

# ATTACHMENT 7

October 31, 2013

**VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL**

First Selectman Rudy Marconi  
Town of Ridgefield  
Ridgefield Town Hall  
400 Main Street  
Ridgefield, CT 06877

Re: Homeland Towers, LLC (Homeland)  
and New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T)  
Proposed Wireless Telecommunications Tower Facility  
Northwestern Ridgefield, Connecticut

Dear First Selectman Marconi:

We are writing to you on behalf of Homeland Towers, LLC (Homeland) and New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T) with respect to a proposed wireless telecommunications tower facility to be located in northwestern Ridgefield towards the area of town known as Ridgebury. The purpose of our letter is to commence a formal consultation process with you and other Town officials prior to any application being filed by Homeland and AT&T with the State Siting Council. Enclosed you will find a detailed Technical Report for the proposed facility which includes information on the need for the proposed tower and the environmental effects of the project as identified at this time.

**Background**

All major wireless carriers lack reliable wireless services in northwestern Ridgefield which is fundamentally due to the absence of any existing tower infrastructure in that part of the community. Over the course of the past several years, numerous wireless carriers and tower companies have explored various tower siting options in northwestern Ridgefield, most recently in collaboration with the Town of Ridgefield. As you will recall, the Town with your leadership explored the acquisition of an approximately 28 acre parcel of land, along the ridge below Old Stagecoach Road and above Ledges Road, for both conservation purposes and development of a communications tower facility to be utilized by Town agencies and commercial wireless carriers in serving northwestern Ridgefield. That project, which was the subject of a Town RFP, did not proceed based on a Town Meeting vote in 2011 (362 voters with 254 against and 108 for the project).

**Community Need for a Tower in Northwestern Ridgefield**

AT&T's wireless network in the Town of Ridgefield is currently served by sites in downtown, along Branchville Road and from existing tower facilities along the Route 7 corridor. AT&T's statistics show that signal levels that are reliable for use in homes, vehicles and generally around town only currently serve about 16% of the Town's land mass and 18% of the population. These gaps in reliable wireless coverage are notable for a community like Ridgefield with a large population. These service deficiencies are particularly evident in the northwestern part of the community which supports three elementary schools, a middle school and the Town's High School, numerous places of public assembly like Tiger Hollow and major commuting corridors such as State Route 116. Indeed,

Ridgefield's own experiences during three major storms in the past year and a half, with days of power outages and the lack of any communications services, highlighted the threats to public health and safety that exist due to the lack of reliable wireless services in this part of the community. Of note over 70% of all 911 calls in the U.S. are made from a wireless phone.

#### The Tower Project

Homeland is a company that specializes in the development of tower infrastructure needed to serve a community's wireless communications needs and works closely with commercial wireless carriers and public safety agencies. Its President, Mr. Vicente, has nearly twenty years of experience in the wireless industry and as you know, Homeland was the successful respondent to the Town's RFP which had been pursued in 2010/11. Subsequent to the Town Meeting in 2011 Homeland continued its search for suitable tower sites in northwestern Ridgefield.

Homeland's continued search reconfirmed the need for a new tower in the same geographic area explored with the Town in 2010/11 and led Homeland to a 3.18 acre parcel of undeveloped wooded land abutting the 28 acres of recently acquired Town conservation lands off of Old Stagecoach Road. This parcel which does not have a postal address was subsequently acquired by Insite, a national wireless infrastructure company, and Homeland entered into a long term lease with Insite for development of a new tower facility on the property. AT&T has also since entered into a lease agreement with Homeland for its proposed use of the new tower facility. Homeland has also had discussions with the Town's Police and Fire Chiefs regarding their use of the tower facility. Homeland would own, maintain and operate the tower facility subject to any approval the State Siting Council may issue for the project.

The project as currently proposed would consist of a 150' monopole structure within a 4,650 square foot fenced compound. Town emergency communications antennas would be installed at the top of the tower to an overall height of 161.5' along with additional antennas lower on the tower and an equipment shelter and generator in the compound. AT&T's antennas would be installed at the 146' level of the tower with an equipment shelter and generator in the compound. The tower and fenced area are further designed to support the antennas and equipment of four other FCC licensed wireless carriers. Access and utilities to the facility will be extended from Old Stagecoach Road. The facility will be unmanned with no sanitary or water facilities and generates on average 1 vehicle trip per month by each wireless carrier consisting of a service technician in a light duty van or truck.

