

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

IN RE: :
 :
APPLICATION OF CELLCO PARTNERSHIP : DOCKET NO. 471
D/B/A VERIZON WIRELESS FOR A :
CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL :
COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED FOR :
THE CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE :
AND OPERATION OF A WIRELESS :
TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY AT :
208 KIRK ROAD (a/k/a 1075 PARADISE :
AVENUE) IN HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT : SEPTEMBER 13, 2017

SUPPLEMENTAL POST HEARING BRIEF

Factual and Procedural Background

On March 3, 2017, Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless (“Cellco”) filed an application (“Application”) with the Connecticut Siting Council (“Council”) for a Certificate of Environmental Capability and Public Need (“Certificate”) to construct a wireless telecommunications facility (the “Hamden 8 Facility”) on an approximately 9.34-acre parcel at 208 Kirk Road in Hamden, Connecticut (the “Property”). The Property is owned by Joseph Vignola and Denise Courtmanche Vignola (together the “Owner”) and is used for residential, commercial and agricultural purposes. (Cellco 1, pp. 6-7, Tab 1, Tab 6).

On May 2, 2017, the Council conducted an evidentiary hearing and an evening public hearing on the Application (May 2, 2017 Transcript (“Tr. 1”), p. 4). Prior to the evidentiary hearing, at 2:00 p.m. on May 2, 2017, the Council conducted a site visit at the Property. The evidentiary hearing was continued to June 13, 2017 (June 13, 2017 Transcript (“Tr. 2”), p. 3). On July 20, 2017, the Council, on its own motion, ordered the reopening of the evidentiary record for the limited purpose of gathering information about (1) Cellco’s ability to utilize a cluster-

mounted antenna configuration at any of the alternative tower locations; (2) the overall visual impact of the three (3) alternative tower locations and whether a tree tower or a painted monopole tower would help to reduce the visual impact of the tower; (3) options for the screening of the ground-mounted equipment within the facility compound; and (4) the location and design of the security gate that would be installed near the site access entrance of the Country Club Road cul-de-sac. The evidentiary hearing was continued to August 15, 2017 (August 15, 2017 Transcript (“Tr. 3”), p. 4).

This Supplemental Post-Hearing Brief is filed on behalf of the Applicant pursuant to Section 16-50j-31 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (“R.C.S.A.”) and the Council’s directive (Tr. 3, p. 30). The supplemental brief summarizes and evaluates the new information presented in the reopened proceeding.

Alternative Facility Locations Under Consideration

During the course of the Council’s review of the Application, Cellco presented information on three (3) alternative tower sites at the Property. Cellco could satisfy its Hamden 8 Facility wireless service objectives from any of the three (3) alternative sites described below.

The Proposed Site is the cell site described in the Application. At the Proposed Site, Cellco would construct a 160-foot tall monopole tower within a fenced compound, in the westerly portion of the Property. Access to the Proposed Site would extend from Country Club Drive over a new gravel and partially paved driveway a distance of approximately 400 feet to the facility compound.¹ (Cellco 1, pp. iii, 7-9, Tab 1; Cellco 8).

At the Alternate 1 Site, located approximately 175 feet to the northeast of the Proposed

¹ On May 2, 2017, Cellco submitted a revised site plan showing an alternative access drive to the Proposed Site. Construction of the alternative driveway would have less of an impact on the environment (i.e. tree removal; grading) than the driveway proposed in the Application. (Cellco 8).

Site, Cellco would construct a 150-foot tall monopole tower within a fenced compound. Access to the Alternate 1 Site would also extend from Country Club Drive over a new gravel and partially paved driveway a distance of approximately 350 feet to the facility compound. (Cellco 9, Q33).

At the Alternate 2 Site, located approximately 175 feet to the east of Alternate 1 Site and 350 feet northeast of the Proposed Site, Cellco would construct a 120-foot monopole tower within a fenced compound. Access to the Alternate 2 Site would extend from Country Club Drive over a new gravel driveway a distance of approximately 250 feet to the facility compound. (Cellco 9, Q33).

