

In The Matter Of:
STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Docket No. 484
September 18, 2018

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STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Docket No. 484

Application from Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon
Wireless for a Certificate of Environmental
Compatibility and Public Need for the Construction,
maintenance, and Operation of a Telecommunications
Facility at One of Three Locations at 72 Ragged Hill
Road, Pomfret, Connecticut

Public Hearing held at the Abington
Congregational Church, Fellowship Hall, 542 Hampton
Road, Pomfret, Connecticut, Tuesday, September 18,
2018, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

H e l d B e f o r e :
ROBIN STEIN, Chairman

1 A p p e a r a n c e s :

2 C o u n c i l M e m b e r s :

3 JAMES J. MURPHY, JR.

4 Vice Chairman

5

6 ROBERT HANNON,

7 DEEP Designee

8

9 MICHAEL HARDER

10 EDWARD EDELSON

11

12

13 C o u n c i l S t a f f :

14 MELANIE BACHMAN, ESQ.,

15 Executive Director and Staff Attorney

16

17 ROBERT MERCIER,

18 Siting Analyst

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22

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1 A p p e a r a n c e s:(cont'd)

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Good evening, ladies and
2 gentlemen. I'd like to call to order this hearing
3 of the Connecticut Siting Council today, Tuesday
4 September 18, 2018, approximately 6:30 p.m.

5 My name is Robin Stein. I'm Chairman of
6 the Connecticut Siting Council. Other members of
7 the Council here are Senator James Murphy;
8 Mr. Hannon, who's designee from the Department of
9 Energy and Environmental Protection; Mr. Edelson;
10 and Mr. Harder.

11 Members of the Council staff present are
12 Attorney Melanie Bachman, our Executive Director;
13 and Robert Mercier, our siting analyst.

14 This is a continuation of a hearing that
15 began at 3 p.m. this afternoon. Copies of the
16 hearing program and Council's citizen guide to
17 siting Council procedures are available for
18 members of the public in the back, and also I
19 believe there's a sign-up sheet for those who
20 haven't signed up and wish to.

21 The hearing is held pursuant to the
22 provisions of Title 16 of the Connecticut General
23 Statutes and of the Uniform Administrative
24 Procedure Act upon an application from Cellco
25 Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless for a

1 certificate of environmental compatibility and
2 public need for the construction, maintenance and
3 operation of a telecommunications facility located
4 at one of three proposed locations at 72 Ragged
5 Hill Road in Pomfret, Connecticut.

6 The application was received by the
7 Council on July 9, 2018. This application is also
8 governed by the Telecommunications Act of 1996
9 which is administered by the Federal
10 Communications Commission. This act prohibits
11 this Council from considering health effects of
12 radiofrequency emissions on human health and
13 wildlife to the extent the emissions from towers
14 are within the federal accepted safe limit
15 standard, which standard is also followed by the
16 State Department of Public Health.

17 The federal act also prohibits this
18 Council from discriminating between and amongst
19 providers of functionally equivalent services.
20 This means that if one carrier already provides
21 service for an area, other carriers have the right
22 to compete and provide service in the same area.

23 The applicant published notice of the
24 filing of the application to the Council in the
25 Bulletin on July 5th and July 6, 2018. The

1 Council's legal notice of the date and time of
2 this hearing was published in the Bulletin on
3 August 6, 2018.

4 Upon this Council's request the
5 applicant erected three signs on the subject
6 property so as to inform the public of the name of
7 the applicant, type of facility, hearing date and
8 location, and contact information for the Council.
9 This afternoon members of the Council's staff and
10 public personally conducted a field review of the
11 proposed sites in order to observe firsthand the
12 potential effects of this proposal.

13 This hearing tonight has been reserved
14 for the public to make short statements into the
15 record. These statements are not subject to
16 questions from the applicant or the Council, and
17 members of the public making statements may not
18 ask questions of the applicant or Council. These
19 statements will become part of the record for
20 Council consideration. As I mentioned before,
21 there is a sign-up sheet available for those who
22 wish.

23 As a reminder to all, off-the-record
24 communication with a member of the Council or a
25 member of the Council staff upon the merits of

1 this application is prohibited by law.

2 I wish to note that the applicant
3 including their representatives are not allowed to
4 participate in the public comment session. I also
5 wish to note for those who are here and for the
6 benefit of your friends and neighbors who are
7 unable to join us for the public comment session,
8 that you or they may send written statements to
9 the Council within 30 days of the date hereof and
10 such written statements will be given the same
11 weight as if spoken at the hearing.

12 We ask each person making a public
13 statement in the proceedings to confine his or her
14 statements to the subject matter before the
15 Council, and to avoid unreasonable repetition so
16 that we may hear all of the concerns you and your
17 neighbors may have. Please be advised that the
18 Council cannot answer questions from the public
19 about the proposal.

