

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL**

IN 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 12 BURR ROAD,
BLOOMFIELD, CONNECTICUT

DOCKET NO. 379

Date: June 30, 2009

PRE-FILED TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL LIBERTINE

Q1. Mr. Libertine, please state your name and position.

A. Michael Libertine and I am Director of Environmental Services for Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. ("VHB"). I am also a Licensed Environmental Professional in the State of Connecticut. VHB is located at 54 Tuttle Place in Middletown, Connecticut.

Q2. Please state your qualifications.

A. I have a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Connecticut with a concentration in Natural Resources Management and Bachelor of Arts degree from Stonehill College in Business. My background includes over 25 years of professional experience, including 17 years of environmental engineering consulting. I have been Project Manager for more than 1,600 environmental site assessments and field investigations for property transfers in Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Florida and Canada. In addition, I have assisted in the permitting of more than 500 wireless telecommunication facilities in New England during the past ten years. My responsibilities include: coordination and oversight of site screenings and environmental assessments to fulfill NEPA requirements, environmental

site assessments, wetland delineations and assessments, vegetative/biological surveys, noise analyses, visual impacts analyses and regulatory permitting support.

Q3. Please describe your involvement in this matter.

A. VHB was responsible for preparing a Visual Resources Evaluation report for the proposed site at 12 Burr Road in Bloomfield (the "Site"). The purpose of this Visual Resources Evaluation Report was to evaluate the potential visibility of the proposed telecommunications facility ("Facility") from the surrounding areas.

VHB was also responsible for conducting the NEPA screen for the property located at 12 Burr Road (found at Exhibit L of the Application and updated letter dated March 16, 2009), the wetlands delineation and impact analysis, which will be discussed by Mr. Gustafson of my office in his pre-filed testimony.

Q4. Please describe the process for conducting the Visual Resource Evaluation.

A. At the request of SBA, VHB conducted the Visual Resource Evaluation (found at Exhibit J of the Application), which included the preparation of a computer-generated viewshed map and performing a crane test at the Site on June 9, 2008. The predictive model is employed to assess potential visibility throughout the entire Study Area (a two mile radius surrounding the site), including private property and/or otherwise inaccessible areas for field verification. The crane test and Study Area drive-through reconnaissance are conducted to obtain location and height representations of the proposed Facility, back-check the initial computer model results and provide documentation from publicly accessible areas. Results of both activities are analyzed and incorporated into the final viewshed map and report.

Q5. Please describe how you prepared the viewshed analysis for the Visual Resources Evaluation.

A. Using ERSI's ArcView® Spatial Analyst, a computer modeling tool, the areas from which the top of the tower is expected to be visible are calculated. This is based on information entered into the computer model, such as tower height, its ground elevation, existing vegetation and surrounding topography. Data incorporated in the model includes a digital elevation model ("DEM") obtained from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and a digital forest layer for the project area. The forested areas within the study area are overlaid on the DEM and then a series of constraints are applied to the computer model to achieve a realistic estimate of where the tower will be visible from within the surrounding landscape.

Also included in the viewshed model is a data layer, obtained from the Connecticut State Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP"), which depicts various land and water resources such as state parks and forests, recreational facilities, dedicated open space and DEP boat launches. Additionally, information is gathered from the Connecticut State Department of Transportation ("DOT") and local officials to determine if there are any state or locally designated scenic or historic roadways.

Q6. Please describe how you conducted the crane test.

A. The crane test consisted of raising a crane to the height of 130 feet. Once the crane was erect, VHB personnel drove the public road system within a two-mile radius (the "Study Area") to inventory those areas where the crane was visible and photograph the crane from numerous vantage points to document representative locations where the proposed tower will be visible. The location of each photograph was recorded using a hand-held GPS receiver and subsequently plotted on a USGS 7.5 Minute topographic

quad map, utilizing ESRI's ArcView® Spatial Analyst software, to indicate their approximate distance and relative location to the proposed Facility.

In addition, as part of the NEPA compliance documentation, VHB worked with the State Historic Preservation Office ("SHPO") office. SHPO personnel were present during the crane test and drove the surrounding area with VHB personnel to determine potential visual impacts to historic sites in the area, including the Auer Farm property.

Q7. How were the representative locations chosen?

A. Several photo locations were selected prior to the in-field evaluation, utilizing a preliminary version of the viewshed map to identify areas adjacent to public roads from where the proposed Facility might be visible. Other locations were identified based on in-field observations made during the time of the crane test.

Q8. Please describe the visibility of the proposed Facility.

A. Areas from which the proposed Facility will be at least partially visible from the Site year-round comprise only 37 acres or less than 1% of the entire study area. We expect the proposed Facility to be visible along portions of Route 185, Burr Road, High Hill Road, Millburn Road as well as several open fields on the Auer Farm property to the southwest. We estimate approximately 9 residential properties may have partial views of the proposed Facility from portions of their parcels. In addition, the proposed Facility may be at least partially visible seasonally (during "leaf off" conditions) from an additional 14 acres and portions of approximately 8 additional residential properties.

Q9. Will the proposed Facility have any impact on any sensitive visual receptors such as scenic, historic or recreational sites or parks?

A. No, the proposed Facility will not impact any sensitive visual receptors. The proposed Facility will not be visible from the Metacomet Trail, portions of which are included in the Study Area. Distant views may be obtained from upper story windows in the Heublein Tower, which is located two miles to the northeast of the Site.


Q10. Please describe the results of the NEPA screen conducted by VHB.

A. At the request of SBA, VHB conducted a NEPA screen to determine if the proposed Facility falls under any listed categories of Section 1.1307 under NEPA. Based upon our review, the proposed Facility does not fall under any listed categories of Section 1.1307. In addition, VHB corresponded with numerous agencies including the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (“DEP”), the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, Historic Preservation & Museum Division (“SHPO”), among others. Both DEP and SHPO have responded and confirmed that the proposed Facility will have no effect on any endangered, listed or threatened species or on any historic resources. Based upon the NEPA screen and VHB’s in-field review of the Site, the Site will be categorically excluded from any requirement for further environmental review by the FCC in accordance with NEPA and no permit is required by that agency prior to construction of the proposed Facility.

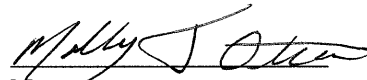
Of note, VHB did spend a considerable amount of time discussing the proposed Facility with the SHPO. Originally, the SHPO had issued a “no adverse effect” letter (dated July 23, 2008) but required the proposed Facility to be constructed utilizing Core-Ten steel and required all antennas to be flush-mounted. Because of the technological

restraints flush-mounting places on carriers, VHB discussed this issue further with the SHPO. The SHPO agreed to an alternate mitigation plan and is now willing to lift the conditions of the original July 23, 2008 determination, as outlined in their March 16, 2009 determination letter.

06/30/09
Date


Michael Libertine FOR MICHAEL LIBERTINE

Subscribed and sworn before me this 30th day of June, 2009.

By: 
Notary

Hartford/72517.1/CLARSON/377133v1

MOLLY T. OTERO
NOTARY PUBLIC
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES JAN. 31, 2014