Cluster-Mounted Antenna Configuration

In its response to the Council's Pre-Hearing Questions (Set 3), Cellco stated that the wireless service objectives for the Hamden 8 Facility could be satisfied if it were required to utilize a cluster-mounted antenna configuration. The cluster-mounted antenna configuration would consist of six (6) antennas and six (6) remote radio heads (RRHs) at the top antenna mounting level on the tower. The antennas would be installed "side by side" and would be mounted closer to the face of the monopole (2 to 2.5 feet off the face of the tower) than a traditional twelve (12) antenna triangular array. (Tr. 3, p. 10). Visually, the cluster-mounted antenna configuration would present a lower profile at the top of the tower. (Tr. 3, p. 12). No tower design modifications would be necessary to accommodate a cluster-mounted configuration and the Cellco facility would still comply with the FCC's standard for radio frequency emissions. (Cellco 12, Q40).

Visual Impact

During the course of this proceeding, Cellco evaluated the visual impact of a monopole at

each of the three (3) alternative tower sites with both a traditional and a cluster-mounted antenna configuration. Cellco also evaluated the use of alternative tower designs (i.e. a “tree tower”) in an effort to further reduce the visual impact the Hamden 8 Facility may have on the surrounding properties. (Cellco 1, pp. 13-14, Tab 9; Cellco 9, Q33 and Attachment 7; Tr. 2, pp. 7-19; Tr. 2, pp. 16-17, 100-101; Tr. 3, pp. 12-19).

A 160-foot tower at the Proposed Site in the western-most portion of the Property, would be visible above the tree canopy (year-round views) from 42 acres, only 0.52 % of the two-mile radius (8,042 acre) study area around the tower site. Seasonal views, through existing vegetation in the area may be possible from 385 acres, only 4.8% of the two-mile radius (8,042 acre) study area around the tower site. The Proposed Site tower may be visible, through the trees from the property at 46 Country Club Road, owned by Patricia Sorrentino, a party to these proceedings.

The overall visibility of a 150-foot tower at the “Alternate 1 Site” and a 120-foot tower at the “Alternate 2 Site” would be very similar to that of the “Proposed Site”. From areas to the south of the Property, however, particularly from parcels around the Country Club Drive cul-de-sac and those near the intersection of Country Club Drive and Bear Path Road, a tower at the Alternate 2 Site would be more visible than a tower at the either the Proposed Site or the Alternate 1 Site, due primarily to the higher ground elevation in this portion of the Property. The Alternate 1 Site, however, would be setback a greater distance from both Ms. Sorrentino’s property and the adjacent parcels along the Country Club Drive cul-de-sac. A 150’ tower at the Alternate 1 Site location would have the least overall visual impact on all of the neighbors to the south of the Property. (Cellco 9, Q33 and Attachment 7; Tr. 2, pp. 7-19; Tr. 3, pp. 14-19).

Cellco continues to believe that a tree tower at any of the proposed alternative site locations would not provide any significant visual benefits over the traditional monopole and may, in fact, be

more noticeable from surrounding properties. (Tr. 2, pp. 16-17, 100-101; Tr. 3, p. 16).

Compound Screening

Cellco remains committed to screen the ground-based equipment within the facility compound to further reduce visual impacts of the facility on neighboring properties. The most effective way to accomplish this would be through the use of a vinyl stockade fence, painted brown to blend in with the surrounding wooded area. A vinyl fence is preferred over wood as it would eliminate longer term maintenance concerns for the Applicant. (Cellco 12, Q41; Tr. 3, p 22).

Access Driveway Gate

The access driveway security gate can be setback from the edge of the Country Club Road cul-de-sac a minimum of 12 feet and can be constructed of wood to blend in with the surrounding wooded area in this portion of the Property. (Cellco 12 Q42; Tr. 3, pp. 22-23).

Respectfully submitted,
CELLCO PARTNERSHIP d/b/a VERIZON
WIRELESS

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CERTIFICATION OF SERVICE

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