



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051
Phone: (860) 827-2935 Fax: (860) 827-2950
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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

January 15, 2021

Kathleen M. Shanley
Eversource Energy
56 Prospect Street
Hartford, CT 06103
kathleen.shanley@eversource.com

RE: **PETITION NO. 1434** - The Connecticut Light and Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed installation of a new 63-foot steel pole and associated radio communications equipment located at the Eversource-owned Old Mountain Road Substation, 29 Old Mountain Road, Farmington, Connecticut.

Dear Ms. Shanley:

At a public meeting held on January 14, 2021, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) considered and ruled that the above-referenced proposal would not have a substantial adverse environmental effect, and pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 16-50k, would not require a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need with the following conditions:

1. Approval of any project changes be delegated to Council staff;
2. Unless otherwise approved by the Council, if the facility authorized herein is not fully constructed within three years from the date of the mailing of the Council's decision, this decision shall be void, and the facility owner/operator shall dismantle the facility and remove all associated equipment or reapply for any continued or new use to the Council before any such use is made. The time between the filing and resolution of any appeals of the Council's decision shall not be counted in calculating this deadline. Authority to monitor and modify this schedule, as necessary, is delegated to the Executive Director. The facility owner/operator shall provide written notice to the Executive Director of any schedule changes as soon as is practicable;
3. Any request for extension of the time period to fully construct the facility shall be filed with the Council not later than 60 days prior to the expiration date of this decision and shall be served on all parties and intervenors, if applicable, and the Town of Farmington;
4. Within 45 days after completion of construction, the Council shall be notified in writing that construction has been completed;
5. Any nonfunctioning antenna and associated antenna mounting equipment on this facility owned and operated by the Petitioner shall be removed within 60 days of the date the antenna ceased to function;

January 15, 2021

6. The facility owner/operator shall remit timely payments associated with annual assessments and invoices submitted by the Council for expenses attributable to the facility under Conn. Gen. Stat. §16-50v;
7. This Declaratory Ruling may be transferred, provided the facility owner/operator/transferor is current with payments to the Council for annual assessments and invoices under Conn. Gen. Stat. §16-50v and the transferee provides written confirmation that the transferee agrees to comply with the terms, limitations and conditions contained in the Declaratory Ruling, including timely payments to the Council for annual assessments and invoices under Conn. Gen. Stat. §16-50v; and
8. If the facility owner/operator is a wholly owned subsidiary of a corporation or other entity and is sold/transferred to another corporation or other entity, the Council shall be notified of such sale and/or transfer and of any change in contact information for the individual or representative responsible for management and operations of the facility within 30 days of the sale and/or transfer.

This decision is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Council and is not applicable to any other modification or construction. All work is to be implemented as specified in the petition dated September 30, 2020.

Enclosed for your information is a copy of the staff report on this project.

Sincerely,

s/ Melanie A. Bachman

Melanie A. Bachman
Executive Director

MAB/emr

Enclosure: Staff Report dated January 14, 2021

- c: The Honorable C. J. Thomas, Chairman, Town of Farmington (towncouncil@farmington-ct.org)
Kathleen Blonski, Town Manager, Town of Farmington (blonskik@farmington-ct.org)
Shannon Rutherford, Acting Town Planner, Town of Farmington (rutherfordds@farmington-ct.org)



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Petition No. 1434
Eversource – Telecommunications Facility
29 Old Mountain Road, Farmington

Staff Report
January 14, 2021

On September 30, 2020, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) received a petition (Petition) from The Connecticut Light and Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy (Eversource) for a declaratory ruling pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed installation of a new steel pole with appurtenances at its Old Mountain Road Substation at 29 Old Mountain Road in Farmington, Connecticut.

On September 30, 2020, Eversource provided notice of the proposed project to the Town of Farmington (Town), state and local officials and agencies, and abutting property owners.

On September 30, 2020, the Council sent correspondence to the Town stating that the Council has received the Petition and invited the Town to contact the Council with any questions or comments by October 30, 2020. No comments from the Town were received.

Eversource is currently in the process of reconfiguring its communications system throughout the state that will allow an upgrade from the current analog voice radio communications system, which is obsolete, to a digital voice communications system. The new system would allow voice communications under all operating conditions including emergency and storm restoration activities as well as the remote control of distribution safety equipment.

Eversource owns the 3.65-acre property that is currently the location of the Old Mountain Road Substation. The substation consists of a gravel-based fenced compound containing electric substation equipment and a control house. Old Mountain Road hosts both residential and commercial properties.

Eversource proposes the installation of a new 63-foot steel pole with a 24-foot, 217 MHz omni-directional whip antenna on the top that would extend to a height of 85 feet above ground level (agl). The new pole would be installed within a new approximately 34.5-foot by 20-foot fenced compound adjacent to the existing substation on the substation property. Associated radio equipment and electrical power supply connections would be installed within the existing substation control house building.

The nearest wetland is located approximately 110 feet southwest of the proposed construction activities within an existing electric transmission line right-of-way. Erosion and sedimentation controls would be installed in accordance with the *2002 Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control* (E&S controls) for the protection of the wetland during construction.

All proposed construction activities would occur within the existing maintained lawn area adjacent to the existing substation and within the existing substation access drive. No adverse impact to wildlife or vegetation is expected to occur. The nearest Important Bird Area is Farmington High Chimney in Farmington located approximately 3.2 miles west of the project location. The proposed structure would

comply with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service guidelines for minimizing potential impacts to bird species.

The nearest Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)-Natural Diversity Database buffered area is approximately 675 feet east of the proposed facility. Eversource consulted with DEEP and confirmed that no known populations of Federal or State Endangered, Threatened or Special Concern Species occur on site.

The northern long-eared bat (NLEB) is a State of Connecticut-listed endangered and federally-listed threatened species. The NLEB's range encompasses the entire state. There are no known occupied maternity roost trees within 150 feet of the site, and there is no known NLEB hibernaculum within 0.25 mile of the site. Additionally, installation of the proposed facility would not require the removal of any trees.

The proposed facility is not expected to have a significant visual impact to the surrounding area. The existing substation is screened from Old Mountain Road by mixed deciduous trees. Several wooden utility poles and electric transmission towers exist south of the existing access drive. The nearest residential property is approximately 345 feet west of the proposed steel pole.

The nearest publicly-accessible recreational areas are Batterson Park, located approximately 0.18 mile southeast, and Town of Farmington Open Space, located approximately 0.20 mile east of the site. Views of the proposed facility from either publicly-accessible recreational area is not anticipated.

No historic properties previously deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places were identified within approximately 0.5 mile of the site.

The proposed structure would not require registration with the Federal Aviation Administration.

The facility would be located in a Federal Emergency Management Agency-designated Zone X, an area of minimal flood hazard.

A Professional Engineer duly licensed in the State of Connecticut has certified that the structure will be structurally adequate to support the proposed loading. The maximum cumulative worst-case power density would be 2.5 percent of the applicable limit with a -10 dB off-beam adjustment.

The nearest daycare is located approximately 0.49 miles southeast of the proposed facility. The nearest school (UCONN School of Medicine) is located .75 miles south of the proposed facility.

No noise would be associated with the proposed facility. Equipment would be housed within the existing substation control house building; therefore, noise levels are expected to be consistent with present day levels.

If approved, construction would begin as soon as possible and take approximately three weeks. Construction is expected to be completed in 2021.

If approved, staff recommends the following condition:

1. Approval of any project changes be delegated to Council staff.



Figure 1. Site location.



Figure 2. View of existing location.



PROPOSED

Figure 3. Proposed facility