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**CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL
INTERVENOR STATUS REQUEST FORM**

RECEIVED
OCT 20 2011
CONNECTICUT
SITING COUNCIL

Docket/Petition No. 422

Town/City: Watertown

Name: Robert and Cathleen Alex

Address: 435 Bassett Road

City: Watertown

State: CT

Zip: 06795

Phone: 860 274 7920

Fax: none

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1. Manner in which petitioner claims to be substantially and specifically affected:

- 1) Applicant failed to recognize Evergreen Berry Farm (a well-established Pick-Your-Own agribusiness) as an adjoining property with significant public access.
- 2) Visitors to Evergreen Berry Farm strongly object to the proposed location as it negatively impacts the scenic and recreational value of their visit.
- 3) Public perception of safety/health of PYO experience at Evergreen Berry Farm would be negatively impacted with the proposed highly visible cell tower
- 4) Proposed monopole presents lightning safety issues to our home, visitors, and staff
- 5) Proposed cell tower presents flight path safety hazard to our hybrid falcons used for crop protection/bird abatement
- 6) Proposed cell tower presents safety hazard to honeybee and native pollinators that fly routinely between our farm and Gustafson Apple Orchard
- 7) Proposed cell tower fails to meet existing town zoning regulation standards
- 8) Concern for property devaluation
- 9) Concern for human health

2. Manner and extent to which petitioner proposes to participate:

Plan to personally attend hearing. Provide statements and supporting evidence to our listed concerns. Pose questions to the applicant.

Copies of this request shall be mailed to all participants at least five (5) business days before the date of the hearing.

Signed: Robert P. Alex Date: 10/17/11
Cathleen Alex 10/17/11

Impact Concern #1

Applicant failed to recognize Evergreen Berry Farm, a well-established Pick-Your-Own agribusiness, as an adjoining property with significant public access.

How was our farm with significant public use completely overlooked by the applicant?

Watertown Zoning regulations bulk filing to the commission section 60.8.2c states the nature of uses of adjacent property should be considered by the commission.

Evergreen Berry Farm is a 28.15 acre property situated on an interior lot at 435 Bassett Road. The property adjoins the Gustafson property where the cell tower is proposed. Evergreen Berry farm is surrounded primarily by the City of Waterbury watershed. Landowners Robert and Cathleen Alex converted an abandoned cornfield into to a blueberry/raspberry pick-your-own farm beginning in 1979 that now provides a recreational activity for thousands of visitors of all ages and abilities each summer. This farm and the impact on its visitors was completely overlooked by the applicant

Infinigy Visual Resource Analysis states *"The majority of the areas where the proposed project will be visible are agricultural areas with limited to no public access and limited to secondary roadways to the south and east of the project site."*

Contrary to Infinigy statement of *"limited or no public access"* Evergreen Berry Farm is open to the public 8am to 8pm everyday July through August transitioning to Fall Hours of Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 8am to noon sometime late August and continuing to frost. The public also visits randomly in the off season to enjoy fall foliage and spring bloom.

Postcard records reveal that Evergreen Berry Farm visitors travel annually from an average of 65-70 different towns throughout CT. A "Where are you visiting from?" poster shows that they are not only CT residents but also visit from out of state and from around the world (attachment 1). The farm website received over 6981 unique visitors to date this year. The register logs in an average of over 7000 transactions each summer. Each transaction represents the payor of typically a group or family. As visitors rarely arrive alone, but rather in groups, a very conservative estimate of over 14,000 visitors enjoy the farm each year. These statistics are used by the owners each year to plan orchard supply and safety needs (eg: containers, portable potty, staffing, signage, parking overflow, etc.) to ensure the visitors have a pleasant stay. Children arrive with their parents and grandparents. Senior centers, day camps, and group homes arrive by the bus or van load to enjoy outdoor adventure. Picnics and family reunions become an annual event for visitors to the farm. They spend a couple hours enjoying a beautiful peaceful space in the Litchfield Hills.

