

**From:** [Rob Burgess](#)  
**To:** [Bolstridge, Karen](#)  
**Subject:** DP 5050 B  
**Date:** Friday, September 17, 2021 11:42:20 AM

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**EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.**

Dear Ms. Bolstridge,

I offer the following comments with regard to the proposed 300' communications tower in Dallas Plantation:

Dear Members of the Land Use Planning Commission:

I am a part-time resident in the Rangeley area, and have been for the last 20 years. I am also President of Southern Maine Astronomers, a non-profit organization that promotes the science of astronomy and advocates for preserving dark skies, not only in southern and coastal Maine but everywhere throughout the state. I oppose this tower for several reasons.

Darkness is a natural resource that is vanishing. The careless spread of stray light into the night sky is not unlike the dumping of effluent into our rivers 50 years ago, where no one paid much attention to the destruction of a public resource. Today we have learned how darkness is part of the natural rhythm of life, and how its destruction has adverse impacts on all manner of wildlife habitats and life cycles, including human health. We have also come to realize that dark skies are integral to the quality of place, spurring, in part, eco-tourism to the Rangeley Lakes area. Any viewer of light pollution maps will see that Maine is about the last location east of the Mississippi that still has dark places and is within a day's drive of tens of millions of potential tourists who are anxious to experience the outdoors, including seeing a night sky they can no longer see at home.

The Rangeley Lakes region is one of the darkest areas remaining in the state and efforts are underway to possibly seek designation as a dark sky community by the International Dark Sky Association. Within the last year Maine has received two IDA designations – an International Dark Sky Sanctuary at the Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument, and an International Dark Sky Park for the AMC's 100-mile Wilderness section of the AT. Maine is being promoted as a dark sky haven, and the Rangeley region could be next among them. (And just across the border, Mont Megantic has already been designated an International Dark Sky Reserve by IDA.) However, the insertion of this monstrous flashing tower in the midst of all the natural beauty of the area would be detrimental and an affront to any such designation. The Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust has recently published a guide on 12 good stargazing areas in the area, including nearby Quill Hill, and I suspect this tower would be visible from many of them.

The tower itself would not create the kind of light pollution we are generally concerned about. However, the flashing nature of the strobes – white by day and red by night - would be highly disruptive to visitors seeking to enjoy the nighttime vistas of the region. If such a tower were to be built you should condition it upon the use of current technology that would only activate the strobes, for a short period of time, when an aircraft was in the vicinity. This is being considered for

the two new electrical transmission towers on either side of Merrymeeting Bay, based on the objections of area residents to the incessant flashing strobes currently in use.

Finally, I question the need for this tower in the face of what is happening above us. For better or worse, SpaceX is launching about 100 small Starlink satellites per month, with a goal to launch as many as 40,000 of them, to facilitate internet access and communications worldwide. While this development is the bane of professional and amateur astronomers alike, if we are going to be faced with it it does suggest that other technologies are fast emerging that may eliminate the need for towers. I think it is inappropriate and unwise to scar a pristine landscape with this kind of structure when its useful life might indeed be short.

For all of the foregoing reasons I urge you to reject the application. Thank you for your consideration.

Robert A. Burgess  
64 Friendship Street  
Brunswick, ME 04011

**From:** [Peter](#)  
**To:** [Bolstridge, Karen](#)  
**Subject:** FirstNet Tower  
**Date:** Friday, September 17, 2021 4:40:01 PM

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**EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.**

To the Land Use Planning Commission:

I am writing to add my support for the proposed FirstNet cell tower on Dallas Hill. This tower will provide much-needed wireless communications for our emergency first responders and will improve cell reception and broadband access to area residents, visitors, and businesses. Rural areas in Maine, like Dallas Plantation and on Rangeley Lake, have suffered from low data speeds and dead zones for far too long. This tower will allow people to reliably work from home, access telehealth and education services and, most importantly, reach emergency services when they are needed.

These community benefits outweigh any negative scenic impacts created by the tower or the lights on the tower. While Dallas Plantation and the surrounding area is rural, it is not remote and it is not a wilderness. The area is already affected by lights from Rangeley Village, at least two lighted cell towers in the area, and lights from the airport.

