



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

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**VIA ELECTRONI MAIL**

November 17, 2022

Brandon Robertson  
Town Manager  
Town of Avon  
60 West Main Street  
Avon, CT 06001-3719  
[brobertson@avonct.gov](mailto:brobertson@avonct.gov)

RE: **PETITION NO. 1547** – SBA Communications Corporation petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed replacement and extension of an existing telecommunications facility located at 277 Huckleberry Hill Road, Avon, Connecticut.

Dear Brandon Robertson:

The Connecticut Siting Council (Council) is in receipt of the Town of Avon's correspondence dated November 16, 2022 concerning the above-referenced petition. Thank you for taking the time to provide the Council with the comments.

This petition will be placed on a future Council meeting agenda for discussion and decision. Please note that you can view all of the documents related to this petition on our website at [portal.ct.gov/csc](http://portal.ct.gov/csc) under the "Pending Matters" link. You may also keep apprised of Council events on the website calendar and agenda.

Before reaching a final decision on any petition, the Council carefully considers all of the facts contained in the record that is developed by the Council, the petitioner, parties and intervenors to the petition, and all of the concerns received from members of the public who submit written statements to the Council.

Copies of your correspondence will be distributed to the service list for the petition.

Thank you for your interest and concern in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Melanie A. Bachman  
Executive Director

MAB/laf

c: Service List, dated November 9, 2022  
Council Members



# Town of Avon

60 West Main Street  
Avon, Connecticut 06001-3719  
(860) 409-4300 • [www.avonct.gov](http://www.avonct.gov)

November 16, 2022

Melanie Bachman, Executive Director  
Connecticut Siting Council  
10 Franklin Square  
New Britain, CT 06051

**RE: Petition No. 1547 – SBA Communications Corporation petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 4-176 and 16-50k, for the proposed replacement and extension of an existing telecommunications facility located at 277 Huckleberry Hill Road, Avon, Connecticut.**

Dear Ms. Bachman:

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the above referenced docket. The background and need for this project are described in the Petition. Briefly, the Town of Avon's existing public safety communications system is a conventional analog system operated in the Ultra High Frequency (UHF) band. The current system has reached the end of its useful life and experiences significant coverage gaps, and lacks the functionality, features, and security of a modern public safety grade communications network.

In 2016, following an assessment of the current system and the needs of stakeholders, an independent third-party consultant recommended the installation of a Project 25 (P 25) Phase 2 compliant simulcast trunked radio system to address these issues. Funding for this system was approved at a town wide referendum vote in December 2018.

The design for the Town's new system requires three tower sites in order to meet the Town's public safety coverage objectives: (1) the State's Connecticut Land Mobile Radio Network (CLMRN) Troop H site on Talcott Mountain, (2) a site owned by Connecticut Water on Ridgewood Road and (3) the Huckleberry Hill tower site that is the subject of this Petition. The existing tower structure at Huckleberry Hill does not have the space available to co-locate the Town's equipment at a height that would provide the Service Area Reliability and Delivered Audio Quality that the Town's public safety needs require. Under this proposal, the existing 100' pole would be replaced by a new pole of 130' and related antennas would be installed that would bring the overall structure to no more than 150'. This modification is needed so the Town can achieve its public safety communications objectives.

The Town has a lease with SBA for this site. In September 2020, the Town and SBA began negotiations to amend the existing lease for the Huckleberry Hill property to permit the construction of the new tower. By late summer 2021 a tentative agreement had been reached.

The Town subsequently engaged in a significant public information effort that included written notice to all property owners within 500 feet of the property; a public information meeting held in August 2021 to review and discuss the project; preparation of three Question & Answer documents in response to questions raised by the public; and a meeting between Town staff and a consultant retained by the neighbors to discuss alternatives

to the proposal. All of these efforts are further detailed on page 5 of the Petition filed by SBA and copies of the written materials developed in support of the Town's informational effort are included as Attachments.

Additionally, though the amendment was a change to an existing lease agreement that did not materially change the stated use of the property, the Town Council determined that it would hold a public hearing process to solicit public comment prior to taking any action on the lease amendment. A timeline detailing the Town's five month long hearing process is included on page 6 of the Petition.

The Town has worked diligently to consider other alternatives and has determined that a new pole at this location is the most effective way to achieve our objectives. Furthermore, as an existing site, the location satisfies C.G.S. 16-50 aa (a) which provides: "The General Assembly finds that the sharing of towers for fair consideration whenever technically, legally, environmentally and economically feasible, and whenever such sharing meets its public safety concerns, will avoid the unnecessary proliferation of towers and is in the public interest."

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Town's support for this Petition. Please contact me at (860) 409-4300 or [brobertson@avonct.gov](mailto:brobertson@avonct.gov) with any questions.

Sincerely,



Brandon Robertson  
Town Manager

BR/jw

Cc: Town Council  
Bruce Appell, Fire Chief, Avon Volunteer Fire Department and Emergency Management  
Director/Fire Marshal, Town of Avon  
Paul Melanson, Chief of Police