20 A verbatim transcript will be made of
21 this hearing and deposited at the Pomfret,
22 Eastford and Woodstock Town Clerk offices for the
23 convenience of the public.

24 And before I call on members of the
25 public to make statements I would like to request

1 that the applicant make a very brief presentation
2 describing the facility, where it's located, why
3 it's necessary and what alternatives were
4 investigated.

5 DAVID WEINPAHL: Thank you,
6 Mr. Chairman.

7 My name is David Weinpahl. I'm the
8 project engineer for Verizon Wireless on this
9 application. I'll go over briefly the project at
10 72 Ragged Hill road.

11 Verizon has three possible locations for
12 this facility. We have a site A, a site B, and a
13 site C. Site A was an original location that was
14 presented in a public information meeting
15 approximately one year ago in town, which would
16 consist of a 150-foot tower.

17 Subsequent to that meeting Verizon with
18 the landlord looked into other options and
19 locations on this property and developed a site B
20 location further inland, which would also be a
21 150-foot tower. And further inland from that
22 would be a 130-foot tower.

23 All the facilities would be nearly
24 identical at the base plans. Over on this board
25 it's indicated a 50-by-50 fence compound,

1 equipment cabinets at the base on a 16-by-10
2 concrete pad and public -- electric utilities
3 coming into the facility. The site would be
4 completely secured and locked and antennas would
5 be located at the top of the tower. Presently
6 there are six antennas total proposed at this time
7 on the structure.

8 That briefly summarizes the project in
9 that regard.

10 You want to talk about the RF needs,
11 Jay?

12 JUAN "JAY" LATORRE: Good evening
13 everyone. My name is Jay Latorre. I'm a
14 radiofrequency engineer with Verizon. The
15 proposal that is in front of the public and the
16 Siting Council tonight, as Mr. Weinpahl mentioned,
17 is for a new monopole tower that will, should it
18 be approved, be in one of three locations
19 identified at 72 Ragged Hill Road in Pomfret.

20 The primary purpose of this facility is
21 to provide enhanced coverage in areas of Northwest
22 Pomfret as well as areas of Woodstock and portions
23 of Eastford.

24 The facility will help alleviate a
25 significant coverage gap experienced in this area.

1 The enhanced services will allow Verizon customers
2 to take advantage of Verizon's 4G LTE service
3 which provides both voice and data service at a
4 high speed and high reliability level to
5 customers.

6 In addition to the enhanced services
7 that will be delivered to this facility, with its
8 development the facility will be able to better
9 allow our customers that may live, work or go to
10 school in the surrounding areas to seamlessly move
11 through the area on main interstates without
12 dropping calls or losing data transmissions.

13 We have a number of different facilities
14 in and around the towns of Eastford, Pomfret,
15 Woodstock, and this facility will work very well
16 communicating with the adjacent facilities to make
17 sure that the Verizon Wireless experience in this
18 area is as ubiquitous and as continuous as
19 possible.

20 Thank you.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. I'd like to call
22 those who have signed up. I apologize in advance
23 if I mispronounce your names. The first
24 individual who signed is Jim Hearn. If you please
25 come up. Use the mic. Thank you. And if you

1 want to just spell your last name to make sure our
2 stenographer gets it, and if you want to give us
3 your address you can.

4 JIM HEARN: Sure. My name is Jim Hearn
5 H-E-A-R-N. I live at 105 Ragged Hill Road.

6 First off, I want to begin with a note
7 of thanks to the Siting Council -- and also extend
8 an advance apology.

9 I was here for the three o'clock for
10 those of you that weren't, and the Siting
11 Council -- and particularly Mr. Mercier asked a
12 great deal of questions. So it showed me that you
13 actually really read the application. I've been
14 to some meetings where some people hadn't. So I do
15 appreciate that. You know, a number of my
16 questions that I picked up from going through the
17 application were asked by the members. So thank
18 you for that.

19 If it sounds like I have an attitude, I
20 do, because I have lived in Pomfret for 15 years.
21 My wife and I have been married for just under 42.
22 I mean, we're less than 30 days away from 42
23 years. We've lived in five states, owned eleven
24 properties. And each time we went to buy a house
25 we spent a considerable amount of time looking at

1 the adjoining area.

2 Pre-Internet -- I'm older than the
3 Internet -- I worked for Dun & Bradstreet. So we
4 traveled around with the D&B reference book. For
5 those of you that are not familiar with Dun &
6 Bradstreet, D&B, they have a 36-million different
7 businesses file including demographic business
8 operations, lawsuits, anything.

