

WVZN is a 500 watt daytime/5 watt nighttime radio station licensed to Columbia, PA. WVZN is owned by the Susquehanna Association for the Blind and Vision Impaired (SABVI). SABVI is a non-profit organization. The mission of SABVI is to give people who are blind or vision impaired tools which will enable them to become independent, functioning, working citizens.

SABVI purchased the license to 1580 AM in the spring of 1997, and WVZN went on the air May 26, 1997. WVZN is dedicated to providing news and information to the print handicapped that would otherwise be inaccessible. WVZN's format is news/talk. WVZN airs two hours of the morning newspaper and two hours of the evening newspaper each weekday, in addition to airing local, state and national news reports throughout the day. WVZN also airs programming via satellite.

SABVI is very interested in the Low Power FM (LPFM) proposal that is currently being considered by the FCC. SABVI is in favor of some form of LPFM. However, there are some questions that we would like to address. Why could a current broadcaster not be allowed to own a low power FM service? You can tell by our programming that the community would certainly benefit from a station like ours, yet the current proposal would not allow us to broadcast on LPFM.

Another question is what about the Emergency Alert System? The EAS is an important component of community service. If there are going to be additional licensed stations, then there should be some form of EAS that they use.

We feel that a LPFM would be better for us for the following reasons. First, it would be extremely beneficial for SABVI to be able to operate a LPFM station, licensed to Lancaster, PA. A low power FM signal would reach the vast majority of clients that SABVI currently serves. Also by having a city of license of Lancaster, our transmitter, tower and studios would be located in the same municipality. This would eliminate certain engineering issues that currently exist.

Second, with a low power FM signal we would be able to expand our community oriented programming since our signal strength would not diminish at sunset, as it currently does now. For example, we could broadcast live at a city council meeting, or provide election results as they become available. With our current AM signal, economically we are unable to do this.

The third reason is a low power FM signal is a cleaner signal than our current AM signal. AM radio is subject to a wide range of interference. The FM signal would carry our community-oriented, local news dominated programming to our clients and listeners.