Evergreen Berry Farm is part of the CT Department of Agriculture CT Grown initiative promoting locally grown food sources and is referenced on its state PYO map. The farm is also noted on multiple unsolicited websites by various organizations as a picturesque family outing for PYO:

<http://fairfieldcounty.kidsoutandabout.com/content/evergreen-berry-farm>

<http://speakwithyourfood.blogspot.com/2010/07/swyf-find-evergreen-berry-farm.htm>

<http://www.buyctgrown.com/evergreenberryfarm>

<http://worldaccordingtokate.com/2010/08/01/blueberry-picking-at-evergreen-berry-farm>

Farm website: www.evergreenberryfarm.com

Evergreen Berry Farm is recognized as a model conservation farm by the Natural Resources Conservation Service under the Department of Agriculture as noted in reference below:

“Berry Farm is Shining Example of Protecting Local Water Quality

Bob and Cathee Alex operate the Evergreen Berry Farm in Watertown, Connecticut. This model conservation farm has been awarded a 10-year contract in the Conservation Security Program (CSP). CSP identifies and rewards those farmers who are meeting the highest standards of conservation and environmental management on their farms.

Evergreen Berry Farm is a small, 28 acre farm; of which 10.5 acres are pick-your-own berries – mostly blueberries, but blackberries and raspberries are also available.

The farm protects soil quality by maintaining five-foot wide strips of grass between each row of berries. The rows themselves are mulched with wood chips and composted horse manure to help control weed growth and improve soil organic matter. Soil tests are taken to ensure the proper amount of pH. Foliar testing is done to determine fertilizer rates. Fish emulsion is applied to provide amino acids and trace micro-nutrients.

Water quality and quantity are also well managed at this farm. If weeds do make it through the mulch, herbicide usage is minimized by spot treatment and weed whacking. Flash tape, scare eyes, audio machines, and the presence of Bob’s hunting falcon are also used to reduce bird damage to the crops. Japanese beetles are hand picked off plants.

Water diversions, which look like grassy swales between the berry rows, help divert excess rain water off the sloping land, protecting the land from erosion. A drip irrigation system is used to minimize irrigation water and energy use, while producing juicy berries.

A small, intermittent stream flows from the farm into the nearby Wigwam Reservoir. The environmental care that goes into all the farming practices at Evergreen Berry Farm help protect the drinking water quality of the reservoir and the aquatic habitat in the Central Housatonic Watershed.

CSP is a voluntary program that supports ongoing conservation stewardship of agricultural working lands and enhances the condition of America’s natural resources. NRCS financial and technical assistance promotes the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes. CSP will be available each year on a rotational basis in as many watersheds as funding allows.”

www.ct.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/CSP-success2.html 10/24/06

Impact Concern #2

Visitors to Evergreen Berry Farm strongly object to the proposed location as it negatively impacts the scenic and recreational value of their visit.

Town Zoning regulation section 60.8.2e charges the commission with reducing or eliminating visibility from public roads or adjoining property

Infinigy Visual Resource Analysis that states *"The proposed facility does not interfere with or reduce the public's enjoyment and/or appreciation of the appearance of any areas considered to be aesthetic resources. Therefore the proposed 150' monopole will not have a significant adverse impact on the surrounding area."* This conclusion is erroneous and misleading.

A petition signed by hundreds of Evergreen Berry Farm visitors objecting to the proposed cell tower clearly proves Infinigy wrong in their conclusions that that the cell tower would not interfere with the public's enjoyment and or appreciation of the farm's aesthetic resources. The petition represents just a sample of the public's concern. (Attachment 2) The majority of the 370 signatures were acquired in the tail end of the berry farm's season. Even though only 12 days were left of the regular season when the owners were notified of the application, hundreds of visitors signed this petition to help preserve the beauty and recreational value of the berry farm. It is certain that this list would be multiple times longer had all of the July visitors during the peak of the season been aware of the situation as well. Visitors to Evergreen Berry Farm truly respect, treasure, and value the farm and their experience there.

The public's strong interest in preserving Evergreen Berry Farm's unique landscape needs to be recognized and acknowledged.

