

Funds are still needed to reach the Trust's capital need of \$1 million. The Trust will celebrate contributors of \$1,000 or more on a recognition panel in the restored birth house. A contribution to the capital campaign affords an excellent opportunity for citizens to play a significant role in the preservation of one of Concord's most historic houses. The Trust is pleased to provide a private showing of the house to anyone interested.

## CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Genine Tillotson, Chair  
Frank Okurowski, Clerk  
Scott Anderson  
Lynne Lori Sylvan

The Cable Advisory Committee set the following goals:

- To upgrade the CAC website to better address issues and to better assist residents in understanding the conversion to all digital-television;
- To meet with Verizon and members of the Municipal Light Plant to understand why Verizon has not installed FIOS in Concord;
- To meet with Comcast to share citizen concerns about services, conversion to an all-digital signal, and varying costs of services (in Concord versus elsewhere);
- To host a public hearing on the service provided by the Concord-Carlisle PEG (public, educational, and government) TV station;
- To better understand how the Smart Grid project might be used to support, at minimum high speed internet service in Town;
- To revise and have its charge clarified and updated.

2009 was a challenging year for the Cable Advisory Committee as the nation witnessed the conversion of any remaining analog broadcast signals to all digital ones. As part of this conversion, Concord residents were reporting breakdowns in service and diminishing tiers of programming options provided by Comcast. Residents also complained of the loss of channels and wanted to know why other service-providers were not available.

The CAC re-vamped its website to provide links to outside government and PBS sources which explained all technical options for those needing to convert to digital boxes. The Committee also fielded many queries about digital conversion and chronicled Comcast-specific problems with internet and telephone downtime.

In response to citizen complaints, the CAC arranged a series of meetings to better understand why Concord has no alternative service provider, e.g., Verizon; what Comcast intended to do to improve service and programming options, and what the Municipal Light Plant might be able to offer in the way of Town-generated broadband alternatives.

The CAC learned that Verizon had no plan for installing FIOS in Concord and that undergrounding bylaws and their interpretation and implementation by CMLP and government made installation of FIOS likely to be too costly in the future as well. Plans for 2010 were undefined.

Meetings with Comcast representative Tim Kelly revealed that Comcast would be providing new low-cost boxes and a basic TV service package and that new "line-ups" were being developed. The escalating fees for Comcast service were described as "not under the representative's control" and a review of the Town contract and national legislation indicated that no pricing caps were in place, locally or nationally.

The CAC also investigated the Smart Grid project in a series of meetings with CMLP. It appeared that major initial focus would be on providing fiber to the home to monitor energy devices, rather than developing telecommunications links for high speed internet or television programming.

The CAC hosted its annual, live-broadcast Public Hearing on the performance of Concord's local PEG TV stations. The most significant suggestion was to continue to improve the broadcast quality of Town Meeting.

Finally, the CAC presented proposed revisions to its charge to Selectman Stan Black and the Town Manager which focused on the examination of new and interrelated technologies and policies (e.g., bundled internet, phone, and television) and an updated role of the CAC as technology monitors and advisors to the Selectmen. The committee also made a related request to expand its search for members with telecommunications technical and policy backgrounds. Both requests were placed on indefinite hold.