#### State Considerations – Balance Need for a Tower with Environmental Effects

Connecticut State policy generally recognizes the need for new towers to serve the public and has designated the State Siting Council as the state agency with responsibility for reviewing specific tower proposals. The Siting Council's focus is on balancing the need for a tower on a case by case basis with any significant adverse environmental effects. In this regard we note for the Town the following initial findings by the project sponsors as set forth more fully in the enclosed Technical Report:

- This tower site will bring new reliable AT&T wireless service to over 5,000 residents of Ridgefield and provide such service at 5 public schools in northwestern parts of the community.

- The Town's Police, Fire and Emergency Management Departments all support this project and plan to install emergency communications antennas and equipment at the site.
- Environmental effects principally involve localized visibility of the tower structure from residences, public properties and Seth Low Pierrepont State Park.
- On-site management of stormwater and erosion controls are required during and after construction due to ledge, steep slopes and on-site wetlands.
- At this time, there are no known alternative tower sites that would meet technical requirements and/or are available for lease or acquisition for construction of a tower site.

The Siting Council will be called upon to evaluate all of these factors once an application is filed with the agency and based on the facts, it is the project sponsors' belief that the need for a new tower to serve the community is evident and that no matter where located in northwestern Ridgefield, there will be some visibility of the structure and impacts aesthetically in the community.

#### Ridgefield Town Input & Procedural Next Steps

We are providing the enclosed Technical Report to the Town of Ridgefield in accordance with Section 16-50/ of the Connecticut General Statutes, which requires consultation with a municipality in which a tower facility is proposed prior to submission of an application with the Siting Council. As you know, jurisdiction over any proposed cellular tower facility rests exclusively with the Siting Council and would be in lieu of local zoning, wetlands and other types of municipal land use review and approvals. As such, the purpose of local consultation is to give the municipality in which a facility has been proposed an opportunity to provide the prospective applicant with any recommendations or preferences it may have prior to the filing of an application with the Siting Council.

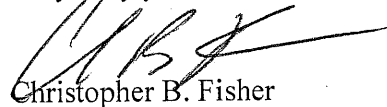
In this regard, the project team is certainly cognizant that Ridgefield, as a community, has a demonstrated commitment to the environment as evidenced by its Plan of Conservation and Development, conservation efforts and overall land use planning. As part of the State process for tower siting, both Homeland and AT&T encourage active participation in the consultation process prior to filing of any application with the Siting Council. As such, we are seeking feedback from the Town's Planning & Zoning Commission and Inland Wetlands Commission regarding the site design and any locally recommended best practices for construction on sites such as the one involved in this project. Additionally, we'd like to learn more about the Conservation Commission's future plans, if any, for trails and active or passive recreation uses on the adjacent parcel now owned by the Town and managed as open space and how this project might assist the Town in access to that parcel of property. The project team is also prepared to discuss with the Town any preferences it may have for the tower structure itself (e.g. monopine alternative).

Additionally, we would like to coordinate with you on scheduling a community meeting in furtherance of Section 16-50/(g) of the Connecticut General Statutes which gives municipalities the option of conducting a noticed public information session on any proposed cellular tower facility. State law requires any such public information session to be held by the Town during the first sixty

days of the ninety day period afforded to municipalities for consultation with a prospective Siting Council applicant. As such, should you elect to conduct a public information meeting regarding this project, it would need to occur sometime prior to January 1, 2014. For such public information sessions, our typical practice is for introductions to be made by the First Selectman, have the project team make a presentation (usually powerpoint) and then respond to public questions moderated by the First Selectman or other Town officials. The meeting can be part of a Board of Selectman meeting, delegated to another agency in the community to conduct or simply a community meeting conducted on notice at the Town's direction.

In advance, we thank you for your consideration and will follow this correspondence with a call to your office to discuss next steps in greater detail and how you specifically want to lead the consultation on behalf of the Town. We look forward to meeting with you further on this project and learning more about Ridgefield's interests, concerns and recommendations prior to filing an application with the State Siting Council.