9 So I looked to see what kinds of
10 neighbors we would have from the commercial
11 community. So we spent six months selecting our
12 property on 105 Ragged Hill Road. I took a job up
13 in Worcester in March of 2003. It wasn't until
14 September when I was convinced that 105 Ragged
15 Hill was the place to build a home.

16 Like my neighbors on Ragged Hill -- I
17 was the last house. They didn't even have cable
18 on the street until I built my house, because the
19 population density wasn't large enough. So as I
20 said, if I seem to have a little bit of an
21 attitude I apologize, because we spent what we
22 thought were exhaustive efforts to find a location
23 to build our home for our family. We have four
24 kids.

25 What I didn't hear in the application --

1 and I know some of it, you know -- by the way, I'm
2 also going to present written comments, because I
3 know we're supposed to be short tonight.

4 But there's no health or financial
5 concerns that have been raised at every meeting
6 that I've been at -- but it's not in the
7 application. It wasn't addressed today. People
8 here have each time -- and the only meeting I've
9 missed that I'm aware of was the one in August,
10 because I was already committed to being away on
11 August 15th. I had to be down in New Jersey for a
12 series of business meetings.

13 But each time we brought up health and
14 financial concerns. And for people who I know
15 that they're advocates who -- and I understand
16 that there's no empirical evidence that absolutely
17 says that this will happen to humans if they are
18 within a certain distance of the radio towers.

19 But if you watched your news at all this
20 week what you saw was a common medical practice in
21 modern medicine of taking a baby aspirin was
22 called into question. And there are a bunch of
23 people who have been taking baby aspirins for a
24 long period of time thinking it was going to
25 prevent strokes and heart attacks -- are now being

1 advised to go back and speak to your doctor.

2 So my point is, we don't know. So you
3 know, you can't just dismiss a concern on the
4 medical just because there's no long-term
5 empirical study that says that there is no
6 negative impact right now.

7 I have read a number of articles and
8 online references. To those that have a
9 compromised immune system, it can be deadly for
10 them to be in close proximity, and I don't think
11 anybody can argue with that. There are many cases
12 out there where people were identified as having
13 that.

14 My next big concern is financial, and
15 I've got a couple points of interest on that one.
16 The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
17 Development, HUD, considers cell towers to be
18 hazards and nuisances. So our federal government
19 calls it a hazard and a nuisance. This isn't a
20 local issue. This is the federal government.

21 If you read further there are certain
22 restrictions where FHA loans cannot be approved
23 for an individual location in that for -- again,
24 I'm being repetitive here. I screwed up what I
25 wanted to say.

1 FHA loans may not be approved if they're
2 within the fall zone of a tower. If the property
3 is within the easement area, an adjuster, the
4 appraiser has to comment on the presence of -- and
5 they give all range of towers. It's not just cell
6 towers, but all range of items. And they have to
7 document an adverse, any adverse effect on the
8 financial marketability or sale of that house, the
9 price of that house.

10 Currently Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac
11 will also both accept loans for transmission
12 tower, but they also require -- again, the
13 appraiser has to document in the appraisal if in
14 fact there is, and what the proximity is to a cell
15 tower, and again other towers along with it, but a
16 cell tower is specifically called out on that.

17 So like anything in real estate,
18 proximity and the impact on the view is going to
19 be judged on a case-by-case basis, with the towers
20 that are close to residences are going to have
21 marketability -- and I will address that in my
22 written, but there have been studies that have
23 shown that up to 95 percent of the people when
24 asked if they would buy a home that has a cell or
25 transmission tower near it -- and this is a 2014

1 survey. So this isn't ancient history. This
2 isn't New Zealand or Australia, or some other
3 place. This is driven out of the United States,
4 that the marketability can be very severe in a
5 negative way. And that's that point I started out
6 with to my neighbors and friends.

7 For 30-odd years that we looked for a
8 house we purposely bought homes away from sites
9 like that. We made a significant effort. We did
10 not want to be exposed to it. I paid a premium
11 for my lot. I paid way more than I thought the
12 lot was worth, but I wanted that lot because it
13 was away from everything that was out there.

14 My last point is that today we heard a
15 lot -- for those of you who may have been here at
16 the three o'clock -- from the Verizon engineers.
17 We heard a lot of concerns about increased ability
18 for upload and download for in-vehicle standards.

19 Honestly, I've lived here for 15 years.
20 I traveled these roads every day. In the
21 application there are about three areas where it
22 was identified where calls are frequent, and I'm
23 working off the top of my head, but I will
24 document it in my written notes -- that you're
25 talking about a one mile stretch on 44, 98 and

1 244. It's in the application. So we, the
2 residents face some significant impact to our
3 lives and the decisions that we've made about
4 living here for enhanced coverage.

