

Petition No. 738
New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC
Knowlton Road, Ashford
Staff Report
October 19, 2005

On September 20, 2005, New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (Cingular) submitted a petition to the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) is required for modifications to an approved wireless telecommunications tower. On October 12, 2005, Council member Colin C. Tait and Christina Lepage of the Council staff met with Cingular representatives Lucia Chiochio, and Stephen Schadler, and David Vivian of National Grid Communications, Inc. (Gridcom).

The telecommunications facility was approved by the Council in Docket # 291 on October 26, 2004. The applicant in the Docket #291 proceeding, Tower Ventures II, LLC (Tower Ventures), had proposed the construction of a 180-foot monopole at the site. During the proceedings, the Council became aware that AT&T Wireless had expressed an interest in locating antennas on the monopole and would require a centerline height of 177 feet above ground level (agl). AT&T Wireless did not intervene in the proceedings due to the then expected merger of AT&T Wireless and Cingular. T-Mobile, an intervenor in the proceeding, indicated that its coverage goals could be achieved at a height of 150 feet agl.

The Council approved a 150-foot monopole to be designed and constructed with the ability to be extended to 180 feet agl with such extension subject to Council approval by petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Sections 16-50j-38 through 16-50j-40 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. The Certificate was issued to Tower Ventures. Gridcom is part of the National Grid holding company, which has acquired all of Tower Ventures' assets.

The Development and Management (D&M) plan for this facility was approved on March 3, 2005. Construction of the facility has not yet begun.

Cingular proposes to extend the 150-foot monopole by 30 feet to a height of 180 feet agl, consistent with the Council's decision. The proposed project includes the installation of six panel antennas on a low profile platform with a centerline of 176 feet 8 inches agl. Cingular would install an 11 foot six inch by 20 foot equipment shelter on a concrete pad within the approved 75-foot by 75-foot equipment compound. A GPS antenna would be installed on the cable bridge between the monopole and the equipment shelter.

The proposed modification would provide coverage along Route 44 and the surrounding areas.

The compound is located on the north-central portion of an approximately 95 acre parcel, which is part of an approximately 313 acre dairy farm, located on Knowlton Road.

The proposed cumulative radio frequency electromagnetic radiation is below the ANSI/IEEE standard.

Cingular asserts that the proposed modifications are consistent with the Council's Decision and Order (D&O) in Docket no. 291, and that the Council's D&O (condition #1), providing for an extension to 180 feet agl is evidence of the Council's conclusion that the proposed project would not have a significant environmental impact.