



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

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Web Site: portal.ct.gov/csc

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

November 18, 2022

Dan Polhamus
Town Council Chairperson
Town of Avon
60 West Main Street
Avon, CT 06001-3719
dpolhamus@avonct.gov

RE: **PETITION NO. 1547** – SBA Communications Corporation petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed replacement and extension of an existing telecommunications facility located at 277 Huckleberry Hill Road, Avon, Connecticut.

Dear Chairperson Polhamus:

The Connecticut Siting Council (Council) is in receipt of the Town of Avon's correspondence dated November 18, 2022 concerning the above-referenced petition. Thank you for taking the time to provide the Council with the comments.

This petition will be placed on a future Council meeting agenda for discussion and decision. Please note that you can view all of the documents related to this petition on our website at portal.ct.gov/csc under the "Pending Matters" link. You may also keep apprised of Council events on the website calendar and agenda.

Before reaching a final decision on any petition, the Council carefully considers all of the facts contained in the record that is developed by the Council, the petitioner, parties and intervenors to the petition, and all of the concerns received from members of the public who submit written statements to the Council.

Copies of your correspondence will be distributed to the service list for the petition.

Thank you for your interest and concern in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Melanie A. Bachman
Executive Director

MAB/laf

c: Service List, dated November 9, 2022

Council Members



Town of Avon

60 West Main Street
Avon, Connecticut 06001-3719
(860) 409-4300 • www.avonct.gov

November 18, 2022

Melanie Bachman, Executive Director
Connecticut Siting Council
10 Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

RE: Petition No. 1547 – SBA Communications Corporation petition for a declaratory ruling, Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 4-176 and 16-50k, for the proposed replacement and Extension of an existing telecommunications facility located at 277 Huckleberry Hill Road, Avon, Connecticut.

Dear Ms. Bachman:

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the above referenced Petition.

The most important function of a municipality is to provide for the safety of the public and its first responders. In recognition of this, on December 12, 2018, Avon voters approved an appropriation in the amount of \$3.89 million to replace the Town's existing conventional analog communications system with a 700 MHz communication system meeting the Project 25 (P25) standard. Public support for the project was strong, as evidenced by the outcome of the referendum vote: 1,654 residents voted 'yes,' compared to 348 residents that voted 'no.'

The Town's existing system has reached the end of its useful life. It experiences significant coverage gaps and lacks the functionality, features and security of a modern public safety grade communications network. Specifically, many critical facilities in Town, including some schools, have little to no in-building radio coverage. Officers responding to incidents in these locations often lose contact with officers outside the building and with dispatch. Compounding this, in areas with no cell phone coverage, there is no way to communicate outside the building. There are also areas, particularly on the west side of Town where on-street coverage is weak or non-existent. Police officers responding together to the same scene often lose communications with each other and dispatch. As a result, officers resort to using their cell phones in areas where they are unable to get a signal on their radio; a situation that puts the officer and the general public at risk.

Additionally, direct communication between departments is not possible using the existing system. On the scene of an emergency, police and fire personnel are unable to communicate directly with each other. Instead, a police officer must communicate to a dispatcher who then relays the message to the fire department and vice versa. A similar process is required for police and fire to communicate with the Town's ambulance provider, AMR, and the Department of Public Works when their services are required during emergency response. In emergency response, every second counts. Each moment spent on inefficient communications is a moment that cannot be spent protecting the life and property of those who live, work and travel through Avon.

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The Town's proposed solution, a P25 system with three tower sites, including a 130-foot replacement tower at the site that is the subject of this Petition, solves for the deficiencies detailed above. It is imperative that this system be installed without delay.

The obligation of a municipality to provide for the safety of the public, its schools and its first responders cannot be overstated. This Petition clearly serves the public interest in this area and should be approved with haste.

On behalf of the Town and its residents, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Petition.

Sincerely,



Dan Polhamus
Avon Town Council Chairman

Cc: Town Council
Brandon Robertson, Avon Town Manager