

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL**

IN RE:

APPLICATION OF OPTASITE TOWERS LLC
AND OMNIPOINT COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED FOR
THE CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND
OPERATION OF A TELECOMMUNICATIONS
FACILITY AT 640 HILLIARD STREET
MANCHESTER, CONNECTICUT

DOCKET NO. 339

Date: AUGUST 22, 2007

PRE-FILED TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL LIBERTINE

Q1. Mr. Libertine, please state your name and position.

A. Michael Libertine and I am Director of Environmental Services for Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. ("VHB"). I am also a Licensed Environmental Professional in the State of Connecticut. VHB is located at 54 Tuttle Place in Middletown, Connecticut.

Q2. Please state your qualifications.

A. I have a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Connecticut with a concentration in Natural Resources Management. My background includes over 25 years of professional experience, including 17 years of environmental engineering consulting. I have been Project Manager for more than 1600 environmental site assessments and field investigations for property transfers in Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Florida and Canada. In addition, I have assisted

in the permitting of more than 500 wireless telecommunication facilities in New England during the past ten years. My responsibilities include: coordination and oversight of site screenings and environmental assessments to fulfill NEPA requirements, environmental site assessments, wetland delineations and assessments, vegetative/biological surveys, noise analyses, visual impacts analyses and regulatory permitting support.

Q3. Please describe your involvement in this matter.

A. VHB was responsible for preparing a Visual Resources Evaluation report for the proposed site at 640 Hilliard Street, Manchester (the "Site"), which is located on property owned by 640 Hilliard Street, LLC and is currently developed with an old industrial mill that has been converted into commercial space for various tenants. The purpose of this Visual Resources Evaluation Report was to evaluate the potential visibility of the proposed telecommunications facility ("Facility") from the surrounding areas.

VHB was also responsible for various environmental investigations that occurred at the proposed site. These included a wetlands delineation, supervising a Preliminary Archeological Assessment, conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment as well as completing the NEPA compliance documentation for the proposed site.

Q4. Please describe the process for conducting the Visual Resource Evaluation.

A. At the request of Optasite, VHB conducted the Visual Resource Evaluation (found at Exhibit K of the Application), which included the preparation

of a computer-generated viewshed map and performing a balloon float test at the Site on April 23, 2007. The balloon float test consisted of raising a helium-filled weather balloon, approximately four feet in diameter, to the height of 150 feet at the Site. Once the balloon was aloft, VHB personnel drove the public road system within a two-mile radius (the "Study Area") to inventory those areas where the balloon was visible and photograph the balloon from numerous vantage points to document representative locations where the proposed tower will be visible. The location of each photograph was recorded using a hand-held GPS receiver and subsequently plotted on a USGS 7.5 Minute topographic quad map, utilizing ESRI's ArcView® Spatial Analyst software, to indicate their approximate distance and relative location to the proposed Facility.

Q5. How were the representative locations chosen?

A. Several photo locations were selected prior to the in-field evaluation, utilizing a preliminary version of the viewshed map to identify areas adjacent to public roads from where the proposed Facility might be visible. Other locations were identified based on in-field observations made during the time of the balloon float.

Q6. Please describe how you prepared the viewshed analysis for the Visual Resources Evaluation.

A. Using ESRI's ArcView® Spatial Analyst, a computer modeling tool, the areas from which the top of the tower is expected to be visible are calculated. This is based on information entered into the computer model, such as tower

height, its ground elevation, existing vegetation and surrounding topography. Data incorporated in the model includes 7.5 minute digital elevation models (“DEMs”) and a digital forest layer for the project area. The forested areas within the study area are overlaid on the DEMs and then a series of constraints are applied to the computer model to achieve a realistic estimate of where the tower will be visible from within the surrounding landscape.

Also included in the viewshed model is a data layer, obtained from the Connecticut State Department of Environmental Protection (“DEP”), which depicts various land and water resources such as state parks and forests, recreational facilities, dedicated open space and DEP boat launches. Additionally, information is gathered from the Connecticut State Department of Transportation (“DOT”) and local officials to determine if there are any state or locally designated scenic or historic roadways.

Q7. Please describe the visibility of the proposed Facility.

A. Areas from which the proposed Facility will be at least partially visible year-round comprise only 45 acres or less than 1% of the entire study area, with much of that visibility occurring in the immediate vicinity of the Site, which is largely industrially-zoned. We expect the proposed Facility to be visible along portions of New State Road, Hilliard Street, Adams Street, Wedgewood Drive, Englewood Drive and Middle Turnpike East. The design of the proposed Facility, a monopole that will be painted brown and contain flush-mounted antennas, serves to minimize the visual effects of the proposed Facility. We estimate

approximately 16 residential properties may have partial views of the proposed Facility from portions of the parcels.

