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| 2 | STATE OF CONNECTICUT |
| 3 | CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL |
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| 5 | Docket No. 537 |
| 6 | Application from The Towers, LLC, for a |
| 7 | Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and |
| 8 | Public Need for the Construction, Maintenance, and |
| 9 | Operation of a Telecommunications Facility and |
| 10 | Associated Equipment Located at 327 North Anguilla |
| 11 | Road, Stonington, Connecticut. |
| 12 | |
| 13 | |
| 14 | Zoom Remote Public Hearing (Teleconference), |
| 15 | on Thursday, August 28, 2025, beginning at 6:30 p.m. |
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| 17 | Held Before: |
| 18 | JOHN MORISSETTE, THE VICE CHAIR |
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| 1 | Appearances: |
|----|---------------------------------------|
| 2 | Councilmembers: |
| 3 | JOHN MORISSETTE (Vice Chair) |
| 4 | |
| 5 | QUAT NGUYEN, |
| 6 | PURA Designee |
| 7 | |
| 8 | CHANCE CARTER |
| 9 | KHRISTINE HALL |
| 10 | BILL SYME |
| 11 | DR. SCOTT WILLIAMS |
| 12 | DANIEL P. LYNCH, JR. |
| 13 | |
| 14 | |
| 15 | Council Staff: |
| 16 | MICHAEL PERRONE, |
| 17 | Siting Analyst |
| 18 | |
| 19 | MELANIE BACHMAN, ESQ., |
| 20 | Executive Director and Staff Attorney |
| 21 | |
| 22 | LISA FONTAINE |
| 23 | Administrative Support |
| 24 | |
| 25 | |
| | |

(Begin: 6:30 p.m.)

THE VICE CHAIR: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

This hearing is called to order this Thursday,

August 28th at 6:30 p.m.

My name is John Morissette, Vice Chair of the Connecticut Siting Council. Other members of the Council are Brian Golembiewski, designee for Commissioner Katie Dykes of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection; Quat Nguyen, designee for Chairman Marissa Paslick Gillett of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority; Chance Carter; Khristine Hall; Bill Syme; Dr. Scott Williams, and Daniel P. Lynch, Jr.

Members of the staff are Executive Director Melanie Bachman, Siting Analyst Michael Perrone, Administrative Support Lisa Fontaine.

If you haven't done so already, I ask that everyone please mute their computer audio and/or telephones now.

This is a continuation of the public hearing that began at 2 p.m. this afternoon. A copy of the prepared agenda is available on the Council's website along with the record of this matter, the public hearing notice, instructions for public

access to this public hearing, and the Council's citizens guide to the Siting Council's procedures.

This hearing is held pursuant to the provisions of Title 16 of the Connecticut General Statute and of the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act upon an application from the Towers, LLC, for a certificate of environmental compatibility and public need for the construction, maintenance and operation of a telecommunications facility and associated equipment located at 327 North Anguilla Road in Stonington, Connecticut. This application was received by the Council on April 25, 2025.

This application is also governed by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which is administered by the Federal Communications

Commission. This act prohibits the Council from considering the health effects of radiofrequency emissions on human health and wildlife to the extent the emissions from towers are within the federal acceptable safe limit standards, which our standard is also followed by the State Department of Public Health.

The federal act also prohibits this Council from discriminating between and amongst providers

of functionally equivalent services. This means that if one carrier already provides service for an area, other carriers have the right to compete and provide service in the same area.

The Council's legal notice of the date and time of this public hearing was published in The Day on May 17, 2025. Upon this Council's request, the Applicant erected a sign in the vicinity of the proposed site so as to inform the public of the name of the Applicant, the type of the facility, the public hearing date, and the contact information for the Council, including the website and phone number.

As a reminder to all, off-the-record communication with a member of the Council or a member of the Council's staff upon the merits of this application is prohibited by law.

This public comment session is reserved for members of the public who have signed up to make brief statements. These limited appearance statements are not subject to questions from the parties or the Council, and members of the public making statements may not ask questions of the parties or the Council.

In accordance with the public hearing notice

and in fairness to everyone who has signed up to speak, these public statements will be limited to three minutes. Please be advised that written comments may be submitted by any person within 30 days of this public hearing.

I wish to note that parties and interveners, including their representatives, witnesses, and members are not allowed to participate in the public comment session.

