

Petition No. 1119
Verizon
Woodstock, Connecticut
Staff Report
December 4, 2014

On October 29, 2014, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) received a petition from Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless (Verizon) for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the installation of a “small cell” telecommunications facility at the Woodstock Fairgrounds, 281 Norwich Worcester Turnpike (Route 169) in Woodstock, Connecticut. Council member Robert Hannon and Siting Analyst David Martin visited the site on December 1, 2014 to review the proposal. Michael Libertine represented Verizon at the field review.

Verizon currently has five cell sites in Woodstock and the neighboring towns of Pomfret, Putnam, and Thompson that generally provide reliable coverage into portions of southeast Woodstock. Reliable coverage on the Woodstock fairgrounds, however, is problematic, especially during the annual Woodstock Fair and other events that attract large crowds, which create network capacity problems for Verizon. In order to improve its coverage here, Verizon is proposing to install a “small cell” facility that would consist of pole-mounted antennas at three separate locations within the Woodstock fairgrounds.

Presently wood utility poles, approximately 30 feet in height, are spaced around the fairgrounds to support lights and electrical service for fair vendors. At Location 1, Verizon would replace an existing 33-foot tall wood utility pole next to the existing First Aid Building with a new galvanized steel pole of equal height. The existing pole currently has three whip antennas at its top. These antennas would be transferred to the replacement pole. Verizon would install a 700 MHz “small cell” antenna on the replacement pole at a height of 25 feet above ground level (AGL). Verizon would also place an equipment cabinet on the pole about five feet above grade.

Verizon’s proposed Location 2 is close to the center of the fairgrounds. Here Verizon would replace an existing 28-foot wood pole with a galvanized steel pole of approximately the same height. On this pole, Verizon would install two 700 MHz “small cell” antennas at about 26 feet AGL. The antennas to be deployed are much smaller than the antennas typically installed on monopoles; they measure 16.5 inches tall by 11 inches wide by 7 inches deep. The equipment cabinet would be located on the same pole about five feet above grade.

Verizon’s Location 3 is on a separate parcel of the fairgrounds to the northeast of the main fair area. Here Verizon would replace a 29-foot wood pole with a galvanized steel pole of approximately the same height and install one 700 MHz “small cell” antenna at 27 feet AGL and an equipment cabinet five feet above grade.

During the field review, Council member Hannon asked if the galvanized poles might be replaced with weathering steel poles that would more resemble the existing wood utility poles in place. In response to this inquiry, Verizon has indicated that it would use wood poles to keep in character with the rest of the fairgrounds’ poles.

Verizon’s proposed “small cell” facility would not require any notable alterations to the fairgrounds and should not noticeably increase the visibility of the fairground facility. Utility service would be provided through the fairground’s existing overhead lines. Staff calculates that the power density of each of Verizon’s “small cell” locations would be approximately 0.23% of the FCC’s Maximum Permissible Emissions limit.

For this petition, Verizon notified the Town and abutting property owners. No comments have been received.

The proposed installation of a “small cell” telecommunications facility is not expected to have any substantial adverse environmental effects. Staff recommends approval.

Aerial view of proposed "small cell" locations



View of pole to be replaced at Location 1



View of pole to be replaced at Location 2



View of pole to be replaced at Location 3

