

Petition No. 1075
Crown Atlantic Company
Berlin, Connecticut
Staff Report
December 12, 2013

On August 1, 2013, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) received a petition from Crown Atlantic Company (Crown) for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the re-location of a telecommunications facility access road on property identified as 1684 Chamberlin Highway in Berlin. Council Member Philip Ashton and Council staff members Fred Cunliffe and Robert Mercier visited the site on September 18, 2013 to review the proposal. Town of Berlin Traffic Officer Robert Canto and Chris Tralli, a local resident, attended the field review. A copy of the petition was provided to the Town of Berlin and all property abutters.

During the field review, access drive sight lines were discussed as the driveway entrance is located at the edge of a curve on Orchard Road. Crown subsequently redesigned the driveway entrance and submitted the revision to the Council on November 27, 2013. The revised petition was submitted to the Town and all abutting property owners.

In this petition, Crown proposes to relocate access to an existing town approved telecommunications facility located on a 65-acre parcel currently used as a Christmas tree farm. Access to the tower site currently uses a farm road that begins on the Chamberlain Highway, passes between existing farm buildings and extends through the interior of the property, passing through open field and former orchard areas to the tower site at the south end of the parcel. The property owner is requesting relocation of the tower access drive to reserve interior property roads for farm use only.

The proposed 12-foot wide tower access drive would extend approximately 750 feet from Orchard Road, uphill to the tower site in a northwesterly direction along the south edge of the property. A drainage swale would be located on the north side of the driveway. A paved curb cut would be installed per Town specifications. Rip-rap would be installed on the hill-side above and below the access drive, as necessary. A chain link gate would be installed at the access drive entrance and a six-foot high chain link fence would be installed at the outer edge of the drainage swale to prevent unauthorized access to the property.

The new driveway would extend through a brushy and wooded area to the south edge of the compound. One mature tree adjacent to the construction area would be preserved using specified tree protection measures. The site area is not within a mapped Natural Diversity Database area. No wetlands were identified through town mapping and a site walk. Construction of the proposed access drive is not expected to have any substantial adverse environmental impact.