and right of way agreement."

In order to ensure my concerns were correctly represented, I submitted a version of that form to the Area C APC before the meeting, but apparently it was not accepted. I am attaching part of the form here, for your information.

I understand that telecommunication infrastructure is regulated by the federal government, but I also know that although the ISED can proceed without local concurrence, they are hesitant to do so, and as a measure of good faith local government concerns are considered. There are numerous examples in BC where siting of towers have been modified or even relocated. For example, in a CVRD staff report dated January 7, 2020, regarding a Freedom Mobile proposal in LAZO, that

"Over the course of the year, the proponent reviewed the concerns and proposed alternatives. This updated proposal sites the telecommunication tower in the middle of the property, approximately 260 metres from the unconstructed March Road right-of-way adjacent to the Seal Bay Nature Park."

Black Creek is a growing area, and with its proximity to beaches, the Oyster River, and parks and trails, has tourism potential. Why destroy the ambiance of the rural area with the visual blight of a cell tower right next to the road when it is so easily avoidable.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

Sharon Clarke
Bill Engleson

The TELUS proposed site plan shows the area between the tower compound and the property boundary is already cleared and is designated for parking. Site prep will result in further clearing to accommodate the driveway, hydro pole and the tower compound, leaving no screening on the property itself and no possibility of mitigating the visual pollution at ground level with berms or plantings.



The “existing vegetation” is not located within the subject property and there is no guarantee that it will be preserved in the future.

Existing cleared driveway extends south along the property line

Recent photographs (taken Mar 5/21) of the existing tree coverage on the proposed site follow.

The following 2 pictures are taken from the survey peg at the NW corner of the property, showing an existing rough roadway along the property line to the south. An access driveway along this line would require very little work or disruption to vegetation. Areas cleared of large trees can be seen in the distance.



The next picture is taken from the survey peg looking to the east, along Macaulay Road. Another driveway was cleared along the north property line leaving the few trees on the road allowance. This can be clearly seen on the site plan, and is the area designated for parking. The clump of trees on the right are situated exactly where the tower and compound would be located, removing the existing natural screening that could be saved if the tower were to be moved farther south from Macaulay Road by a couple hundred feet. Relocating the tower would have negligible impact on the owner of this substantial property.



This is the screen of “mature trees” referred to in the siting selection rationale, which is actually located on the road allowance.

This is the proposed site of the tower and compound, which would result in clearing the existing screening.

The following two photos show the hydro pole flag and views towards the south. The proposed tower compound site would necessitate clearing the clump of trees to the left in the first photo.

The area behind the proposed site appears to be relatively free of large trees, and would be a preferable location, requiring fewer, smaller trees to be removed, while leaving the existing screening intact and still allowing easy access from the existing roadway shown in the pictures above.



Hydro flag

A closer view of the proposed site shows part of the tree cover that would need to be removed to accommodate the compound development. The view from across the road shows that there is already very little tree coverage beyond the trees on the road allowance.