5 As was acknowledged today at three
6 o'clock, our area is very lightly populated and
7 has nominal daily traffic. So what you're doing
8 if you approve putting a cell tower in Pomfret on
9 the site is you're doing it for the benefit of the
10 transient population that cruises through Pomfret.
11 You're not doing it for those of us that live
12 here and have made a decision. The largest
13 investment we're ever going to make in our lives
14 is our home, and you're not doing it for us.

15 I've been at every meeting other than
16 August and not one resident has stood up and said,
17 boy, I really want that cell tower to be put in.
18 My life is incomplete if I don't get better cell
19 coverage.

20 So the last item -- and I know we can't
21 ask you questions, but I would ask you to consider
22 this. What if you did in your personal life what
23 my wife and I have done for 40-odd years of buying
24 homes, and have lived here for 15 -- we've now
25 been in our home for 15 years, paid off the

1 mortgage -- and said, boy, this is great, you
2 know?

3 And only to have someone come in and try
4 and put a cell tower, it's going -- the financial
5 impact is going to be one resident, while many of
6 the other residents in the adjacent area or the
7 properties could, in fact, incur adverse marketing
8 for people who won't even look at our house and
9 also suffer financially from the house not being
10 able to be sold.

11 So thank you for your time. I
12 appreciate it.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

14 The next person, Peter Schultz.

15 PETER SCHULTZ: Good evening,
16 councilmembers and neighbors. My name is Peter
17 Schultz. In November of 2017 my wife Marianne and
18 I purchased our home at 69 Ragged Hill Road in
19 Pomfret. To serve as our second home we also live
20 in a townhouse in Madison, Connecticut.

21 We were particularly attracted to this
22 beautiful rural setting in, quote, the quiet
23 corner of Connecticut as a special place where we
24 could escape the hustle and bustle of our
25 technology driven daily lives in the northeast

1 megalopolis.

2 To our surprise, and chagrin, we are now
3 faced with possibly viewing one or more large
4 telecommunications cell towers looming over the
5 view in front of our secluded home. We strongly
6 object to this project for several reasons, and I
7 might note that several of these echo some of the
8 concerns that Mr. Hearn already expressed.

9 First, we believe it is highly
10 inappropriate to site cell towers within possible
11 view of rural residences and wandering tourists in
12 this special part of Connecticut.

13 To quote an article from the New York
14 Times, Touring the Quiet Corner, by Jill Knight
15 Weinberger of June 2002, quote, the quiet corner
16 lies within a congressionally designated National
17 Heritage Corridor. This last green valley, as it
18 has been called, represents the only remaining
19 substantial green belt over a thousand square
20 miles within the urban and suburban sprawl between
21 Washington and Boston.

22 This is a very special place and any
23 decision to place a large cell tower or towers in
24 it must be given very careful consideration.

25 I am sure there are numerous other sites

1 preferably not requiring a zoning variance within
2 the hills of Pomfret that could be considered for
3 this tower that are not so close to local
4 residences and tourists.

5 The applicant indicates that they have
6 reviewed 14 possible sites, of which 9 are
7 actually located within that parcel of land that's
8 under consideration in this docket. The remaining
9 five of which the applicant has rejected for
10 various reasons are actually less than a mile away
11 from it. Surely there are additional possible
12 suitable sites out there. I urge this committee
13 to request a more in-depth analysis of other
14 possible and hopefully more suitable sites.

15 Second, the applicant justifies this
16 tower by noting that it will provide better cell
17 service -- actually for Verizon -- to the local
18 community and passing motorists, but is this tower
19 really needed? Those of us living in close
20 proximity to the site already have adequate cell
21 service as well as video and Internet through
22 other service providers. We don't really need
23 anything more.

24 Coincidentally, this afternoon when I
25 visited one of those sites there was a young man

1 there who was responsible for the balloon. I have
2 AT&T service, which I got while I was standing at
3 that location. He had Verizon service, and he had
4 service, several bars. So I think there is pretty
5 good service already in the area.

6 Can't the cell service for passing
7 motorists be handled using smaller and less
8 visible towers along the actual major roadways,
9 even if according to the applicant it is less
10 economical to construct? After all, our
11 million-dollar views are really our most valuable
12 community asset, not 3G or 4G cellphone service
13 for passing motorists.

14 If the tower is really being built to
15 provide long-haul repeater capacity for Verizon
16 then it definitely does not have to be located in
17 this particular rural residential site. There are
18 many other more isolated and less visible hills in
19 the region to choose from.

20 Third, I believe considerable emphasis
21 is being placed on hiding the towers from the view
22 using the existing forest cover. Many photos were
23 submitted by the applicant showing that trees
24 generally blocked the view of the proposed sites
25 A, B and C. However, the surrounding forest in

1 leaf can only provide temporary concealment of
2 cell towers at best. Forests do not provide
3 permanent protection for local residents. They
4 could disappear overnight due to fires, ice
5 storms, windstorms, disease or other natural
6 disasters. They could be logged or removed for
7 building, development or farming.