Owners Robert and Cathleen have worked hard for decades creating and maintaining a natural landscape at Evergreen Berry Farm so that once visitors are in the blueberry field they can look in all directions and view only the natural landscape. (Attachment 3) The farm presents a **rare 360 degree scenic view** in a rapidly disappearing landscape in CT. This is especially true in Watertown. The 2007 Watertown Plan of Conservation and Development noted that in 1997 there were 5954 acres of agricultural land in Watertown. (Attachment 4) Now, alarmingly, just 14 years later Tax Assessor Carolyn Nadeau reports that only 2456 agricultural acres remain in Watertown. Very few of these remaining agricultural acres offer a similar unadulterated landscape.

The loss of this rare scenic and recreational landscape enjoyed by so many is needless as several alternatives to the proposed site are noted by the applicant. For instance, the Gustafson Farm is over 362 acres and the applicant has designated *two other* sites that could potentially be used (applicants' Site Search Summary, attachment 2, page 5 map, sites 5 & 6). Both of these sites would NOT impact Evergreen Berry Farm or the wildlife corridor between the farms. Additionally, the Town of Watertown is on record that a tower in this area should be sited on *town* property nearby where tower leasing revenue would benefit the whole town (Applicants' Site Search Summary, Attachment 2, page 5 map, site 3).

Impact Concern #3

Public perception of safety/health of PYO experience at Evergreen Berry Farm would be negatively impacted with the proposed highly visible cell tower.

A cell tower in residential and recreational areas is generally perceived as negative, otherwise there would be no need for a Siting Council and local zoning would prevail. The public has increased awareness of the growing body of evidence that emissions from cell towers pose health risks. Just one research review by Levitt and Lai cites 156 studies/hearings alone on the "biological effects from exposure to electromagnetic radiation emitted by cell tower base stations and other antenna arrays" (attachment 5). Information is at the public's fingertips online, at their local libraries, and in the media.

Our pick-your-own farm is perceived as a safe and healthy recreational activity for families. Visitors like the idea of picking fresh fully ripe berries that are considered some of the healthiest fruits on the planet with their high anti-oxidant and disease fighting properties (attachment 6). There are frequent inquiries about our farm practices regarding the type of fertilizers and pest controls we use. The farmer is held accountable for food safety. There is great relief to our visitors when we can inform them of farmer Bob's incorporation of both organic practices and integrated pest management. They are reassured that they may at all times safely eat our berries right off the bush...one of the highlights of their visit! Our visitors value their health, appreciate locally grown produce, are willing to take the time to travel, harvest their own and enjoy the experience.

Now the *perceived* health and safety of their visit is threatened by this proposed cell tower. Harvesting their berries in significant view and close proximity to a cell tower (they would be within 600 to 1350 feet of the tower throughout the field) is not something they view as healthy. A cell tower would be perceived as a sharp contradiction to the health benefits of picking their own berries. Some have said they would not return to our farm to avoid exposure especially to young children and pregnant women.

The success of our pick-your-own, our income and livelihood, depends on our visitors returning patronage which would be influenced by their perception of health and safety during their visit.

Impact Concern #4

Proposed monopole presents lightning safety issues to our home, visitors, and staff

It is documented that cell towers increase lightning strikes in their vicinity.

The National Lightning Safety Institute recommends avoiding being near communications towers (attachment 7, National Lightning Safety Institute: Multi Agency Recommendations for Lightning Safety Section 4.2).

As a pick-your-own operation hosting thousands of visitors each year on our property their safety is paramount. It is often necessary to clear the field when thunderstorms are approaching to protect them. The proposed tower would put our visitors and staff at a higher risk of lightning strike in our field due to their close proximity of just 600 to 1350 feet from the proposed tower.

July and August are prime harvest months for berries coinciding with peak summer thunderstorm activity in CT (attachment 8, CT Climate).

The cell tower would become an attractive nuisance to lightning forcing earlier and more cautious evacuation of the public scattered over a 13 acre field with 7 miles of berry rows.

