

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 Facility are provided below.

As an FCC licensed wireless carrier, T-Mobile decides to seek out a site in an area based upon the needs of its wireless infrastructure and extensive research of the subject area. T-Mobile chooses a target area central to the area in which it has identified coverage and/or capacity needs. The area targeted is the geographical location where the installation of a site would, based on general radio frequency engineering and system design standards, likely address the identified problem. T-Mobile’s goal is to locate sites that will remedy coverage or capacity issues, while resulting in the least environmental impact. In this case, T-Mobile has searched for a site in this area for several years, and has identified the Buttonball Road property as the best possible location for a wireless facility.

T-Mobile is sensitive to State and local desires to minimize the construction of new towers, and it does not pursue development of a new facility where an acceptable existing structure can be found. In general, T-Mobile’s site acquisition personnel first study the area in and near the search ring to determine whether any suitable structure exists. If T-Mobile cannot find a structure with appropriate height and structural capabilities, it turns to industrial / commercial areas or individual parcels that have appropriate environmental and land use characteristics. The list of potential locations is limited by the willingness of property owners to make their property available. Radio frequency engineers study potentially suitable and available locations to determine whether the locations will meet the technical requirements for a site in the area. Analysis of potential environmental effects and benefits may further narrow the alternatives. The weight given relevant factors varies for each search, depending on the nature of the area and the availability of potential sites.

In the area of Old Lyme, which 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. The nearest towers and suitable structures are already in use by T-Mobile. There are no large areas of commercial or industrial use in or near the target area. Finally, the proposed site is located within the target search area and abuts the Amtrak rail line, which is a component of the coverage goal.

The locations considered and the reasons locations other than the proposed Buttonball Road Site were not selected are outlined below:

1. Amtrak Power Substation, 63 Buttonball Road. This parcel is a right of way for Amtrak. Amtrak maintains a strict policy against collocation of antennas on Amtrak catenaries. The parcel is only 1.5 acres and is situated very close to Buttonball Road. The ground elevation is also eight feet lower than the proposed Site.

2. Black Hall Golf Course, 50 Buttonball Road. Several calls were made to the landlord but were met with a lack of interest in leasing the property for the location of a tower.

As a result, T-Mobile has determined that the property owned by Ron Swaney LLC at 61-1 Buttonball Road (the "Property") is superior to other properties in the area. The Property is zoned LI-80 and is 2.53 acres. Access to the Site is across an existing paved parking lot on the Property. T-Mobile would not have to remove any trees. The Property is currently used as a commercial storage facility. (The existing twenty foot building located on the Property is too low to afford adequate coverage.) The location is also set back approximately 1,000 feet from Buttonball Road, with adequate screening mature trees. The Black Hall Golf Course abuts the Property to the south and a large track of forest is located to the north. There are no residential properties in the immediate area.

The proposed Buttonball Road site (the "Facility") would enhance wireless service availability to existing and future T-Mobile wireless device users. Enhanced coverage provided by the Facility would allow T-Mobile subscribers to use voice and data services reliably as well as to connect to Emergency 911 services. The intended coverage area of the Facility would include Buttonball Road and Route 156 just south of Interstate 95 in the Town, as well as the Amtrak rail line that passes through this area. Additionally, the Facility would provide capacity relief for the current sites that presently cover this area from outer lying areas.