I also wish to note those who are listening and for the benefit of your friends and neighbors who aren't able to join us for the public comment session that you or they may send written statements to the Council within 30 days of the date hereof by mail or by e-mail. Please be advised that any person may be removed from the public comment session at the discretion of the Council.

We ask each person making a limited appearance statement in the proceedings to confine his or her statements to the subject matter before the Council, and to avoid any unreasonable repetition so that we may hear all the concerns you or your neighbors may have. Please be advised that the Council cannot answer questions from the

public about the proposal.

A verbatim transcript will be made of this hearing and will be deposited in the Stonington Town Clerk's office for the convenience of public.

At this time, I request the Applicant to make a brief presentation to the public describing the proposed facility. I understand Robert Burns will be making that presentation.

Good evening, Mr. Burns.

ROBERT BURNS: Good evening, Vice Chair Morissette.

Thank you very much.

For the record, my name is Robert Burns. I'm a licensed civil engineer in the State of Connecticut and I work for All-Points Technology Corp out of Waterford, Connecticut. This presentation is for the Towers, LLC, proposed Stonington 2 telecommunications facility.

The facility is to be located in an existing open area at 327 North Anguilla Road in Pawcatuck, Connecticut, which is currently occupied by an existing farm. The subject parcel is located on the west side of North Anguilla Road.

Vehicle access to the proposed facility will be from North Anguilla Road on an existing gravel driveway for approximately 760 feet, and then proceed to a proposed 12-foot-wide gravel driveway located on the west side of the existing driveway and will proceed for approximately 110 feet west to the proposed facility.

As part of this project, the utility company will be replacing all the existing utility poles that traverse the site. The proposed electric and telephone service that will feed the site will be from -- will be underground from one of those -- for the closest replaced pole located on the east side of the proposed facility and proceed approximately 240 feet west along the existing access driveway and terminate at the facility.

If we want to scroll to maybe SP-2?
One more.

Thank you.

The proposed facility will be a 60-foot by 60-foot gravel surface compound surrounded by an 8-foot-high chain-link fence with privacy slats with a 12-foot-wide access gate on the east side of that compound. The interior of the proposed compound has been sized for four telecommunications carriers' ground equipment; Verizon, and space for three future carriers.

Outside of the fence on the southeastern side

of the compound will be a proposed utility area that will include a utility backboard which will house the proposed electric meters for the facility and electric transformer. This area will be surrounded by steel bollards for protection.

We could probably scroll to the next one. Perfect.

Inside the fence in the southwestern corner will be Verizon's ground equipment which will include a 10-foot by 20-foot concrete pad with equipment cabinets and a 50-kW diesel-fired generator. In the center of the compound will be a 150-foot-tall monopole.

Verizon, who is the anchor tenant, is planning to install nine panel antennas, six remote radio heads, three diplexers and one surge arrestor which will be mounted on a triangular platform. The center line of those antennas will be at 145. The tower will be designed for three additional future carriers at ten-foot intervals below Verizon's installation. The tower will not be required to be lit or marked.

That concludes my presentation.

Thank you, Mr. Morissette.

THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Burns.

We'll now call upon Beatrice Biedermann to make a public statement followed by Andreas Biedermann.

Beatrice, good evening.

BEATRICE BIEDERMANN: Good evening. Thank you for allowing my participation in this public hearing.

My name is Beatrice Biedermann and my husband Andy and I live at 345 North Anguilla Road. We own the primary property that abuts this proposed cell tower that will be only 661 feet away. This is absolutely unacceptable.

We fell in love with our new home and property four years ago precisely because of the rural scenic area which is zoned residential here. Our property includes a vineyard, orchard, berry bushes and vegetable gardens. We are responsible and hardworking caretakers of our place here on North Anguilla which is a town-designated scenic road.

Our home is also an investment for our future. We worked hard and sacrificed to live here. We value our community and neighborhood, and have supported all efforts to maintain the unique character that the upland area is so rich in.

This cell tower is a significant threat to a sensitive ecological habitat which needs to be protected. We have countless bird species that make their homes here. I have watched ospreys build a nest on a utility pole in the field behind us this summer; Eversource and personal photos can confirm this. We have wild turkeys every spring, and other wildlife. The proposed tower would be a massive industrial-looking structure permanently marring the scenic landscape and in direct conflict of the rural/rustic character and sense of peace here.

