

Petition No. 1108
New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC/ATC
668 Jones Hill Road, West Haven, Connecticut
Staff Report
August 21, 2014

On July 1, 2014, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) received a petition from New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T)/American Tower Corporation (ATC) for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the expansion of an existing compound at an existing telecommunications facility located at 668 Jones Hill Road in West Haven, Connecticut. Council member Dr. Barbara Bell and staff member Robert Mercier visited the site on July 28, 2014 to review the proposal. Jennifer Young Gaudet represented the petitioner at the field review.

Pursuant to § 16-50j-40 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, on June 30, 2014, AT&T/ATC notified the City of Milford and abutting property owners of the proposed project. No abutters or City officials attended the field review.

The existing facility was approved on May 11, 2005 under Council Docket 293 and consists of a 150-foot monopole and a 50-foot by 50-foot compound/lease area. The 668 Jones Hill Road property consists of a small farm with related outbuildings. The facility is located in a wooded/shrubby area approximately 100 feet west of a barn and immediately south of a field. ATC, the current Certificate Holder, has negotiated a new 70-foot by 70-foot lease area with the underlying property owner.

AT&T proposes to install 12 antennas at the 125-foot level of the tower and install a 12-foot by 16-foot equipment shelter and an emergency diesel generator at the site. The existing compound does not have enough space to accommodate AT&T's ground equipment. The site currently supports T-Mobile, Clearwire, Verizon, MetroPCS, and a local user. The existing tower and foundation would need reinforcement to support AT&T's equipment.

AT&T/ATC propose to expand the compound fence line to the northwest by 16 feet to create 784 square feet of new compound space to accommodate the proposed ground equipment. The expansion area contains small diameter trees/shrubs and pine trees that were planted along the northwest side of the existing compound fence. One large diameter ash tree is near the proposed expanded fence edge and may be removed as part of the project. AT&T/ATC propose new evergreen plantings along the expanded fence line.

During the field review it was noted that the existing shrub vegetation along the proposed west fence perimeter would serve to screen the facility from adjacent areas. Given this shrub buffer, it was determined that there was no need to remove the existing shrubs and install evergreens, except where there was more exposure along the northwest corner of the compound where it is adjacent to a dirt road. AT&T/ATC would also examine the possibility of shifting the fence line slightly to prevent the loss of the large ash tree, one of a few in the area that serve to screen the tower from surrounding areas.

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

- that AT&T/ATC retain as much of the existing vegetation as possible, including the large diameter ash tree;
- install new evergreens along the northwest corner of the new fence line adjacent to the dirt road;
- the tower and foundation shall be reinforced in accordance with the structural analysis report prepared by ATC dated May 9, 2014 and stamped by William Garrett; and,
- within 45 days following completion of the equipment installation, ATC shall provide documentation certified by a professional engineer that its installation complied with the recommendations of the structural analysis.



Google Earth Image of site location at 668 Jones Hill Road, West Haven.
Yellow box is approximate expansion area.
Red outline is existing compound.