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March 12, 2012

Ms. Linda Roberts  
Executive Director  
Connecticut Siting Council  
10 Franklin Square  
New Britain, CT 06051

**RE: Docket No. 425; Message Center Management application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the construction, maintenance, and operation of a replacement telecommunications facility located at 4 Dittmar Road, Redding, Connecticut**

Dear Ms. Roberts:

We represent the Town of Redding in the above-referenced matter. We are writing to provide comments in response to Message Center Management's (MCM) application to replace an existing guyed tower at 4 Dittmar Road in Redding with a new, self-supporting monopole tower with the appearance of an evergreen tree, or "monopine", and to make certain modifications to associated infrastructure at the tower site. We provide a brief summary of the history of the site, summarize the interactions between MCM and the Town, and provide a list of issues that the Town still has regarding this project.

In May of 1987, Redding's Planning and Zoning Commission issued permits for the replacement of the then-existing tower with a new 80-foot tower. Petition No. 735, Connecticut Siting Council's Findings of Fact, p. 2. After dismantling the old tower and equipment, the Commission determined that the newly constructed tower was in compliance as of December 1988. *Id.* Then, in May of 1992, the property owner, Mr. Robert Paradise, asked the Town's Zoning Board of Appeals for an increase in tower height to 120 feet. *Id.* In June of 1992, the Zoning Commission approved a height of 100 feet. *Id.* In May of 1996, the Commission issued a certificate of zoning compliance for the 100-foot tower. *Id.* In September of 2002, the Council received and approved AT&T's notice of intent to modify the facility by adding antennas and making equipment cabinet modifications. *Id.* In September 2005, Nextel petitioned the Council for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need was required for a ten-foot extension of the tower. The Council denied that petition in December of 2005, citing potentially substantial adverse environmental effects. Letter from Connecticut Siting Council to Christopher B. Fisher, December 22, 2005. (Note that the tower is currently 110-feet high, not 100 feet, so there appears to be a clerical error somewhere in the record.)

MCM contacted the Town of Redding early in 2011 about its plans to undertake this project. The Town scheduled several meetings with MCM and asked them to explain the reason for the additional height and to provide a visual analysis of the proposed tower replacement. After examining MCM's visual analysis of a proposed lattice tower replacement, the Town asked MCM about alternative tower designs and MCM provided an updated visual analysis which included photo simulations of a monopine tower. In recognition of the Town residents' strong opposition to the proposed ten-foot extension in 2005, the Town held a meeting between MCM and the site's abutting property owners on June 23, 2011, to discuss the project. The abutting property owners raised a number of valid and reasonable concerns and issues, including tower types, tower height, tower location, noise levels, and screening. MCM submitted a Technical Report to the Town in August of 2011, which incorporated some of the abutting property owners' requests and preferences.

MCM has thus far been proactive and responsive regarding the Town's concerns, something that goes a long way toward establishing and maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship with the Town. The abutting property owners are willing to work with MCM as evidenced by the fact that these comments are not in opposition to the project itself, but rather to certain aspects of design and implementation which can be addressed by MCM. Through its actions thus far, MCM appears willing to work with the Town, which is appreciated, but some questions and issues still remain. As noted in the Town's interrogatories, dated March 2, 2012, chief among these remaining issues are:

- Noise, from air conditioning compressors and backup generators for electrical service
- Screening, both at the property line and at the tower compound
- Final appearance of the monopine
- Future expansion of the tower beyond 127 feet, including a strict not-to-exceed cap of 147 feet
- Safety, including the fall zone of the tower and how wind affects a monopine
- Notice to the Town of future actions regarding the tower
- Compliance with all Siting Council orders and decisions

The Town of Redding is a rural town where people desire a certain quality of life that includes peace and quiet and beautiful natural views. While a tower has been on this property for over twenty years, MCM's proposal represents a radical shift in design, appearance, and potential effect on abutting property owners and the people of Redding. The Town has an obligation to protect the interests of the Town and its residents. The Town urges the Siting Council to consider the recommendations it will hear during the public hearings on this matter concerning, in particular, alternatives to mitigate and improve the visual impact of this tower, and to mitigate

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**& COMLEY** LLC  
ATTORNEYS

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the facility's noise. The Town supports the efforts of the Council to limit, to the extent possible, the impact of the tower on the safety, noise and visual intrusion by the tower on the residents.

Respectfully Submitted,



Brad Mondschein  
Attorney for the Town of Redding

cc: Service List