Make no mistake, Verizon/Cellco will raise the tower height. They can do that at a later date an additional 20 feet or more, and we are talking about a much taller structure that will loom over our backyard and be visible to passersby coming from either direction on North Anguilla.

I believe that Verizon/Cellco did not do their due diligence in their search for an appropriate site. There were sites that they contacted in a more commercial and developed area at the Route 2 and 184 connection. When they didn't receive responses, there was no followup. No response is not the same as a negative

response.

At the 2 p.m. evidentiary hearing today, questions posed about this area were answered either evasively or in a manner pretending not to understand the question. There are, in fact, commercial areas north of Highway 95 that would be appropriate in the area of the traffic circle and to the north of the traffic circle along Route 2. A simple search using Google Maps will show this.

I implore the Siting Council and Michelle
Bachman to behave responsibly as this location on
North Anguilla would set a terrible precedent for
future tower locations in the scenic, rural,
environmentally sensitive areas of Stonington and
Mystic.

Thank you.

THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Mrs. Biedermann.

I will now call on Andreas Biedermann followed by Thomas Nicolai.

Mr. Biedermann?

ANDREAS BIEDERMANN: Yes. Hello, this is -- yeah.

This is Andreas Biedermann, and thank you for hearing our concern.

I live here also right next to the cell tower, proposed cell tower. I'd like to say that

this area is the most restrictive zoning area because of ecological concerns. It's designated a scenic zone.

Looking at the papers submitted by the tower people, it seems that this is not the ideal location for a tower because we are in a valley. There were 45 sites it could have been placed, but they did not make a good-faith effort to contact these sites. One letter is hardly a good-faith effort.

There are four commercial sites that are very close to the center of their optimal placement of the tower that has a higher elevation that would be more effective sites. These are Eagle Park,

A/Z, EV Gateway, and Christie Landscaping. Three of these sites were not even contacted by Cellco.

It's hard to say that they did a due diligence effort to find a place.

They claim that they had moved the tower site to reduce the impact of the visual. They moved it 300 feet further back. The Wheelers have 78 acres. The Wheelers agreed to two other sites. These sites were where vernal pools were, but he has plenty more acreage, but he does not wish to cut into any of his income-generating properties.

I feel that he is getting compensated for this, and there's no reason why he can't lose a little bit of fields further back. From talking to my realtor, they expect that it's about a 10 or 20 percent reduction in the value of my house. While the wheelers are getting all the cream, I'm taking all the pain.

Moving into this area, I understood that I was next to a farm. I enjoy the sights, the smells of the farm, but a cell tower is not farming. Verizon claims that a flagpole type would not help to reduce the visual impact of this tower. I don't think this is true.

If you take a look at Valenti dealership, a very similar height tower on their property, it's less objective. It's a little bit more in cost for the, you know, the company there, but why should I be taking all the pain in this? The bottom line is they have done the very minimal work to find the appropriate site that would impact the community the least. Their interest is getting this tower made the cheapest and easiest way.

Thank you.

THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Biedermann.

1 I will now call upon Thomas Nicolai and 2 followed by Dan Booker. 3 Thomas Nicolai, good evening. Hi. This is Tom Nicolai. Thank you 4 THOMAS NICOLAI: 5 for the opportunity. 6 My understanding is I'm not supposed to 7 discuss any health potential issues. Is that 8 correct? 9 THE VICE CHAIR: You can discuss them, but we cannot 10 use them as part of our evaluation. 11 THOMAS NICOLAI: Okay. 12 THE VICE CHAIR: As long as they meet the standards. 13 There is an awful lot of information THOMAS NICOLAI: 14 online that would indicate that there are numerous 15 health issues involved if you live too close to a 16 cell tower. And depending on where you read it, 17 they're recommending 1,000 feet, 1,300 feet, 1,600 18 feet to be a safe distance away. There are 19 numerous potential concerns. That is, I guess, my 20 major concern. 21 We've been here for 31 years. We bought what 22 we thought was our dream home and we were going to 23 die here, but in light of this we don't know if 24 that's the case or not because of those concerns. 25 As well as the aesthetic concerns on what has been classified as a scenic road, they're going to stick a 150-foot cell tower right in the middle of it, which affects the aesthetics, obviously.

And it also affects, I believe, as Andy said, the loss in real estate value if you go to sell your home. So, even if we decide not to stay here, we will take a hit when we go to sell our home. Not to mention, a lot of realtors will tell you that if you go to sell your home and you have a cell tower on your property or near your property, it will make your home more difficult to sell.