In addition, the proposed Facility may be at least partially visible seasonally (during “leaf off” conditions) from an additional 17 acres and portions of approximately 12 additional residential properties.

Q8. Please describe any mitigation measures that have been taken by the Applicants that will reduce any potential visual impact of the proposed Facility.

A. The design of the proposed tower, a flush-mounted monopole painted brown, will allow the proposed Facility to blend into the surrounding vegetation and act to minimize the potential visual impact of the proposed Facility. In particular, this design will largely mitigate potential seasonal views of the proposed Facility. In addition, the proposed landscaping around the equipment compound will help mitigate any potential visual impact of the compound area, particularly from abutting properties and near views.

Q9. Will the proposed Facility have any impact on any sensitive visual receptors such as scenic, historic or recreational sites or parks?

A. No, the proposed Facility will not impact any sensitive visual receptors. There are no state or locally designated scenic roads within a 2-mile radius of the proposed Facility.

Q10. Please describe the results of the wetlands inspection conducted by VHB.

A. At the request of Optasite, VHB conducted a wetlands inspection of the property located at 640 Hilliard Street in Manchester, the results of which are found at Exhibit J of the Certificate Application. VHB reviewed the materials provided by Optasite concerning the location of the proposed Facility, access

drive and utility easements. VHB then conducted an in-field review of the property to determine the location of wetlands on the property and the impact of the proposed Facility on any wetlands. Based upon VHB's inspection, no wetlands or watercourses were located within 100 feet of the proposed Facility and leased area. The nearest wetland is approximately 114 feet south of the proposed leased area. Therefore, the proposed Facility will not directly or indirectly affect any wetlands or watercourses.

Q11. Please describe the results of the Phase I Environmental Assessment conducted by VHB.

A. At the request of Optasite, VHB conducted a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment ("PESA") of the property located at 640 Hilliard Street in Manchester, the results of which can be found at Exhibit M of the Certificate Application. The PESA was conducted to identify any potential areas of environmental concern at and within the vicinity of the Site. The results of the PESA indicated that no significant environmental concerns exist at the Site. VHB then concluded that no further investigations were required as a result of the PESA.

Q12. Please describe the results of the NEPA screen conducted by VHB.

A. At the request of Optasite, VHB conducted a NEPA screen to determine if the proposed Facility falls under any listed categories of Section 1.1307 under NEPA, the results of which are found at Exhibit P of the Certificate Application. Based upon VHB's review, the proposed Facility does not fall under any listed

categories of Section 1.1307. In addition, VHB corresponded with numerous agencies including the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP"), the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, Historic Preservation & Museum Division, among others. Based upon the NEPA screen and agency correspondence, the Site is categorically excluded from any requirement for further environmental review by the FCC in accordance with NEPA and no permit is required by that agency prior to construction of the proposed Facility.

Q13. Did VHB's correspondence with the State Historic Preservation Office ("SHPO") include any discussion of an historic site located at 642 Hilliard Street in Manchester?

A. Yes. As is VHB's normal practice, VHB forwarded information to SHPO concerning the proposed Facility as well as information concerning identified historic resources in the area. In this case, VHB did identify the E.E. Hilliard Woolen Mill, located at 642 Hilliard Street, as a historic resource in the area. SHPO has determined that the proposed Facility will have no adverse effect on this historic resource.

Q14. Please describe the results of the Preliminary Archeological Assessment supervised by VHB.

A. At the request of Optasite, VHB supervised Heritage Consultants, LLC, who conducted a Preliminary Archeological Assessment of the property located at 640 Hilliard Street in Manchester, the results of which can be found at Exhibit L of the Certificate Application. The Preliminary Archeological Assessment was conducted to determine if any historic or cultural resources are located in the

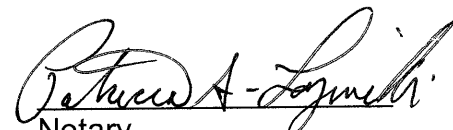
vicinity of the proposed Facility and if any archeological deposits may exist in the vicinity of the proposed Facility. The results of this assessment demonstrate that, because of the degree of existing disturbance in the area, there are no potential archeological deposits in the vicinity of the proposed Facility and therefore no additional archeological investigations are needed.

The statements above are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

8/22/07
Date


Michael Libertine

Subscribed and sworn before me this 22 day of August, 2007.

By: 
Notary
my commission
expires August 31, 2010