Very truly yours,



Christopher B. Fisher

Enclosures

cc: Planning & Zoning Commission/ Inland Wetlands Commission, Town of Ridgefield  
Conservation Commission, Town of Ridgefield  
Manuel Vicente, President, Homeland Towers  
Harry Carey, AT&T  
David Vivian, SAI  
Daniel M. Laub, Esq.  
David Grogins, Esq.

November 21, 2013

**VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL**

First Selectman Rudy Marconi  
Town of Ridgefield  
Ridgefield Town Hall  
400 Main Street  
Ridgefield, CT 06877

Re: Homeland Towers, LLC (Homeland)  
and New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T)  
Proposed Wireless Telecommunications Tower Facility  
Northwestern Ridgefield, Connecticut


Dear First Selectman Marconi:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with Homeland and AT&T yesterday to discuss the proposed wireless communications tower facility on the ridge above Ledges Road and with access from Stagecoach Road. As noted at our meeting, this project is critical for commercial wireless services and Town emergency communications to be provided to residents, students and visitors in the northwestern part of Ridgefield. We appreciated the feedback we received from you and the town's conservation, planning and emergency communications officials and we look forward to your and their formal comments as part of the 16-501 consultation process on this project.

In the interim, I wanted to take this opportunity to confirm for you that Homeland is offering the Town rent free space on the tower and in the fenced compound for Town emergency communications equipment. The Town's antennas and equipment space have already been incorporated into the project design based on the specifications that were provided by Town officials. Additionally, in furtherance of our conversation, we are enclosing additional photographs simulating a monopine tower alternative from two of the more prominent views of the tower structure and which we will present to the public on December 14<sup>th</sup> as well as the other project details. While it will ultimately be up to the Siting Council to decide whether or not a monopine is warranted for the project, the Town's perspective on this is certainly welcomed as part of any preferences you might articulate for the Siting Council.

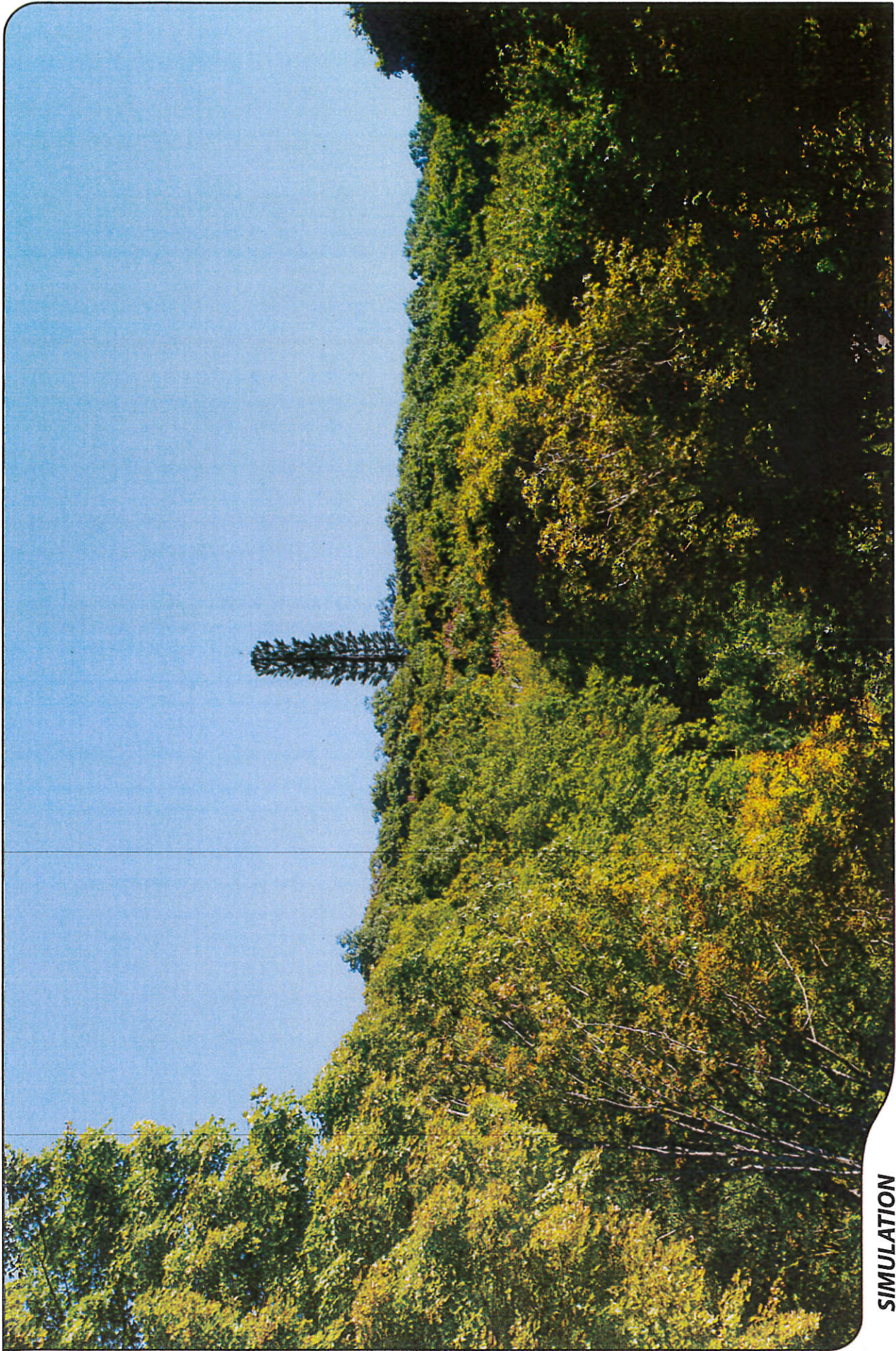
We look forward to seeing you again at Town Hall on December 14th.