I encourage you to approve the Rising Tide Tower application so that this critical piece of public safety infrastructure can be built as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Pete Roehrig  
63 Faunce Road  
Rangeley, ME 04970

**From:** [kdhutch3@maine.rr.com](mailto:kdhutch3@maine.rr.com)  
**To:** [Bolstridge, Karen](#)  
**Subject:** DP5050- rebuttal  
**Date:** Friday, September 17, 2021 5:18:26 PM  
**Attachments:** [final cell tower rebuttal.docx](#)

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**EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.**

Hello Karen,  
Could you please add this rebuttal letter to the public record on Development Permit 5050 Rising Tide Towers.

Thank you,  
Ralph & Karen Hutchinson

This is not a referendum on whether the area needs a cell phone tower. This is a decision about whether this particular cell tower project belongs on this particular area of Dallas Hill.

First and foremost, we refer you to **Chapter 10.06- D**, which states : "Where two or more protection subdistricts apply to a single land area, the combination of the more protective standards for each subdistrict shall apply." This cell tower is proposed for a land area that is part of two subdistricts, the D-RS2 and the M-GM, so the stricter standards of the D-RS2 subdistrict must apply. In fact, the tower was first proposed for the D-RS2 subdistrict and was turned down by your Commission. It is now located a few feet away, just slightly over the line, placing it in the M-GM subdistrict. This violates the spirit of the regulations. Just because the tower is budged a few feet over the line does not mean that all of the Commission's reasons for denying this project should not apply to this tower as well.

Second, Rising Tide has failed to show that the tower will not have a negative impact on the scenic character of the area for miles around. During the site visit, there was no weather balloon or any other real props used to model the visual impact, only computer generated images. The "experts" that led this site visit had one goal, to push the idea that there would be no visual impact at all. The idea that no campers or boaters would ever be on the lake to see the tower is not true. I was present at the site visit, and at each stop it was clear that there would either be a huge visual impact, or it was impossible to tell because there was no balloon or other props to show the height of the tower. We simply were asked to take the word of the "experts" (paid by Black Diamond to push the project) and believe that this 300 foot tower was no big deal. There was also no photos or visits to the neighborhood on Dallas Hill that would be most impacted.

In both the M-GM and D-RS2 subdistricts, structures are to be of similar type, scale and intensity as other allowed uses. This requirement is completely ignored by this 300 foot tower. Adequate provision has not been made for fitting the proposal harmoniously into the existing natural environment in order to ensure there will be no undue adverse effect on existing uses, scenic character, and natural and historic resources in the area likely to be affected by the proposal. Rising Tide insists that the tower will hardly be visible. How can this be? This is a 300 foot structure with blinking lights, which will be visible during the day and all night long. Rising Tide's dismissal of the negative visual impacts is misleading and dishonest.

Finally, Rising Tide has stated that there is simply nowhere else to locate this tower and that they are running out of time. The original area chosen by AT&T where the tower should be located for efficient reception was large. There were many areas within this circle that the tower could have been placed that would not be in a neighborhood, not as visually impactful and still supply good reception. Perhaps rather than concentrating and doubling down on this one small neighborhood on Dallas Hill, Rising Tide should have made a wider search. Has Rising Tide simply looked for the site that is the easiest and least expensive for their purposes? How can we know that they have done their due diligence in looking for the best site for this tower? When siting this tower, shouldn't this permanent structure be placed in a location that is best for the entire area, and not just Rising Tide and the big corporate cell tower companies?

We do not deny that good reception is necessary for the people of Rangeley. However, the placement of this tower matters! In a special area like Rangeley, this tower should be placed in a location that does not mar the beauty of the area and does not negatively impact a neighborhood. Please uphold your previous decision about DP5050, that this area of Dallas Hill is not appropriate for this tower. Work with Rising Tide to find a more appropriate location.

Thank you,

Ralph & Karen Hutchinson

43 Beans Corner

Dallas Plantation