Also, our own home electronics, water well, copper dx geothermal heating system and equipment barn are within 500 to 550 feet of the tower site.

How does the applicant plan to mitigate lightning strikes on a site with shallow, restrictive, non-conductive soil conditions (ledge) where proper grounding is difficult? (Attachment 9, National Lightning Safety Institute: Lightning Protection for Telecommunications Facilities by Richard Kithil, section 5.56, Sub Section 3.3 Grounding)

Iron/iron compounds that attract lightning were noted in numerous rocks imbedded in the soil in the vicinity of the tower site by the surveyor at time of the farmland purchase in 1979. A magnetic locator designed to find iron pins, iron pipes, and wire fences commonly used as boundary marking material, was the device that noted this geological feature of the area.

Why wasn't a geological survey and lightning strike survey performed on the site by the applicant to identify if lightning strikes would be made more serious than they already are?

Impact Concern #5

Proposed cell tower presents safety hazard to our hybrid falcons used for crop protection/bird abatement

Evergreen Berry Farm utilizes hybrid falcons for bird abatement to protect the crops.

Owner Robert Alex is a CT Licensed Falconer (CT General Class Falconry Permit # 0514007 and Federal Fish and Wildlife Permit #MB105031-0).

These falcons require significant investments in both money and time. They are purchased from breeders for an average \$800-\$1500 depending on sex and genetics. Their feeding costs \$1-\$2 per day. They are flown almost daily weather permitting year round, for training, exercise, and bird abatement. Falconry is a challenging and difficult under normal circumstances.

The proposed tower is in the falcon flight path increasing their risk of injury or death due to collision and/or excessive RF power density exposure.

Any loss of these falcons results not only in loss of significant time and money invested in the bird itself but also loss of berry income, our livelihood which these falcons protect.

The farm also utilizes plastic owls, scare eyes, flash tape and bird distress calls for additional bird abatement. However, the most efficient and effective control is a live, flying bird of prey. Falconry has been utilized for bird abatement at airports, landfills, vineyards, golf courses, and orchards across the nation. (Attachment 10)

Direct impacts of communication towers to migratory birds come from two sources, collisions and possibly from radiation exposure. Collisions represent a primary source of mortality and have been well documented since the late 1940s in the U.S. (Aronoff 1949, Kemper 1996, Manville 2005 and 2007a). From a collision perspective alone, 4-5 million birds are conservatively estimated to die each year in tower and guy-wire collisions—with high-end estimates at 40-50 million birds (Manville 2005). (Attachment 11, Cumulative Impacts of Communication Towers on Migratory Birds and Other Wildlife in the US, Division of Migratory Bird Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, April 2009)

The applicant commissioned Michael Doirin of SAI Communications to assess the RF power Density for the proposed site. A "worst case" analysis was done with the assumption that a "6 foot person is standing directly below the antenna" (antenna positioned downward at 147 feet from ground level). The assessment concluded that the tower would be "within 7.3% of FCC Standard for General Public / Uncontrolled MPE."

It is obvious that the falcons would be exposed to a much higher RF Power Density flying next to the tower and at antenna height while bearing only 200-800 grams of body weight compared to a human.

Impact Concern #6

Proposed cell tower presents safety hazard to honeybee and native pollinators that fly routinely between our farm and Gustafson Apple Orchard

Evergreen Berry Farm rents six honey bee hives each spring to augment area native pollinators eg: bumblebees, mason bees etc., as well as honeybees that travel freely from hives managed at Gustafson Apple Orchard. Pollination is critical to all of our berry crop yields which would then of course impact our livelihood. For instance, a rainy spring during our May 2011 bloom cycle decreased our typical yields by 30% as honeybees don't work in the rain.

There are recent studies suggesting that non-thermal effects of radiofrequency emissions impact honeybee behavior and hive health negatively. Honeybees utilize magnetite sensitive to electromagnetic fields in a band around their abdomens to navigate. Reduction of honeybee activity and hive strength outside of poor weather conditions would also negatively impact the farms' income.