8 How can we, the adjacent homeowners
9 be protected from all of this? We can not.
10 Instead we will face the daily threat that this
11 tower will become fully exposed some day for all
12 of us to see.

13 Fourth, we object to this tower
14 construction due to its future negative impact on
15 or adjacent property values. As already has been
16 mentioned, a 2014 survey of a thousand respondents
17 published by the National Institute for Science,
18 Law and Public Policy indicates that cell towers
19 and antennas negatively impact interest in real
20 estate properties. Ninety-four percent of the
21 respondents said a nearby cell tower or group of
22 antennas would negatively impact interest in a
23 property, or the price that they would be willing
24 to pay for it.

25 This survey reinforced the findings of

1 an earlier study, of which I'm sure the
2 councilmembers are aware. 4300 respondents to a
3 study by Sandy Bond, PhD, in a New
4 Zealand Property Institute, Past President of the
5 Pacific Rim Real Estate Society published in the
6 Appraisal Journal in 2006, the impact of cellphone
7 towers on house prices in residential
8 neighborhoods.

9 That study found that buyers would pay
10 as much as 20 percent less for properties located
11 near a cell tower as determined at that time by an
12 opinion survey in addition to a sales price
13 analysis. To put it in other terms closer to each
14 one of you, would you buy a home loomed over by a
15 cell tower? Given these grim findings it is clear
16 that our property values will be negatively
17 impacted by construction of this tower.

18 Finally, I wish to note for this Council
19 that I am a scientist, and I am the coinventor of
20 fiber optics for telecommunications. For this
21 achievement I've been awarded the National Medal
22 of Technology by President Clinton, the highest
23 technical award made by the U.S. government, and
24 was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of
25 Fame, which is part of the U.S. Patent and

1 Trademark office. I have worked for the past 45
2 years, and still remain actively involved in the
3 development, implementation and deployment of
4 fiberoptics for telecom networks.

5 I understand and I fully support the
6 need, the need for and the value of a robust
7 telecom infrastructure. I also believe that the
8 implementation of these technologies must be done
9 in a fair and an equitable manner consistent with
10 and respectful of the values of our neighborhoods,
11 our communities and our nation.

12 I thank you very much for your
13 attention.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

15 William -- I'm not sure whether it's --

16 WILLIAM GOULD: It's Gould.

17 THE WITNESS: Gould?

18 WILLIAM GOULD: Yeah. I'm Bill Gould.

19 I live at 102 Angel Road in Pomfret, and I
20 purchased land here 42 years ago -- 43 years ago,
21 and have lived on the site for 30 years.

22 The reason I came here was the same that
23 these other residents have, that they wanted the
24 beauty, the seclusion. And I built my home here
25 and I have this -- unfortunately it's not large

1 enough to put on the board. I'm sure you're all
2 already aware of what it looks like.

3 This is the area where the tower would
4 be sited and where my residence is. The tower
5 would be over here, and I live directly across
6 this expense. Just pass it around -- well, just
7 kind of glance at it.

8 There's nothing here. There's no
9 houses. There's no development. You're putting
10 up a cell tower and investing millions of dollars
11 in this thing to provide service to no one.

12 There's a road that goes through,
13 Brayman Hollow Road, and it might have a dip in
14 service, but everybody else here that has
15 spoken -- and I'm a Verizon customer, a wireless
16 customer. I have no trouble. It seems like this
17 idea, it should be where there's a population if
18 we already have sufficient service.

19 Thank you.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

21 Dominic -- is it Roto?

22 DOMINICK ROTO: I'm not much for
23 speaking at this point. I have a lot of hay
24 fever, but owning property in this area for -- I'm
25 not sure whether it's 15 or 20 something years. I

1 love it there. I don't live there, but I've owned
2 it because of its pristine beauty, never dreaming
3 that something of this sort would occur in such a
4 beautiful area.

5 And I live in Eastford and I find where
6 I am very happy, but I intend for my children to
7 live there, but now I'm very surprised and feel as
8 though the footing underneath my thought of
9 America -- and I was in World War II. The America
10 I knew is considerably different than today. And
11 America today is the bottom line and profit, and
12 it disturbs me greatly with all this hocus
13 pocus talk of evaluations and the need.

14 And I have a cellphone. I like it
15 because of need -- if my wife falls down or
16 something of that sort, and me too, because I'm
17 94. And I just feel -- what's happened? What has
18 happened to our people? It's always the bottom
19 line.

