

Petition No. 1100
New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC
23 Stony Brook Road, Stratford, Connecticut
Staff Report
July 3, 2014

On April 21, 2014, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) received a petition from New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T) for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the extension of and collocation on an existing telecommunications tower located at 23 Stonybrook Road, Stratford, Connecticut. Council Chairman Robin Stein and staff member Robert Mercier visited the site on May 19, 2014 to review the proposal. Christopher Fisher, Esq. of Cuddy & Feder LLP and AT&T technical staff represented AT&T at the field review.

Pursuant to § 16-50j-40 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, on April 17, 2014, AT&T notified federal, state and regional entities, appropriate elected officials, the Town of Stratford and the City of Bridgeport (within 2,500 feet) of the proposed project. AT&T discussed the project with Town of Stratford officials prior to the petition filing and, according to AT&T, the Town chose not to comment. Notice was also sent to abutting property owners on April 17, 2014. No municipal officials or residents attended the field review nor were any written comments received to date.

At a Council meeting on May 29, 2014, after concern was expressed regarding notice of the project to the surrounding neighborhood, the Council voted to set the date by which to make a decision to October 18, 2014 to allow time for AT&T to install and maintain a sign on the property for 14 days describing the proposal and providing contact information for the Council. AT&T installed the sign on June 20, 2014 and no subsequent inquiries were received by the Council.

The existing 100-foot monopole was approved by the Council under Docket 385 in February 2010. The Docket 385 applicant was T-Mobile Northeast LLC (T-Mobile), which currently has antennas installed at the 97-foot and 87-foot levels of the tower. Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless (Verizon) is located at the 77-foot level of the tower. As a condition of the Council's approval, antennas could only be installed in an exterior flush-mount configuration.

AT&T proposes to extend the tower by 20 feet to an overall height of 120 feet and install three flush mounted antennas and associated remote radio units at both the 117-foot and 107-foot levels of the tower. A revised structural report was submitted on May 28, 2014 indicating the tower needs reinforcement to support the proposed loading. Once reinforcements are complete, the tower would be below 100 percent of allowable tower stress levels.

AT&T would install an equipment shelter and a generator within the existing 40-foot by 50-foot lease area. The existing eight-foot high compound fence would be extended to enclose the shelter and generator. The existing lease area would not be expanded. Although AT&T initially specified a diesel generator for the site, it is investigating the use of a natural gas-fired generator as a new gas feeder that has already been installed to the compound.

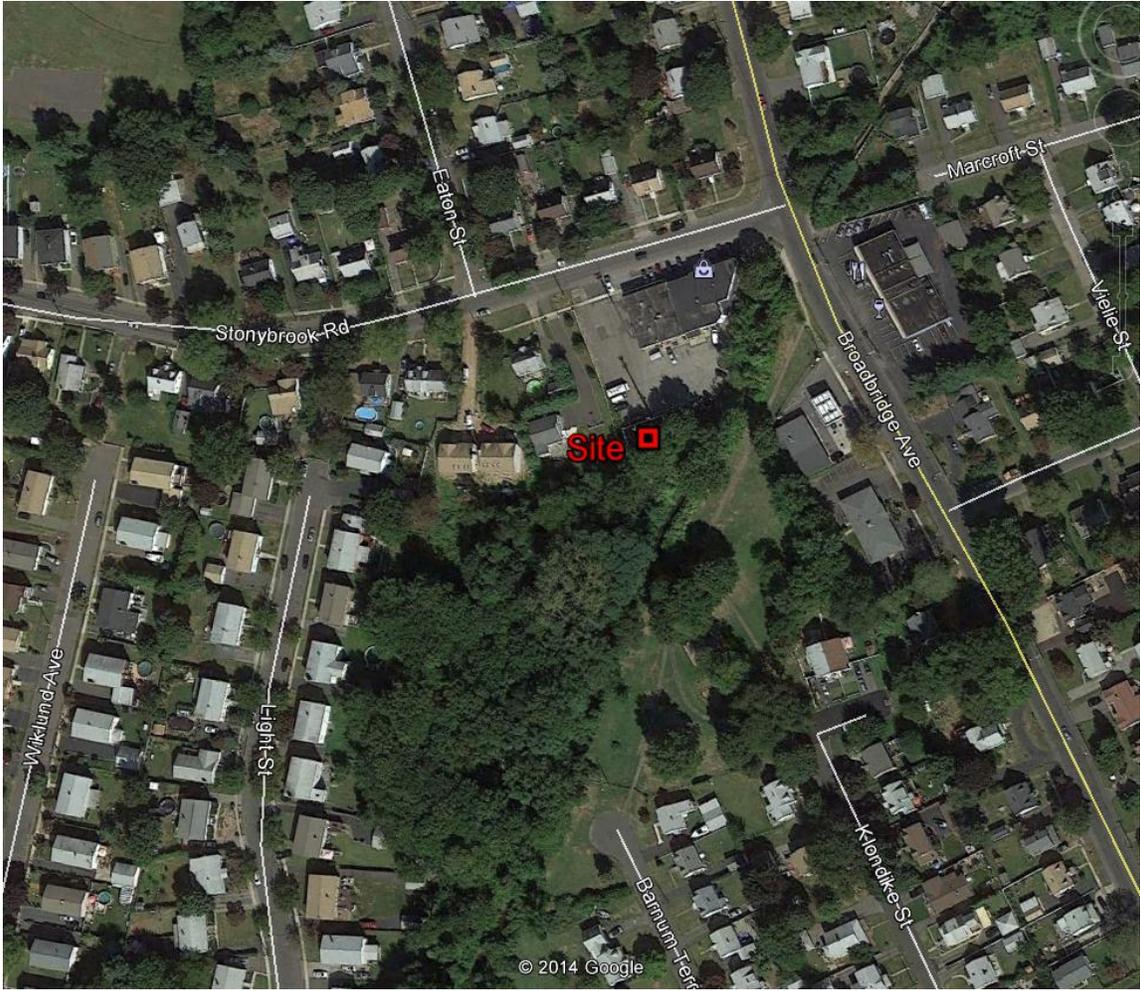
The tower site is at the rear of a small commercial plaza surrounded by high density residential development. Most of the existing tower visibility is to the adjacent neighborhood south and east of the site. With the extension, visibility would moderately increase given the abundance of mature, deciduous trees interspersed with some open lawn areas throughout the area. There would be instances in the surrounding area where additional residences would have a view of the tower above or through the tree canopy. The site would be more noticeable to the neighborhood during "leaf off" conditions.

AT&T's proposal qualifies as an eligible facility under the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 and Section I.C of the Nationwide Collocation Agreement which allow a telecommunications carrier to extend the height of an existing tower where the modification does not qualify as a "substantial change". In this instance, the tower would increase in height by 20 percent, which does not meet the Federal Communications Commission's definition of a "substantial change" under the Act or the Agreement.

A noise study conducted by AT&T indicates that a noise study concluded that AT&T's installation together with T-Mobile's and Verizon's installations would not create noise levels exceeding regulatory limits under non-emergency conditions.

Staff recommends approval of the petition with the following conditions:

- the tower be modified to support the proposed loading in accordance with the structural report prepared by Frederick Bost, a Professional Engineer duly licensed in the State of Connecticut, dated May 28, 2014;
- Within 45 days following completion of the equipment installation, AT&T shall provide documentation certified by a professional engineer that its installation complied with the recommendations of the structural analysis; and,
- any nonfunctioning antenna, and associated antenna mounting equipment subject of this petition shall be removed within 60 days of the date the antenna ceased to function.



Google Earth Image of site location at 23 Stonybrook Road, Stratford.