There is global concern for bee colony collapse. Theories being investigated include viruses, parasites, pesticides, genetically modified crop use and climate change along with the increase in electromagnetic smog. All likely contribute in some way to the overall stress on bees, both native and colonized.

Recent studies reveal low level EMF exposure induced increased rate of worker piping leading to unexpected swarming. (Attachment 13, "Mobile phone-induced honey bee worker piping" by Daniel Favre, April 2010).

Another pair of studies observed that honeybee ability to navigate back to hive was impaired as well as honeycomb weight was reduced when exposed to low level EMF. (Attachment 14, "Can electromagnetic exposure cause a change in behavior? Studying Possible Non-thermal influences on Honey bees" by Harst, Kuhn, & Stever; Attachment 15, "Changes in honeybee behavior and biology under the influence of cell phone radiations" by Ved Parkash Sharma and Meelima R Kumar May 2010)

Impact Concern #7

Proposed cell tower fails to meet existing town zoning regulation standards

Pertaining to local zoning regulations Article VI Section 60 Telecommunications Facilities:

Section 60.3.4d. surrounding topography within 1,000 feet at interval not exceeding five feet based on town datum

This data not included in application. (topo map in application is not to this standard)

Section 60.3.4e design of the tower, with particular reference to design characteristics that have the effect of reducing or eliminating visual obtrusiveness

The applicant is completely unaware of the visual obtrusiveness/scenic impact to Evergreen Berry Farm. Ridge top silhouette location impacts view shed of two farms and is unnecessary as alternate sites on Gustafson farm were proposed that do not impact Evergreen Berry Farm.

Section 60.3.5 In all cases in which the Commission feels that a peer review of the applicant's service area, tower sharing, or other technical issues is warranted, the applicant shall be required to reimburse the Town for the cost of the peer review. This payment shall be made to the Town prior to the decision by the commission on the application.

Has the town requested an unbiased peer review of the technical aspects of the proposed tower? Ironically, we are AT&T wireless customers with full service at our home that is now supposedly in need of a cell tower 500' from our home! Where are the checks to confirm coverage need?

Section 60.7.1 Towers with equipment buildings/structures shall be permitted by special permit as provided by for in Sections 51 and 52

Applicant is commercial entity in residential zone requiring special permit. Has permit been sought by applicant?

Section 60.7c. shall be located a minimum of five hundred (500) feet from any residential structure located within a residential district. Distance shall be measured from the base of the tower to the foundation.

Applicants Abutters Map provided by Infinigy has mislabeled landowners Robert and Cathleen Alex's equipment barn as their residence resulting in inaccurate distance from their actual residence which is very near the 500 feet minimum.

Why was there no on-site verification of structures conducted by applicant?

Section 60.8.3 The commission will require that applicants provide simulations of tower locations and impacts as part of the review of a Special Permit application. Such simulations may entail the erection of balloons or other devices, necessary to visualize the proposed facility.

Why weren't adjoining landowners notified of original balloon flight on January 19, 2010? Why weren't photos taken from Evergreen Berry Farm view shed?

Applicant had over a year to prepare and analyze impact on area view sheds while abutting landowners and others have only hours the day of the public hearing (weather permitting!) to witness and prepare photographic evidence.

Section 60.9 Removal of Abandoned Towers and Antennas

A telecommunications site not in use for six (6) months shall be removed by the facility owner. This removal shall occur within ninety (90) days of the end of such six (6) month period. Upon removal, the site shall be restored to its previous appearance and where appropriate, re-vegetated.

Why is there is no mention of this condition in the application?

Reference Town of Watertown ARTICLE V - SITE PLANS AND SPECIAL PERMITS

SECTION 51- Site PLANS

Section 51.10.5 The adequacy of vehicular access to all of the Site Plan property for fire, police, and emergency medical services and, if applicable, for school buses

Access road doesn't meet the grade and horizontal curve standards.

