

Petition No. 1414
Eversource - Tower Replacement
112 Prospect Hill Road, East Windsor

Draft Staff Report
August 21, 2020

On June 17, 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 replacement of an existing wall-mounted pipe mast and associated radio communications equipment located at its East Windsor Area Work Center located at 112 Prospect Hill Road in East Windsor, Connecticut.

On July 16, 2010, the Council issued a declaratory ruling in Petition No. 952 to The Connecticut Light and Power Company for the installation of a 25.5 foot wall-mounted steel pipe-mast attached to the wall of the work center building. The bottom of the existing pipe-mast is approximately 10 feet above ground level (agl) with the top of the existing pipe-mast extending to a height of 35.5 feet agl.

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system throughout the state that will allow an upgrade from the current analog voice radio communications system, which is obsolete, to a digital voice communications system.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.

The Eversource work center is an approximately 19-foot building located on an approximately 13.5 acre parcel owned by Eversource. Eversource proposes to replace the existing wall-mounted pipe mast with a new pipe mast to support an additional 24-foot 3-inch omnidirectional antenna. The two existing antennas would be relocated to the replacement pipe-mast. The top of the replacement pipe-mast would extend to a height of 34 feet agl. The proposed antenna would extend to a height of 52 feet agl.

All cabling would follow the same route as the existing cabling. All equipment would be located within the work center building.

The proposed structure would be located entirely on the façade of the existing building with no ground disturbance anticipated. No wetlands or watercourses are located near the proposed work. The nearest wetland is approximately 385 feet southeast of the proposed construction activities.

The proposed project is not expected to have an adverse effect on wildlife or vegetation. The nearest Important Bird Area is Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks, which is 3.5 miles west of the site. The nearest Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Natural Diversity Database buffer area is approximately 0.4 mile to the north. 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 on the surrounding area. The work center building is screened from Prospect Hill Road by mixed deciduous trees. Views from the commercial areas near Prospect Hill Road and Route 140 are not expected to change significantly due to the slim profile of the omnidirectional antenna proposed. See Figures 2 and 3, attached.

A Professional Engineer duly licensed in the State of Connecticut has certified that the proposed replacement structure would be structurally adequate to support the proposed loading. The maximum cumulative worst-case power density would be 14.3 percent of the applicable limit.

No new access would be necessary because the site is paved and has existing access already. Radio equipment and electric power supply connections would be inside the existing work center building.

No commercial child day care facilities are located within one mile of the proposed facility. The nearest school is Lincoln Technical Institute, which is located approximately 0.39 mile southeast of the site. No historic properties listed or deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places were identified within a half mile radius. The nearest property listed on the National Register of Historic Places is St. John's Episcopal Church located 0.65 mile west of the facility.

The design of the pipe-mast would comply with the United States Fish and Wildlife Guidelines for Minimizing Impacts to Migratory Birds. The proposed facility requires registration with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The FAA determined the facility would present no hazard to air navigation as long as FAA Form 7460-2 is submitted to the FAA within five days after construction reaches its greatest height.

No noise would be emitted beyond the site boundaries. All equipment would be located within the building; therefore, noise emissions would be consistent with current levels.

Notice was provided to the Town of East Windsor, government officials and abutting property owners on or about June 12, 2020. No comments have been received.




If approved, construction would begin as soon as possible and would take approximately two weeks. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2020.

If approved, staff recommends the following condition:

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



Legend

-  Proposed Wall Mounted Antenna and Replacement Pipe Mast
-  Subject Property
-  Approximate Parcel Boundary



**Figure 2
Site Schematic**

Proposed Communications Facility
East Windsor AWC
112 Prospect Hill Road
East Windsor, CT

Figure 1. Site location.



Figure 2. Existing facility



Figure 3. Proposed facility