

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL**

IN RE:	:	
	:	DOCKET NO. 503
ARX WIRELESS INFRASTRUCTURE, LLC	:	
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF	:	
ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AND	:	
PUBLIC NEED FOR THE	:	
CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND	:	
OPERATION OF A	:	
TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY	:	
LOCATED AT 43 OSGOOD AVENUE,	:	July 12, 2021
NEW BRITAIN, CONNECTICUT	:	

**PRE-FILED TESTIMONY OF KEITH COPPINS**

**Q1. Mr. Coppins, please summarize your professional background in the telecommunications industry.**

A1. I am the founder and Managing Director of ARX Wireless Infrastructure LLC ("ARX"), the applicant in this proceeding. I have been part of the telecommunications industry for thirty years with a primary focus on property development, lease contract negotiations, and construction of newly-approved towers. I have successfully completed all aspects of development activities for more than 450 sites in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New York. I personally handled or directly managed the leasing, zoning and construction of every site. I also coordinate with wireless carriers to address their coverage needs and determine their interest in occupying each location.

In addition, I am the principal/owner of Phoenix Partnership LLC, a telecommunications site development company. I was formerly the Vice

President of Development at Optasite where I led a development team in the Northeast Region telecommunications development and site acquisition activities. I joined Optasite from Site Acquisitions, Inc. where I was Vice-President and oversaw the leasing, zoning and construction of new tower sites. I also managed a consulting team for AT&T Wireless and T-Mobile.

Previously, I was also General Manager for American Tower Corporation and managed a consulting group for Cellular One and Southern New England Telephone. My primary responsibilities were site acquisitions, lease negotiations and zoning of new cellular sites in the New England and New York markets.

**Q2. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

A2. My testimony provides background information relating to this Application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need ("Application") for the proposed facility ("Facility") at 43 Osgood Avenue, New Britain, Connecticut (the "Site").

**Q3. What was your role in this Application?**

A3. I was responsible for ARX's site search, site acquisition, coordination with the landowner, and communication with the wireless carriers for this Application.

**Q4. Please describe your site search process for the Facility.**

A4. As detailed in Exhibit F to the Application, before concluding that the Site at 43 Osgood Avenue was the best location to meet the carrier's needs, we affirmatively reached out to the owners of fourteen (14) other properties in the area. In many instances multiple letters were ignored by the property owner. In others, such as the locations at 285 Osgood Avenue, 221 Farmington Avenue, and 210 Farmington Avenue, we met with the owner and were then advised by the owner that he was not interested in the development of a tower on his property. In other instances, such as the locations at 314 Osgood Avenue, 224 Allen Street, 52 Derby Street, 92 McClintock Street, 370 High Street, and 75 Carmody Street, the properties were not suitable to meet AT&T's coverage needs.

**Q5. Did the City of New Britain ("City") request any changes to the proposed Facility design after the Technical Report was filed?**

A5. Yes, during the municipal consultation period, on November 17, 2020, the Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City, Joseph E. Skelly, Jr., wrote to ARX's counsel, objecting to the site at 43 Osgood Avenue because of its supposed eligibility for historic status and because it is "located in the middle of a residential neighborhood." Attorney Skelly proposed two alternative sites: 1) a site containing a water tank, which is situated at 1780 Corbin Avenue; and 2) a public park named Osgood Park, which is situated at 470 Osgood Avenue.

**Q6. Did you respond to the City's request?**

A6. Yes. Following receipt of Attorney Skelly's letter, and in a continuing effort to explore every possible location, we worked with AT&T to evaluate the potential feasibility of the two alternative sites identified by the City.

With respect to the property situated at 1780 Corbin Avenue, AT&T explored the use of the water tank located on this property. However, AT&T rejected this site from an RF perspective because it was 0.4 miles from another AT&T site (CT5419) and 1.1 miles from the search ring.

With respect to Osgood Park, situated at 470 Osgood Avenue, AT&T rejected this site from an RF perspective because it was 0.2 miles from another AT&T site (CT5419) and 1.2 miles from the search ring.

Following this evaluation, ARX's counsel responded to Attorney Skelly in a letter dated March 5, 2021 explaining that AT&T had rejected both sites from an RF perspective. ARX's counsel also noted that both of these alternative sites were also in residential areas, which was one of the bases for the City's objection to the proposed Site. ARX's counsel communicated that the proposed Site at 43 Osgood Avenue remained the best location for the proposed Facility, and that AT&T was fully supportive of the proposed Site in terms of meeting its coverage needs.

**Q7. Were there any other bases for the City's objection to the proposed Site at 43 Osgood Avenue?**

A7. Yes, the City took the position that the building on the proposed Site would be eligible for historic designation, and at the same time the City argued that the same supposed historic building had development value for housing or as an assisted case living facility.

**Q8. Do either of the City's arguments justify rejecting the proposed Site at 43 Osgood Avenue?**

A8. No. With respect to the City's contention that the building would be eligible for historic status, as detailed in the Pre-Filed Testimony of Michael Libertine, LEP and Brian Gaudet, contrary to the City's position, in its determination letter dated November 24, 2020 the State Historic Preservation Office ("SHPO") concluded that: "The Subject Property itself, known as the Israel Putnam Elementary School, does not appear eligible for listing on the National Register."

With respect to the supposed development potential of the building and the fact that the City previously granted a variance to the property owner allowing for the conversion of the building to a 34-unit aged restricted apartment building, I have spoken with the owner of the property and he has confirmed that he has no current intention of developing the Site in this manner, and is fully supportive of the construction of the proposed Facility on the Site.

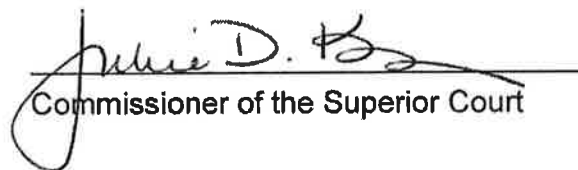
**Q9. Does this conclude your testimony?**

A9. Yes.

I hereby affirm that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Keith Coppins

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 12<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2021.

  
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Commissioner of the Superior Court