

# **CHAPTER 7**

## **UTILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES**



## **7.1 BACKGROUND**

The Utilities and Public Services Subcommittee reviewed input from responses to the town-wide Master Plan Public Survey and the two Public Forums and information contained in the 2003 Master Plan. Below please find the direction which the citizens of Effingham wish to pursue in the upcoming years.

## **7.2 TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

The highest priority for 90% of the survey respondents was the need for broadband internet access. Interestingly, this was from an age spread where 61% of the respondents are between 51 and 70. The second most popular issue, improved cell phone service, was supported by 79% of the respondents. Just seven years ago, there was no mention of Internet Access or cell phone service as a Town priority, but there is now widespread agreement that these services are important.

These services would support economic development – small businesses, medium-size businesses, home businesses – and provide a platform for connectivity with regional initiatives.

This would be of tremendous value to our town as a whole. At present, some areas in Effingham are not served by either broadband internet or cell phone coverage.

Our Subcommittee also reviewed available technologies that might also serve our citizens, but are not present here at this time. We noted that Fairpoint Communication's DSL service has expanded here, that we do not have FIOS (fiber optic), that there is limited 3G network capacity and no 4G network capacity. The committee felt that beginning work on acquiring 4G service would improve cell phone service and broadband internet access at the same time. Furthermore, not all households have access to Time Warner Cable.

## **7.3 UTILITIES**

There is no town-wide water service. Presently, one private development has a water service. Most households have private wells. The town has implemented a groundwater protection ordinance.

Three-phase power is currently only available along the discontinued section of Route 25, which starts at the Ossipee town line and runs through to the junction of Route 153 and Iron Works Road. Three-phase power is necessary for large electric machinery, of which is there is not much demand in town at this time, except to support the power requirements for the current and expanding needs of the transfer station

Improving both cell phone service and broadband internet access throughout town is important to our citizens and will require a dialogue about how best to provide that service using the cell tower ordinance of 2001. Given the need for improvement, this issue should be addressed as an educational and economic development priority for the town.

With respect to existing electric service, the committee felt that improvements could be explored such that an outage in one part of town might not affect the entire town. An example might include tapping the lines on NH Route 25 instead of the present one supply line around Green Mountain.

The desire to improve both cell phone service and high speed internet access throughout town is important to our citizens and will require a dialogue about how best to provide that service using the cell tower ordinance of 2001. Given the high percentage of people wanting improvement to these services we have an opportunity to be proactive.

Effective Spring 2011, the Town has created the Technology Development Committee to begin work to improve the Internet Access and Cell Phone service.

## **7.4 2011 MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

**See Implementation Chapter**