

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL**

**RE: APPLICATION OF SBA TOWERS II, LLC
FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED FOR
THE CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND
OPERATION OF A TELECOMMUNICATIONS
FACILITY AT ONE OF TWO ALTERNATE SITES AT
RABBIT HILL ROAD, WARREN, CONNECTICUT**

DOCKET NO. 378

Date: May 14, 2009

PRE-FILED TESTIMONY OF MARK CIARFELLA

Q1. Mr. Ciarfella, please summarize your professional background in telecommunications.

A. I am the Vice President of Tower Development at SBA Towers II, LLC ("SBA") where I head a nationwide development team, including in the growing Northeast Region telecommunications development and site acquisition activities. My responsibilities include supervising SBA's New England regional development team in site selection and design, municipal and community relations associated with SBA's development of new tower sites in Connecticut and New England, coordination and support during the approval process and supervision of project construction once approved. I have been part of the telecommunications industry for more than fourteen years and have been involved in all aspects of the development of telecommunications facilities nationwide. Prior to working for SBA, I co-owned a site development services company that provided site acquisition, zoning, construction management and program management services to the wireless telecommunication industry. In addition, I have personally developed and owned towers for a company that I owned. I have also previously worked for wireless carriers in the development of new towers. I have

successfully completed all aspects of development activities for more than 400 telecommunications sites.

Q2. What is the purpose of your testimony?

A. My testimony provides background information relating to SBA's application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the proposed Warren facility at one of two alternate sites, both located on the property of Truda and Lewis Tanner located at Rabbit Hill Road in Warren (the "Property"). In addition, I will address the specific site search resulting in the proposed sites as well as SBA's activities prior to initiation of this application.

Q3. How does SBA conduct a site search?

A. SBA maintains close relationships with the wireless carriers active in Connecticut, follows the development activities of others and has an in-depth understanding of the fluctuating market conditions. When a wireless carrier contacts SBA regarding the need for a new facility, SBA conducts an extensive review of the area. The first activity after assignment of a search ring to acquisition personnel is a review of the area for suitable existing structures, such as existing telecommunications facilities, transmission lines available for co-location and other, existing tall structures. Only once SBA exhausts its search for existing structures on which to locate, does it then begin to study the area for suitable locations to construct a new facility. SBA first studies the area to determine whether industrial, commercial areas or town-owned parcels which have appropriate environmental and land use characteristics are present. Potential locations are studied by radio frequency engineers to determine whether the locations will meet the

technical requirements for a site in the area. The list of potential locations is then further refined based on the willingness of property owners to make their property available.

Q5. Please describe SBA's search for the proposed Warren wireless facility.

A. SBA commenced a search for a site in this area of Warren in 2005. Specifically, SBA (then Optasite) was aware that AT&T had a coverage gap in this area of Warren/Washington along Route 202 and had previously had a lease for a parcel located on Rabbit Hill Road. In that area, SBA found no existing towers suitable for use as a wireless communications facility. There are only two towers located within a four mile radius of the Property and both are too far away to provide coverage to this area. In addition, SBA identified no existing structures which were suitable for use and available.

Turning to locations for a new tower proposal, SBA found that site selection in the area was limited by existing residential development throughout the area. There are no large areas of commercial or industrial development in the site search area. In addition, SBA's site search was limited by the existing terrain in the area.

Q6. Did the Applicant consult with municipal officials with regard to its plans?

A. Yes. In compliance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 16-50l(e), consultation with municipal officials was undertaken by SBA. On August 20, 2008, SBA delivered a copy of its technical report to chief elected official of both Warren and Washington, complete with information concerning public need, the site selection process and the environmental effects of the proposed facility, as required by this statute. As already noted in this docket, the technical report contained information concerning Site A only. Since the Site was located within 2,500 feet of the town line between Warren and Washington, SBA supplied copies of the technical report to both towns. On September

11, 2008, SBA's representatives, had separate meetings with both the First Selectman of Warren and the First Selectman of Washington to discuss the proposed Facility. During those meetings, as is SBA's practice, SBA offered to attend any public informational sessions that either town chose to have. SBA confirmed this offer in follow-up correspondence to both towns, which is included in the bulk filing in this docket.

At the request of the First Selectman of Warren, SBA attended an informational meeting held by the Town of Warren's Board of Selectmen on September 26, 2008. At the request of the First Selectman of Washington, SBA attended an informational meeting held by the Town of Washington Conservation Commission on November 5, 2008.

As a result of its municipal consultation, both Towns and the residents thereof expressed concerned that the proposed Facility at Site A was located on a portion of the Property that was subject to an agricultural restriction. In addition, some residents expressed the desire to see the existing silo on the Property utilized or the proposed Facility sited near the existing silo. As a result, SBA investigated the possibility of an alternate site, presented in this application as Site B. SBA informed both First Selectmen of this intention and, in fact, despite not being required, held a public balloon float at both Site A and Site B on November 20, 2008. In addition, SBA provided both First Selectmen with copies of the plans, propagation maps and viewshed map from Site B. Finally, SBA had received requests from both the Town of Warren and Washington to attend a second informational meeting. SBA has sent correspondence to both Towns offering to attend a second public informational meeting, if requested. SBA has not received a request from either Town to do so.

Q7. Has SBA offered co-location to the Town of Warren so it can locate its emergency service equipment at this Site?

A. As is its customary practice, SBA will make space available for the Town's emergency service equipment, free of charge. As noted in the interrogatory responses submitted by the Town of Warren, the Town has indicated its desire to reserve such space for its use. SBA has committed to reserve that space for the Town of Warren.

Q8. Does SBA have a preference between the two alternate sites proposed in this Application?

A. No, SBA does not have a preference between Site A and Site B.

Q9. Pursuant to statutory requirements, did SBA post a sign giving the public notice of the hearing on this Application?

A. Yes, on May 6, 2009, SBA posted a sign on the Property giving the public notice of the hearing on this Application. Photographs of the hearing signs are attached hereto as Exhibit 1.

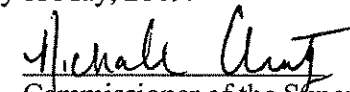
The statements above are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

5-12-09
Date


Mark Ciarfella

Subscribed and sworn before me this 9 day of May, 2009.



By: 
Commissioner of the Superior Court