Very truly yours,

  
Christopher B. Fisher  
Enclosures

cc: Betty Brosius, Town Planning Director  
Benjamin Oko, Town Conservation Commission  
Richard Aarons, Town Emergency Management  
Manuel Vicente, President, Homeland Towers  
Harry Carey, AT&T





**SIMULATION**

PHOTO

5

LOCATION

ADJACENT TO #96 HUGBY DRIVE

ORIENTATION

NORTHEAST

DISTANCE TO SITE

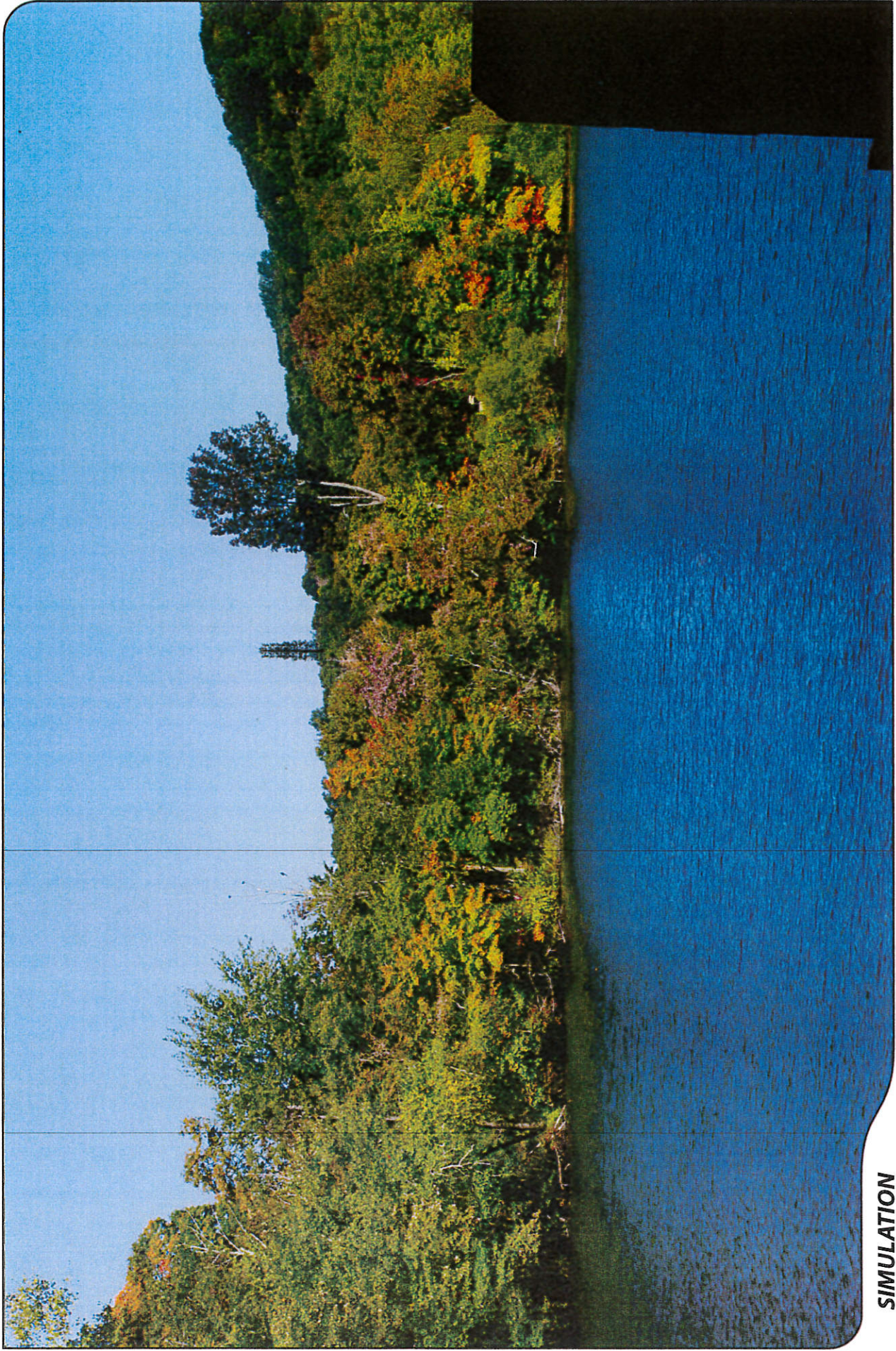
+/- 0.31 MILE

VISIBILITY

YEAR ROUND







**SIMULATION**

PHOTO  
3

LOCATION  
SETH LOW PERREPONT STATE PARK

ORIENTATION  
NORTHWEST

DISTANCE TO SITE  
+/- 0.77 MILE

VISIBILITY  
YEAR ROUND



December 16, 2013

**VIA OVERNIGHT MAIL**

First Selectman Rudy Marconi  
ATTN: Wendy  
Town of Ridgefield  
Ridgefield Town Hall  
400 Main Street  
Ridgefield, CT 06877

Re: Homeland Towers, LLC (Homeland)  
and New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T)  
Proposed Wireless Telecommunications Tower Facility  
Northwestern Ridgefield, Connecticut

Dear Wendy:

In furtherance to Saturday's public information session, enclosed is a usb flash drive that contains the Power Point presentation which First Selectman Marconi asked for. He indicated that the Town would post it on its website. Please let us know if any additional information is needed at this time.

Very truly yours,



Christopher B. Fisher  
Enclosures



## Response to Comments Letter

Christopher B. Fischer, Esq.  
Cuddy and Feder LLP  
445 Hamilton Ave, 14th floor  
White Plains, New York 10601

Re: Ridgefield Conservation Commission Comment Letter Dated 1/30/2014  
Project # CT283120

February 5, 2014

Dear Mr. Fisher:

In partial response to the Town of Ridgefield Conservation Commission's comment letter dated January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014, All-Points Technology Corporation, P.C.(APT) offers the following responses.