20 And I said to Mary, we pay more and we
21 get less. This is the name -- so that what I'm
22 trying to apply this to is that, do we need this
23 there? Is it that important or is it competitive?
24 Is it marketability that the want more? Whoever
25 these are, I've heard all kinds of names and

1 experts speaking from different companies, and
2 it's just beyond me to comprehend.

3 And so I just want to voice my opinion
4 that, please give it consideration. Keep some
5 parts of America as they were. You're not going
6 to get them back. We're not going to get food in
7 America anymore. We're outsourcing for food.
8 We're bringing in garlic from Australia because
9 it's cheaper. What's happened to America? The
10 stock market, and everything else that goes with
11 marketing? What are we going to live on?

12 Keep America natural as much as you can.
13 Keep the quiet corner, at least a little oasis in
14 this megalopolis spread -- and it has. It has.

15 And I thank you very much, please, for
16 putting up with me.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

18 Kate Cerrone.

19 KATHLEEN CERRONE: Hello to the Council.
20 Hello, neighbors. My name is Kate Cerrone. I've
21 lived in Pomfret with my husband and two children
22 for 19 years, we've been at 53 Ragged Hill Road
23 for 16.

24 From what I understand -- and thank the
25 Council for their work. From what I understand,

1 you are charged with the responsibility of
2 balancing the need of the cell service with
3 environmental impact. I can't speak to the
4 environmental impact. I hope that if you have a
5 chance to do a site visit, that you have done so
6 or will do so.

7 This area is pristine. There is
8 wildlife of every kind. I can't imagine that an
9 industrial installment such as this wouldn't have
10 some environmental impact, and I would encourage
11 you to look into that closely. It's not a site
12 that's adding to any industry. This would be the
13 only and first, very first impact on a pristine,
14 rural piece of property.

15 What I would like to underscore here on
16 behalf of my family and our neighbors is the
17 surprise that this has caused us. We did not buy
18 a piece of land that could possibly have had any
19 kind of industry. It's not zoned for it.

20 Route 244 is a recognized registered
21 scenic road. We actually purchased 53 Ragged Hill
22 Road when it was parceled off to a developer from
23 this landlord. It had actually been part of this,
24 this big piece. And I found that that development
25 was in character with the surrounding area.

1 The smallest lot, which I think was
2 ours, is three acres. It just goes up from there.
3 These are big, beautiful pieces of land. These
4 are not starter houses. These are not impulsive
5 purchases. These were people that were settling
6 into a rural area. We invested in these houses.
7 Many of us built them ourselves.

8 And I don't know if you remember in the
9 beginning of 2000 and then into 2005, '7, we were
10 heading into a recession. Our house is our
11 investment. We didn't put money in the stock
12 market. We put money in our house. So any drop
13 in the fair market value is devastating to our
14 family.

15 And we are lucky. We are well off. I'm
16 an attorney. My husband is a pediatrician. If
17 this can happen to us -- I can't imagine. So the
18 security, our financial security is at risk.

19 I agree with the point that Mr. Schultz
20 made. If you want to increase service along the
21 highway put the cell towers along the highway. No
22 one minds driving past them. It doesn't take
23 anything away from anyone. You're coming into an
24 area that never expected this, that never planned
25 on it. We don't have a financial plan B.

1 And I would like -- I appreciate the
2 fact that you allow public comment. I want you to
3 weigh strongly the number of people that have come
4 to speak against this project, and I want you to
5 think of the impact that you're having on many,
6 many people in this area.

7 And what is the reason to put a tower so
8 close to someone's residential house? I just
9 don't understand it.

10 So thank you for your time.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

12 Marc Cerrone.

13 MARC CERRONE: My name is Marc Cerrone.
14 As my wife stated, I am a pediatrician and I live
15 on 53 Ragged Hill Road.

16 I appreciate the opportunity for the
17 public to speak tonight. I think sometimes
18 decisions are made and the public has no voice,
19 and I appreciate you allowing us to speak and
20 having a voice today.

21 As you can see, there's not a chair
22 left. We've been playing musical chairs with
23 whoever speaks. The person who spoke last takes
24 their chair. I think that reflects what our
25 neighborhood feels about this project. United we

1 stand against it, and I feel like the impact to
2 us, as my wife had said, is devastating.

3 We have no financial plan B. Our house
4 is our investment. We put everything we had into
5 it. In fact, we were building our house right
6 around -- we were planning our house right around
7 the September 11th catastrophe and we said, you
8 know what? Let's just put it all in here. This
9 is our life now. We have to invest in our
10 personal future. Our home is our everything.

11 And we wanted to have our home as
12 something that we could pass on to our children as
13 our primary and only investment, and the financial
14 implications of having a cell tower in view is
15 devastating for us, and our neighbors, and we all
16 stand to lose from this.

