

Site Search Process and Selection

Section 16-50j-74(j) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies requires the applicant to submit a statement that describes “the narrowing process by which other possible sites were considered and eliminated.” In accordance with this requirement, the description of the general site search process, the identification of the target search area and the alternative locations considered for development of the proposed Norwich telecommunications facility are provided below.

As a tower developer, Optasite bases its decision to seek out a site in an area on its knowledge and understanding of existing weaknesses in the systems of the several wireless carriers operating in the area and/or consultation with individual carriers. A target area is chosen central to the area in which the coverage and/or capacity needs have been identified. The area targeted is the geographical location where the installation of a site would, based on general radio frequency engineering and system design standards, be likely to address the identified problem. Optasite’s goal is to locate sites that will provide for orderly integration into the existing wireless systems of multiple carriers. In this case, T-Mobile had previously initiated a search for a site in this area and identified the proposed location. Subsequently, T-Mobile agreed to pursue development of a site through Optasite.

Optasite is sensitive to State and local desires to minimize the construction of new towers, and does not initiate searches in areas with known acceptable structures. In the area of Norwich that is the subject of this site search, there are no existing towers, transmission line structures or other suitable structures. Moreover, any existing towers are too far from the target area to provide coverage specifically to the target area.

In general, Optasite first studies the area to determine whether industrial or commercial areas or areas which have appropriate environmental and land use characteristics are present. Potential locations are studied by radio frequency engineers to determine whether the locations will meet the technical requirements for a site in the area. The list of potential locations is further refined based on the willingness of property owners to make their property available. Analysis of potential environmental effects and benefits may further narrow the alternatives. In each site search, the weight afforded to relevant factors may vary depending on the nature of the area and the availability of potential sites.

There are no large areas of commercial or industrial use in or next to the target area. The surrounding area is generally residential. In addition, there is a poultry farm nearby.

Optasite investigated numerous properties in the area of the property owned by the Maennerchor Club at 39 Maennerchor Avenue (#1 on attached map). Optasite investigated property located at 72 Jewett City Road, owned by Bob's Discount Furniture (#2). However, due to a planned one million square foot expansion on the property the owner is unable to enter into a tower deal. Optasite also investigated two parcels located at 768 Boswell Avenue, owned by Saint Mary's and Saint Joseph's Cemetery Corporation (#3). These parcels are cemeteries and the owner declined to pursue a tower deal on either of the parcels. Further, Optasite investigated property located at 15 Bolduc Lane, owned by the Taftville Associates (#4). This property is little more than a ¼ acre in size and borders Jewett City Road with no natural vegetation or screening. Optasite also investigated properties located at 139 Norwich Avenue (#5) and 20 Norwich Avenue (#7). Neither of the owners of these properties, however, could provide enough ground space for a tower. Property investigated at 30 Hunters Road is owned by Nicholas and Irene Saltojanas (#8), who decided not to pursue a tower deal. Optasite also investigated property located at 44 Norwich Avenue, owned by High Point Investment & Development Company, Inc (#6). However, this property is a mobile home park and a tower would likely impact a large number of residences on the property. Optasite investigated properties located at 68 Roosevelt Avenue (#9) and 72 Roosevelt Avenue in Preston, Connecticut, owned by John Good and Northeast Generation Company respectively (#10). Both of these properties, however, are too far from the target area to provide adequate coverage. Several sites Optasite investigate were rejected by T-Mobile for failure to provide adequate coverage including: Rockwell Street (#12), 197 Old Canterbury Turnpike (#13), 167 Merchants Avenue (#14), 555 Norwich Avenue (#15), Mohegan Park Road (#16). Finally, Optasite investigated numerous possibilities for either power mount co-location or new tower builds on CL&P properties in this area. Those were located at 652 River Road in Lisbon (#11), and existing utility poles in the area (#17a-c).

Ultimately, the property owned by the Maennerchor Club at 39 Maennerchor Avenue (the "Property") is superior to other properties in the area. The Property is an approximately 7.01 acre parcel, significantly larger than others in the area. Large portions of the property remain undeveloped and wooded. Topographical features and vegetation afford significant screening of the proposed site.