### **Towns Comment:**

*The project be designed so that, at a minimum, the water quality volume from the new driveway (gravel and paved) as well as other new impervious surfaces is captured and treated, preferably by infiltration, and that the stormwater management be designed so there is no increase in the peak rate of storm water runoff from the property for the 1 through 100 year storm events. We also recommend that the runoff flow be discharged through a properly designed and sized level spreader. In addition, the disturbance area (including that of the stormwater runoff discharge into the Town land) needs to be monitored for invasive species. The failure to do this will result in erosion and damage to the Town's land.*

### **APT Response:**

#### *Water Quality Volume-*

The design as presented provides treatment of the Water Quality Volume (WQV) with the Retention Basin shown on the drawings. The request to use infiltration for the WQV is not practical for this site. The National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) classifies the onsite surficial soils as Hydrologic Soil Group "D" (HSG D). The 2004 Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual (SWQM), section 7.5.1, Groundwater Recharge Volume, within Table 7-4, notes that where HSG D soils are encountered the recharge volume criteria is waived because the existing soils do not have suitable characteristics to provide infiltration.



The Stormwater Management Report (SWMR) authored by APT calculates the WQV utilizing the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) quick method for the area draining to the BMP. The current design presented provides WQV storage of 1,620 cubic feet. Alternately, the SWQM method to determine a site's water quality volume generates a volume of 750 cubic feet for this site. That is less than 50% of the capacity provided. This site is adequately designed.

*Slope Stability/Sediment Transport -*

The existing soils are thin tills above ledge. According to the NRCS, Web Soil Survey, the soil in the area of development is considered a "Rock outcrop-Hollis complex, 45 to 60 percent slopes". The existing soils are highly susceptible to sediment transport. The typical profile consists of a surface layer of "gravelly, fine sandy loam". Fine sandy loam is characterized with a majority of the particles passing the #200 sieve. These small particles are susceptible to erosion. These materials are also in existing steep slopes where energy is added to stormwater runoff and the runoff can suspend and transport the fines. In contrast, this development will provide areas with flatter gradients that will be surfaced with materials less susceptible to erosion. In order to provide these flatter areas at the compound and access drive, embankments will be created. The embankments will be made with clean granular fill with fewer fines than the existing materials. The surface of any embankment steeper than 3:1 will be covered with a very robust, rolled multiple layer dimensional permanent erosion control fabric. This fabric will protect the soil slopes as the plantings mature and will provide erosion protection equal to fully submerged flow at a velocity up to nine feet per second. In conclusion, the erosion potential for the proposed site will be less than the existing site. The volume of sediment transport within or off-site will be reduced in the developed plan.

*Storm Events-*

The SWMR also provides documentation that the rate of runoff decreases or remains the same for each of the storm events noted.

*Level Spreader-*

The design presented provides a protected and hardened edge to the retention basin. The drainage area to this basin is one-half acre. The discharge for the 100-year event is 2.84 cfs. The hardened edge provides over 30 feet of level discharge. The calculated velocity of this discharge at the hardened edge (level spreader) for the 100-year event is less than 1 fps. This is well below the erosive velocity and thus properly designed. This flow will pass across the gravel of the compound at less than 1 fps and flow down the engineered embankment slope to the existing grades. All parts of the flow path are properly protected against erosion. Flow is designed to be

shallow concentrated at its highest erosion potential. The flow will be spread out across the development to mimic existing drainage patterns. No additional design work is required. The project design also complies with the SWQM in respect to non-point versus point discharges. All discharges from this site are non-point discharges.

*Invasive Species-*

The town requests that the discharge be monitored for invasive species. The owner will work with the Conservation Commission for a post approval monitoring arrangement that should be cooperative. The agreement will need to be cooperative as runoff from the adjacent town properties also drains unto this site to the wetland resource.

**Towns Comment:**

*There should be landscaping that screens the enclosure from the pedestrian trail that will run above the installation. This should done along the downhill side of the trail, not along the enclosure itself. The specific number, size and location of the plant materials to achieve this can be determined later in concert with the commission and the developer.*

**APT Response:**

The developer is willing to accommodate this, but notes that it may be difficult to establish plantings in this area. This area is predominately an exposed, highly weathered, rock face. Noting the survey, there are no significant plants in this face currently, even grasses have a difficult time establishing themselves here due to the lack of water, soil and nutrients. The owner will work with the Conservation Commission to provide a landscape buffer when construction plans are prepared for the site.

Sincerely,

ALL-POINTS TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION, P.C.



John R. Whitcomb, P.E.  
Chief Civil Engineer