17 And frankly, cell service is a nice
18 thing to have. It is not a utility. It is not an
19 essential thing that we must have in our area, and
20 we all do fine with the service that we have and
21 we don't complain about it.

22 And so we'd like to consider there are
23 many other options. There are more urban options
24 near us. There are shopping centers. There are
25 highways. There are other places where big towers

1 can be built and you won't see a room full of
2 people against it. And I implore you to consider
3 those.

4 I know we're not supposed to speak to
5 the health options, but as a pediatrician you know
6 that's in the back of my mind as well. We just
7 don't know have enough knowledge about the
8 long-term effects of towers on our health.
9 They've only been around for a couple decades.

10 So I won't mention that, because we're
11 not allowed to, but just know that we all are
12 thinking that in the back of our minds. Many of
13 us have kids that we're raising in our homes. We
14 don't want their health and the health of their
15 offspring to be affected either.

16 So I appreciate the opportunity for us
17 to all speak today and I implore you to consider
18 other options. Thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

20 Colin -- is it Cummings?

21 COLIN CUMMINGS: Yeah, It's Colin
22 Cummings. I live at 589 Brayman Hollow Road.
23 I've grown up in Woodstock and Pomfret my entire
24 life. I've lived, you know, aside from my brief
25 stint in college, within a ten-mile radius of this

1 thing.

2 I think my neighbors have done a really
3 good job talking about, you know, some of the
4 impacts this would have on, you know, I just
5 bought my home a year ago. I can tell you, had I
6 known that there was going to be a cell tower I
7 would not have bought where I am. I bought the
8 property that was peeled off from this estate. It
9 used to be the caretaker's home. It's a beautiful
10 place.

11 You know, a lot of people have talked
12 about the environment. I have grown up in a very
13 rural area. I cannot tell you how different this
14 piece of property feels. In my year I have seen
15 more birds, owls, bobcats, moose, just animals
16 that you have to go to the upper reaches of Maine,
17 New Hampshire to see. You see them in this little
18 piece of Ragged Hill.

19 But what I'd like to speak to more so is
20 the need. I am an avid biker, and I'm a data
21 obsessed biker. And I spend eight to twelve hours
22 biking at slow speeds in all the places in all of
23 these roads you're talking about. I also build
24 technology for a living.

25 I'm a web application developer for

1 PepsiCo, so I'm very familiar with upload speeds
2 and download speeds. I am constantly uploading
3 data 60 pings per minute live to applications.

4 I'm constantly streaming music. I'm
5 getting calls. You know, I've logged 2,000
6 hours -- 2,000 miles, excuse me, eight plus hours
7 a week. I work from home. I bike in the morning.
8 I bike at lunch. I bike after work. And since
9 this tower has been announced I've had my phone on
10 the entire time.

11 I am constantly watching my cell
12 service. I don't have a problem on any of these
13 roads. I'm never not been it communication. I'm
14 never unable to upload data. I'm never unable to
15 download data. No one ever has an issue getting
16 in contact with me. I never have an issue getting
17 in contact with people.

18 I also work from home. I don't have the
19 Internet at my house. I work from a hotspot that
20 is powered by cell towers. I never have a
21 problem. I stream about 30 gigabytes of data a
22 month and I'm never, ever impacted. I work 40
23 hours a week. I bike eight hours a week. I do
24 this all on the cell network. I do not have a
25 problem.

1 So I would just, you know, as far as the
2 need goes, I can't see it and I hope that that is
3 taken into consideration. Thanks.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

5 Donald Jones.

6 DONALD JONES: Yes, good evening, all.
7 My name is Donald Jones. I live at 151 Ragged
8 Hill Road.

9 Let's see. I'm a retired
10 telecommunications system engineer. I originally
11 got my start with Southern New England telephone
12 and actually worked for Verizon in the Syracuse
13 area, extensively working with SELEX.

14 There's not a whole lot that I can add
15 to, you know, some of the eloquent statements by
16 my neighbors and property owners, except the one
17 thing that I've learned and experienced is that
18 one cell tower breeds another cell tower. There's
19 no competition rules here.

20 When I moved to this area I lived in an
21 urban environment, and my specific reason for
22 picking the quiet corner was that it's quiet.
23 That's not to say I'm not in communications. I
24 have excellent cell service at 151 Ragged Hill
25 Road which will be in direct line of sight, no

1 matter what they put up.

2 And as you know, some other people have
3 said, that you know, their cell service is just as
4 well.

5 Property values, I don't have anything
6 written. I will be writing a letter to the
7 Council, you know, as soon as I can get time to do
8 so, you know, expressing, my disappointment that,
9 you know, other people have said, you know, we
10 moved up here for a reason to get away, to be
11 quiet, to live a simple life.

