

Petition No. 824
CL&P
Montville, Connecticut
Staff Report
July 20, 2007

On July 12, 2007, Northeast Utilities System (CL&P) submitted a petition for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the replacement of an existing 181-foot guyed lattice tower. The petition was field reviewed by Council member Phil Ashton and Council staff member David Martin on July 20, 2007. CL&P representative John D'Ambra attended the field review. Town officials were notified of the proposal.

CL&P is seeking to replace an existing, 181-foot guyed lattice tower with a self-supporting lattice tower of the same height on a 1.8 acre parcel on Chapel Hill Road in the western part of Montville. The existing tower was erected in 1978. There are three microwave antennas that are part of CL&P's trunk system and several other CL&P antennas installed on the tower. The Montville Fire and Public Works Departments also have antennas on the tower.

A recent structural analysis showed that the tower does not conform to current standards and could not be adequately reinforced because of age and condition. The replacement tower would be centered approximately 25 feet to the south of the existing tower. Each of the legs of the three-sided replacement tower would be approximately 25 feet wide at the base of the tower. They would taper to a width of approximately 10 feet at the top of the tower. Although the replacement tower would be wider than the existing tower, it would eliminate the need for guy wires that extend far beyond the existing tower. The antennas on the existing tower would be transferred to the replacement tower.

Despite its height, the visibility of the existing tower is limited by topography and vegetation. It is most visible from north of the site where there is a small commercial plaza and a fire house. There are a few single family homes clustered across the street from the commercial plaza, and three or four homes across the street just to the south of CL&P's property. There is also a taller, bulkier tower that was once used for AT&T microwave antennas just across the street from CL&P's tower. Any marginal increase in the visibility of the replacement tower would be insignificant.

CL&P has consulted with the Town of Montville about the proposed replacement. The town has not expressed any concerns.

Staff recommends approval of the proposal since it will increase the safety of an existing facility, and it will not result in any significant increase in visual or other environmental impact.

View of existing tower from commercial plaza to the north



View of two towers – CL&P on right, old AT&T tower on left

