

Petition No. 1112  
Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless  
Bloomfield, Connecticut  
Staff Report  
August 28, 2014

On July 28, 2014, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) received a petition from Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless (Cellco) for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the replacement and extension of an existing telecommunications facility owned by The Connecticut Light and Power Company (CL&P) located west of St. Andrews Road in Bloomfield. Cellco sent notice to abutting property owners and the Towns of Bloomfield and Simsbury on July 28, 2014. No written comments were received from either Town or any of the abutters.

A field review of the proposed project was conducted on August 18, 2014. The following people attended the field review: Council member Daniel Lynch, Jr., Council staff member Robert Mercier, Cellco representative Attorney Kenneth Baldwin, CL&P representatives John Morissette and Steve Florio, and Simsbury Police Lieutenant Fred Sifodaskalakis.

The site is located on a 40-acre parcel owned by CL&P and is accessed from a separate parcel at 5-7 St. Andrews Road. The existing tower was approved in 1993 in Docket 158. A paved access drive ascends west to the site, generally along an existing CL&P transmission corridor, to a ridge top at 412 feet above mean sea level. The existing tower and fenced compound is adjacent to the east side of the transmission corridor.

Existing tower users include CL&P with multiple whip antennas and dish antennas, AT&T with an antenna array at 158 feet, Cellco with an antenna array at 150 feet and the Towns of Simsbury and Bloomfield both of which utilize the tower for emergency communications. Cellco seeks to upgrade their antennas to support LTE services but the current tower is at structural capacity and cannot be economically reinforced to accommodate the new equipment. Cellco would be responsible for construction of the new tower, transferring equipment to the new tower, and the removal of the existing tower. CL&P would own the new tower.

Cellco proposes to replace the existing 180-foot self-supporting lattice tower with a 185-foot self-supporting lattice tower. The proposed tower would be five feet higher to compensate for a five foot elevation loss between the proposed tower site and the existing tower site. Antennas for all carriers/users, including Cellco, would be mounted approximately five feet higher on the new tower to maintain the existing antenna height above ground level.

The new tower would be constructed adjacent to Cellco's existing equipment shelter, approximately 75 feet southwest of the existing tower and partially within the existing compound. The existing compound would be expanded by 2,150 square feet to the south and west to accommodate the new tower and associated ice bridge. A level spreader would be installed on the west side of the compound to control any runoff coming from the compound area.

Approximately 17 trees with a diameter of 6 inches or greater would be removed to expand the compound. Some tree trimming may be necessary along the access drive to facilitate heavy equipment required to deliver materials to the site. The nearest wetland is 140 feet north of the construction area. A vernal pool is located approximately 260 feet north of the new compound fence. Cellco would implement best management practices from March 1 to September 15 to reduce impacts to vernal pool obligate species.

The new tower would maintain the existing aircraft hazard lighting elevations and pattern as the tower is approximately 4.5 miles south from Runway 6 at Bradley International Airport. The site is in a remote area surrounded by extensive woodland with no nearby structures. The proposed tower would have no effect on existing views.

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

- Unless otherwise approved by the Council, the existing tower shall be removed within 180 days of the installation and operation of the new lattice tower;
- The Council shall be notified in writing when the existing tower is removed and the new tower is operational;
- Submit a final structural report depicting final tower loading; and
- Any nonfunctioning antenna and associated antenna mounting equipment on this facility owned and operated by the Petitioner shall be removed within 60 days of the date the antenna ceased to function.



Existing tower from CL&P right-of-way, view west.



South side of compound - proposed tower location by white dome. Compound would be expanded to the left (west).



Northwest corner of compound. Compound would be expanded towards rocks in photo.