12 And you know, technology is great. It's
13 great, it's necessary, but you know, to have a
14 repeating station to improve Verizon's footprint.
15 You know, I was in the business for a long time.
16 It's just the bottom line, and that's all that
17 really matters to them. There must be other sites
18 available.

19 So I suffer from stage fright, believe
20 it or not. So this is a real chore for me to
21 stand in front of people, and I do appreciate, you
22 know, the public comment section, and united we
23 stand. That's a good thing.

24 Neighbors, Good neighbors are -- they're
25 priceless and that's why I live in Pomfret.

1 That's why I live on Ragged Hill Road. And just
2 the mere thought of having to look out my window
3 when I have coffee in the morning and seeing a
4 cell tower makes me physically sick.

5 And that's all I have to say, but thank
6 you much.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

8 As someone who also suffered from stage
9 fright, you're doing very well.

10 Walter -- is it Roo-key?

11 WALTER RUCKI: Rucki.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Rucki. I guess no one
13 has listened to me about spelling your last name.

14 WALTER RUCKI: I'm sorry. I don't hear
15 very well.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: We have your last name.
17 I said -- I had asked -- nevermind.

18 WALTER RUCKI: Like my neighbor Scott,
19 I'm a little -- suffering from stage fright.
20 Recently I mailed a letter to Mr. Stein. You
21 probably haven't received it yet. And I guess the
22 only thing I would like to do is just read that
23 letter, if you don't mind? It's been sent to the
24 Pomfret Times, the selectmen, a bunch of people.

25 This is to Mr. Stein. I'm writing

1 because of my concern for the proposed cell tower
2 on property at 72 Ragged Hill Road in Pomfret,
3 Connecticut. A tower at this location will have a
4 significant impact on this rural location. It
5 will destroy the picturesque area and be a
6 potential health hazard to the area residents. It
7 also may contribute to the impact on the wildlife.

8 As a homeowner, 185 Ragged Hill Road,
9 and landowner on Ragged Hill Road, the tower will
10 be an eyesore and also create a serious
11 depreciation in property values. We homeowners
12 chose to reside in this area and have worked hard
13 and long to maintain its rural quality. The
14 proposed telecommunication tower will result in a
15 serious degradation -- I'm not sure I said that
16 right -- of the entire area's scenic vista values.

17 The proposed tower would be visible for
18 long stretches along Route 244 -- the second of
19 which is a scenic Highway designated by the State
20 of Connecticut. I therefore request that the
21 City, State and Council deny the application of a
22 request for a tower at this location.

23 I am available to answer questions --
24 I'm probably not very good at that. My concern
25 also is that we seem to be suffering for the

1 benefit of many other people, or some other
2 people. Maybe this just isn't necessary. Maybe
3 these other people are just into it for the
4 dollar.

5 I know I've lived on Ragged Hill Road
6 since 1984. I built the house, cleared the land.
7 It's been under the Town of Pomfret since 1957.
8 My dad owned a grocery store here on the four
9 corners, so I appreciate the town being as it is.

10 Leave us alone. Put your tower
11 someplace else. Thank you very much.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

13 That's the last person who signed up.
14 So I'd like to just make -- before closing the
15 evidentiary record of this matter, the Siting
16 Council announces that the applicant may submit a
17 brief or proposed findings of fact no later than
18 October 18, 2018.

19 And anyone -- obviously this is for
20 everybody in the public, or if you or your
21 neighbors who desires to make his or her views
22 known to the Council or expand on your oral
23 testimony, you may file written statements with
24 the Council within 30 days of the date hereof.
25 Again, I think that's October 18th, about October

1 18.

2 After that the Council will issue a
3 draft findings of fact and thereafter the
4 applicant may identify errors or inconsistencies
5 between the Council's draft findings of fact and
6 the record. However, no new information, no new
7 evidence, no argument or required briefs without
8 our permission will be considered by the Council.

9 Again, copies of the transcript of this
10 hearing will be filed at the Pomfret, Eastford and
11 Woodstock's Town Clerk's offices, and that also
12 includes the transcript from the hearing that was
13 held this afternoon.

14 And I therefore declare the hearing
15 adjourned, and thank you all for your
16 participation. And drive home safely.

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18 (Whereupon, the above proceedings were
19 concluded at 7:20 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 40 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the Public Hearing in Re: Docket No. 484, APPLICATION FROM CELLCO PARTNERSHIP D/B/A VERIZON WIRELESS FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, AND OPERATION OF A TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY AT ONE OF THREE LOCATIONS AT 72 RAGGED HILL ROAD, POMFRET, CONNECTICUT, which was held before ROBIN STEIN, Chairman, at the Abington Congregational Church, Fellowship Hall, 542 Hampton Road, Pomfret, Connecticut, September 18, 2018.



Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M 857
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My Commission Expires: 6/30/2020