I guess we're just totally opposed to it. We believe there are probably numerous other sites that are non-residential that would be a more suited place for the cell tower. And I guess, you know, I'm sure that nobody really would really prefer to have one on their property. That's all I have.

Thank you very much.

THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you for coming out this evening.

I'll now call upon Dan Booker, followed by William Lyman. Dan Booker, please?

DANIEL BOOKER: Thank you. I thank the Council for hearing this.

You know, as I've listened to some of this, I would guess some of the members on the Council live in rural areas as well, and they would probably understand locating a tower next to the house where they live would -- and especially if it was in a very pastoral place where that farm is, that they too would have some concerns and pause for concerns.

In addition, it's not clear to me why the alternative locations which were mentioned and are around the area -- I've lived here all my life.

And there are some commercial-zoned areas which already have communication towers on, and I'm not sure that they've been thoroughly vetted. I wouldn't have that idea anyway.

Lastly, I think the potential for locating the tower really abuses the scenic properties and the scenic themes that Stonington has had really tried hard to promote. And I really believe permitting this application has the potential to pollute farmlands all through Stonington and other towns in the southeastern Connecticut. And basically, I just believe it's a poor idea.

Thank you so much.

THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Booker.

We'll now call on William Lyman followed by David Knowles.

William Lyman, please? Good evening.

Mr. Lyman?

WILLIAM LYMAN: Okay. Can you hear me now?

THE VICE CHAIR: Yes, I can. Thank you.

WILLIAM LYMAN: Thank you.

Sorry, I was -- the Town of Stonington, like many Connecticut towns, does a great job of balancing and controlling the needs of commercial, residential, and rural farming land use through their local regulations. This helps make Connecticut a very desirable place to live.

Since the management of cell tower locations has been designated as a function under the regulation of the Connecticut Siting Council, residents in towns like Stonington are relying on you to use good judgment in the placement of this type of infrastructure as future needs will only continue to grow. We are relying on you to help maintain that delicate balance of commercial and rural residential needs.

That said, I believe the process used to choose the cell tower location described in Docket 537 was lacking in a thorough consideration of the

alternatives. Attachment 8 of Docket 537 shows a map of 45 potential sites, most of which are in commercial areas that are typical of existing cell tower locations. Since these areas are already commercial in nature, the potential impacts would probably be minimal.

The report indicates that there was simply no response from 42 of those potential sites, and the three responses with interest were all in rural areas. And of course, a farm on North Anguilla Road was chosen to proceed with further evaluation and the application process.

My concern is that if you approve this, this proposal will begin a creep of this type of infrastructure into a rural residential farming area when there are many potential commercial sites very nearby that were not more aggressively pursued. We are relying on your process to be more proactive upfront in seeking potential sites within commercial areas.

In this case, with many commercial properties very nearby along Route 2 and recognizing that commercial enterprises are often looking for ways to expand revenues, it seems to me that a more suitable site for the proposed tower could be

found in that area.

So, I request that you not approve this proposal and request that potential sites in the nearby commercial areas be revisited with a process that ensures that the commercial property owners are fully aware and able to properly evaluate this potential opportunity for their property.

A future process for determining new cell tower locations that more aggressively pursues options within existing commercial areas will help to preserve that important land use balance that helps make Connecticut such a desirable place to live.

Thank you.

THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Lyman.

We'll now call upon David Knowles, followed by Persephone Knowles.

David, good evening.

DAVID KNOWLES: Good evening, everyone. And good evening, members of the Council. Thank you for allowing me to address you in this matter. I would have been on Zoom, but I'm having a technical issue.

That being said, I was born and reared here

on North Anguilla Road. I built a home, raised a family, and had lived here for the past 62 years.

I've always -- it's always been a rural area, neighbors helping neighbors, designated about 30 years ago as a scenic road. It contains one of the most pristine water sources within the town and the state, known as the Anguilla Aquifer. The Town of Stonington have zoned this the GBR-130, green belt residential and defined as fragile aquifer, stream belt, inland wetland, and significant adjoining areas so to preserve them for future use and present needs.

I can assure you the Town did not envision the future use to be the construction of a commercial cell tower, which if built, will sit directly upon this designated area, an aquifer.

