

Petition No. 822
Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless
Groton, CT
Staff Report
July 26, 2007

On June 29, 2007, Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless (Verizon) submitted a petition (Petition) to the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) is required to extend the height of the existing telecommunications tower at 1662 Gold Star Highway in Groton, Connecticut.

The Council granted a Certificate to Optasite Incorporated and New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (Cingular) on February 27, 2007 in Docket 319. The Certificate holders had applied for a 160-foot tower; however, the Council approved the construction of a 133-foot monopole since Cingular was the only carrier involved in the proceeding and needed a height of 130 feet above ground level. The additional three feet were to allow the tower to be extended in the future.

On April 10, 2007, the Council approved a Development and Management (D&M) plan for a 133 foot structure at the site. Due to the potential presence of the whip-poor-will, construction at the site should be from the end of May to early August. Cingular has installed antennas at the 130-foot level of the structure as approved by the Council in the D&M plan.

Verizon currently has coverage gaps along portions of I-95, near the Exit 88 interchange, Route 117, Route 184 and local roads at both cellular and PCS frequencies. Verizon would require a height of 148 feet above ground level (agl) to achieve adequate coverage from the tower. Verizon proposes to extend the tower by 17 feet to a total height of 150 feet agl. The tower was designed and constructed to accommodate a tower extension to 150 feet agl.

Verizon would install equipment within a 12 foot by 30 foot shelter located in the southeast corner of the existing compound. A diesel-powered back-up generator would be installed in a segregated generator room within Verizon's equipment shelter.

The existing 133-foot structure is visible year-round from approximately 24-acres within a two mile radius of the site. The proposed increase of the tower height to 150 feet agl would result in year-round visibility of the structure from approximately 41-acres within a two mile radius of the site.

With the installation of Verizon's antennas at the 148-foot level, the worst-case total power density level would be 18.33 % of the Federal Communications Commission standard.

The tower would not require Federal Aviation Administration marking or lighting.

On June 29, 2007, a copy of this petition was sent to Groton's Town Manager, Mark R. Oefinger, and the property owner, Chester G. Crouch. Verizon sent a notice of intent to file this petition to

all adjacent property owners on June 28, 2007. No comments from the town, the property owner or adjacent land owners have been received.

On July 24, 2007, Verizon sent a letter to Michael J. Murphy, AICP, Director of Planning and Zoning. The letter mentions a conversation between Verizon and Mr. Murphy on July 24, 2007 and includes a copy of the D&M plan that was approved by the Council.