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May 4, 2009

Chairman S. Derek Phelps
Connecticut Siting Council
Ten Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

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CONNECTICUT
SITING COUNCIL

In RE: Docket 374-Application of Cellco Partnership D/B/A Verizon Wireless for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the Construction, Maintenance, And Operation of a Wireless Telecommunication Facility at 199 Town Farm Rd. Farmington, CT

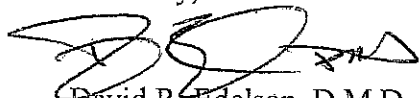
Dear Mr. Phelps,

On behalf of Susan Edelson, enclosed are an original and twenty (20) copies of an additional exhibit that we would like to enter for her testimony and thirty three (34) previous related exhibits.

You may enter this exhibit as #35 and after the following testimony paragraph on page 17

"We respectfully request that the Connecticut Siting Council carry out its statutory mandate and deny Cellco's application in Docket #374. To sacrifice such a beautiful and historic piece of Farmington's history for an unnecessary telecommunications tower, would set a precedent and potentially deal a death blow to farms and open spaces across the state. The Siting Council has the statutory power to help preserve this historic and scenic piece of land for future generations to enjoy. We urge you do so by denying Cellco's application and advise them to find a more appropriate location (Exhibit 35)."

Sincerely,



David R. Edelson, D.M.D.
Representative for Susan Edelson

Cc: Joey Lee Miranda

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OUR VIEW

NO TOWERS ON FARMS

When Gov. M. Jodi Reil announced a \$5 million grant for farmland preservation in December, she spoke of the "intangibles" of seeing a farm while on a country drive, the peaceful feeling and sense of history "certainly worth preserving for future generations."

That is true. But would the mood be broken if a farm saved by taxpayers had a cellphone tower on it?

The question is raised by a case now before the Connecticut

DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

»» Council should not allow farmland antennas

Siting Council, the agency charged with approving the location of telecommunication

facilities. A firm called SBA

Towers II seeks permission to put a 150-foot cell tower on a 106-acre farm in Warren, near the border with Washington, in western Connecticut.

In 1996, the owners sold the development rights to most of the farm to the state for \$727,000. Site A, the first of the two sites proposed for the tower, is within the preserved area. Site B, about 700 feet away, is just outside the preserved area, on land the family held back from the sale.

A well-organized group of residents is opposing both sites, claiming the facility would damage vistas, endanger wildlife and violate local zoning. The most troubling policy question is whether such a development can be built on Site A, farmland that the state paid to preserve.

The state's farmland preservation law would appear to disallow it. That law says that only buildings related to agriculture can be built on protected farmland, and then only with the permission of the state Department of Agriculture. This project would not have been approved, said Agriculture Commissioner F. Philip Prelli, who has intervened in the case against the use of Site A.

But SBA is relying on a little-known and fairly recent proviso in the siting law that says telecom antennas can be built on restricted farmland as long as the facility doesn't "result in a material decrease of acreage and productivity of the arable land."

Are towers allowed or not? The Siting Council, which says on its website that it is "working to protect Connecticut's scenic, historic and recreational values," should not allow towers on protected farmland unless there is an urgent public safety need. Or, because the state bought the development rights, perhaps the state should get the rental income.

Mrs. Reil is right when she says the taxpayers buy scenery and history that should be preserved. Obviously we need cellphone facilities, but we rarely if ever need to put them on protected farms.



More To Leadership Than Test Scores

In response to George Will's April 26 column [CTOpinion, "Case Could Help End Racial Spoils System"]:

We need people as first responders who can do more than pass a written test. I hope the U.S. Supreme Court will use common sense and recognize that an exam should be only one part of determining who advances in his field of service. Those having the respect and trust of their peers should be given weight as well.

In a democracy, people should be able to choose those who will lead.