

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

**DRAFT Staff Report**  
**December 29, 2020**

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throughout the state that will allow an upgrade from the current analog voice radio communications system, which is obsolete, to a digital voice communications system.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