I read the cell survey and subjective wetland vernal pool impact analysis and the USFWS and NDDB compliance report prepared by All-Points

Technology Corporation, hired and paid for by

Towers LLC, in which they identified two endangered bat species and one threatened butterfly species. Both reports are short-sighted, incomplete with inaccurate conclusions.

Nothing in these studies identified the long-term effects on these species due to the persistent EMF effects on wildlife and plants. There are studies that provide evidence of the effects of EMF on bats and other wildlife over time that contradict this objective or subjective opinion.

I'm disappointed in the shroud of secrecy at the determinant -- or the detriment to all the neighbors. This has apparently been in the works for the past two years with neighbors sneaking behind the backs of other neighbors, a secondary consequence to the diminished quality of life this will cause if a commercial tower is erected in a residential neighborhood. I'm sure the secrecy was by design.

I'm also disappointed in the lack of due diligence to explore more suitable commercial sites in the area, of which there are many. The site search summary indicates 45 certified letters were sent out to other potential locations, 42 of which there were no response. Was there any followup, or did anyone attempt to speak with someone at those sites? The evidence suggests not.

Sending letters is a direct marketing technique used by real estate agents and other companies. It's a phishing scam. Toss the bait, sit back and see who bites. Then offer money and proceed in total secrecy until the last-minute notification to those whose quality of life will be most impacted.

In its application to the Council on page 9, section C, site selection and tower sharing, the Towers, LLC, claim in part, the goal of selecting in selecting cell sites, like the one described above, is to locate a facility in such a manner as to allow for the development and operation of a high-quality wireless system with the least overall environmental impact. This location falls far short of that goal, and I respectfully request that you reject the application and ensure that Towers, LLC, does its due diligence to locate a more suitable property to erect its tower.

With that, I yield back, and thank you for your time.

THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Knowles. I will now call upon Persephone Knowles.

Mrs. Knowles, are you speaking this evening?
Persephone Knowles, please?

- 1 DAVID KNOWLES: Stand by. She'll be there.
- 2 THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you.
- 3 DAVID KNOWLES: It's your (unintelligible). You're on.
- 4 PERSEPHONE KNOWLES: My speech?
- 5 DAVID KNOWLES: Yeah.

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- 6 PERSEPHONE KNOWLES: Oh.
- 7 THE VICE CHAIR: Good evening.
- 8 PERSEPHONE KNOWLES: (Unintelligible.)
- DAVID KNOWLES: I'm sorry. She never got the

 confirmation that she was scheduled to speak, so

 she'll pass.
- 12 THE VICE CHAIR: Very good. Thank you.
 - Calling on Max Bunting. Max Bunting, please?

 MAX BUNTING: Thank you for allowing me to address the

 Council.

I'm a new resident to the area. It's a beautiful area. I really like it. My sole concern with this is that it is a residential rural area. We all live here because we think it's beautiful. We want it to remain beautiful. And it seems as if there was an apparent lack of consideration to the adjacent residences.

It would be great to have that on a commercial site rather than in the midst of residences. If that's not possible, it would be

best to have that on a site that is further from the adjacent residences. That's pretty much all I have to say.

Thank you.

THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Bunting.

That concludes our public comment session for this evening.

Before closing this hearing, the Connecticut Siting Council announces that briefs and proposed findings of fact may be filed with the Council by any party or intervener no later than September 27, 2025. The submission of briefs or proposed findings of fact are not required by this Council. Rather, we leave it to the choice of the parties and interveners.

Anyone who has not become a party or intervener but who desires to make his or her views known to the Council may file written statements with the Council within the 30 days of the date hereof.

The Council will issue a draft findings of fact, and thereafter, parties and interveners may identify errors or inconsistencies between the Council's draft findings of fact and the record. However, no new information, no new evidence, no

argument, and no reply briefs without our permission will be considered by the Council. Copies of the transcript of this hearing will be filed at the Stonington Town Clerk's office. I hereby declare this hearing adjourned, and thank you, everybody, for your participation this evening. Thank you. Have a good evening. 7:00 p.m.) (End:

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 27 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the teleconference PUBLIC HEARING of THE CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL in Re: DOCKET NO. 537, APPLICATION FROM THE TOWERS, LLC, FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, AND OPERATION OF A TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT LOCATED AT 327 NORTH ANGUILLA ROAD, STONINGTON, CONNECTICUT, which was held before JOHN MORISSETTE, THE VICE CHAIR, on August 28, 2025.

Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M 857

Notary Public

My Commission Expires: 6/30/2030