Section 51.10.6 The adequacy of the storm drainage system to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation and to accommodate a designed 25-year stormwater run-off as of (1) existing prior to the Site Plan application, and (2) resulting from the Site Plan application completed work

Not noted in application.

51.10.8 The size, location, and type of any outdoor storage facilities including, but not limited to, outdoor dumpsters used for recycling, trash, garbage, grease or other purposes. These facilities shall be covered and screened from public street view as is acceptable to the Commission.

Applicant indicated use of diesel generators on site. How is the fuel being stored?

51.11 Conditions and Safeguards

In granting Site Plan approval the Commission may attach such conditions and safeguards as may be required to protect property values, the public health, safety and general welfare, and to ensure continued compliance with these Regulations including the intent and purpose in Section 1.

What conditions/safeguards for property value, public health and safety were considered for adjoining landowners?

51.12 Environmental and Historic Features

The development of the site shall conserve as much of the natural terrain and existing vegetation as possible, shall preserve sensitive environmental land features such as steep slopes, wetlands and large rock outcroppings, and shall preserve public scenic views and historically significant buildings and site features.

Why were steep slopes and public scenic views ignored by applicant?

1) last 750' of approach to tower exceeds permissible grade

2) northerly travel on Linkfield Road looks directly at tower site for ½ mile disrupting a significant 4 ½ mile view of undeveloped forest and farmland stretching to Route 254 in Litchfield.

SECTION 52 - SPECIAL PERMITS

Section 52.5 Environmental Impact Statement All applications for Special Permits shall include environmental information for the purpose of compiling a complete environmental impact analysis. The statement shall address at least the following; however, upon written request from the applicant, the Commission may waive or modify any of the required information.

Section 52.5.1 The likely impact of the proposed development on the characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood addressing such issues as congestion on public streets, harmony with surrounding development and effect on property values, and overall neighborhood stability.

Cell tower is out of harmony with agricultural landscape especially at Evergreen Berry Farm. Again, why was berry farm disregarded in site plan?

Section 52.5.3 The extent to which any sensitive environmental features on the site may be disturbed and what measures shall be taken to mitigate these impacts.

Applicant used only US Fish and Wildlife Service Data for Federal listed species and the CT DEEP Natural Diversity Data Base Area maps for Watertown. Why was there no on-site visit?

Kestrel, Bobolink, Night Hawk, and possibly Bald Eagles utilize this area. There are Goodyera sp. plants all through the site, possibly the dwarf form. The tower site has been disturbed by tree clearing making a future field review more difficult. Besides listed species, this area should be considered a critical habitat.

With the several thousand acres of nearby Watershed and Army Corp of Engineer lands many species utilize this parcel. As a farmer/falconer I have seen Red-tailed and Cooper's Hawks; Gray, Red and Flying squirrels; skunks; raccoons; opossum; red fox; coyote, deer; turkey (known to roost where access road approaches tower site); bobcat; mountain lion; black bear; and many species of songbirds here. Some species reside here, but many travel through this proposed site to and from feeding areas. This proposal will have an impact on the animals utilizing this forest and surrounding fields.

Kestrels, a threatened species, utilize all three nesting boxes on Gustafson property. They have successfully fledged young for the last several years. They have a range of 275-512 acres in open grasslands which the majority of Gustafson property offers (Attachment 16, Audubon CT "Protecting Connecticut's Grassland Heritage" April 2003).

The applicant utilized the CT DEEP Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDB) map for Watertown and feels that the project did not require further review. This project's access road begins in a NDDB shaded listed species area and the proposed tower site lies about ¼ mile between two shaded areas, located on the map. (Attachment 17, NDDB Area Map for Watertown July 2011) CT DEEP suggests further review if the project is ½ mile or less from these areas. The applicant clearly avoided this and concluded "Additional correspondence with CT DEEP regarding threatened and endangered species is not anticipated at this time...It is the opinion of Infinigy that the proposed project will have no significant impact with this FCC NEPA regulatory item".

Section 52.5.3 (cont.) Consideration shall be given to steep slopes, (including erosion control), wetlands, drainage ways and vegetation and any other land feature considered to be significant.

Applicants grading plan has no indication of road grades, horizontal curve data, cut and fill locations, and contour interval labeling. Grade currently exceeds 20% on approach to the ridge site with proposed curve sharp enough to prohibit large vehicles from traveling safely, eg. emergency response vehicles such as fire and ambulance.

Cut and fill calculations, storm water runoff data, erosion control measures, and blasting figures for facility access road all seem to be missing. How can the council make a judgement on this application without this information?

Why isn't the City of Waterbury public water supply aqueduct noted on the plan by the applicant? What impact will blasting have on integrity of aqueduct tunnel?

Why hasn't the applicant located Fenn Brook and associated wetlands on the map and included it in the inland wetlands report? Fenn Brook is just 450' downhill of proposed access road. Applicant erroneously notes on the map that the closest pond, watercourse or wetlands is a pond behind Frank Gustafson's home labeled at 800' when in actuality it is 1125'. Nearest wetlands in fact Fenn Brook.

Impact Concern # 8

Property Devaluation

Multiple sites were offered the applicant lease holders Gustafson / Calkin Trusts and Trustees on their 362+ acre property. The most northerly site was chosen by the lease holders despite the fact that the coverage area sought by AT&T/North Atlantic is primarily south and east of the proposed site. (see Applicant Attachment 1, page 7, AT&T Current Coverage Map 1 as well as Applicant Attachment 2, Alternate Sites Map)

North of the tower is several thousand acres of primarily uninhabited city of Waterbury watershed land.

Current site proposal minimizes the property devaluation impact on Gustafson property (lease holder) and maximizes devaluation impact on Evergreen Berry Farm (adjoining landowner). If future development is considered for either parcel, the impacts remain the same with landowners closest to site suffering the greatest property devaluation. Dr. Sandy Bond concluded that property devaluation can range from 2-20% with the percentage moving toward the higher range the closer the property to the cell tower (Attachment 12, referencing "The effect of distance to cell phone towers on house prices" by Sandy Bond, Appraisal Journal, Fall 2007).

The ridge that the tower sits on separates the two farms. Both farms cover land considered premier residential and agricultural property. As it is a ridge top location the tower silhouette is highly visible primarily to Evergreen Berry Farm due its closest proximity to their home and their berry field.

*Why shouldn't the more southerly sites where coverage needs are significantly greater be prioritized?
Why is a site that effectively destroys the view shed of both farms being considered?*

Impact Concern # 9

Concern for human health

Although 1996 Telecom Act prohibits the Siting Council from considering health risks as cause to deny an application our concerns should be acknowledged.

A growing body of evidence on negative health effects of long term non-thermal effects of RF emissions exists. (Attachment 18)

Current studies suggest that homes that are within 1000' are at risk. Our home at approximately 508', Pricilla Membrino at 712' and Donna Membrino at 788' are at risk. (Frank Gustafson's home is at 1725')

Evergreen Berry Farm owner Robert Alex would be living and working 24/7 in close proximity to the proposed tower for the rest of his life.

Families with children visiting our farm will be within 600-1350' of the tower during their visit. The Siting Council requests identification of all schools, day cares, playgrounds, recreational area etc when considering transmission lines and electric generation plants. What makes RF exposure during the recreational activity of our farm any different?

Closing Comments

In closing, as a siting council you have reviewed hundreds of cell tower proposals all over CT in a myriad of locations. How many have impacted a landscape that involves a public space where an open field offers a 360 degree view of only nature at its best? Not a house, barn, or utility in sight in every direction?

We implore you to heed the public will to preserve this landscape as they have turned out by the hundreds in opposition to this application through their petition, letters, and appearance at the public hearing.

Your serious and thoughtful consideration of our own and our visitors efforts to preserve this rare jewel of an agricultural site and its surrounding wildlife habitat enjoyed by so many is appreciated.

Alternative locations exist that would not impact Evergreen Berry Farm and its surrounding habitats for wildlife.

Thank you

Robert and Cathleen Alex