

DRAFT

Petition No. 1097A New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC 174 South Grand Street, Suffield

**Staff Report
April 30, 2021**

Introduction

On May 15, 2014, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) issued a declaratory ruling pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) §4-176 and §16-50k, approving a proposal from New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T) for the proposed modifications to an existing wireless telecommunications facility at 174 South Grand Street, Suffield (Declaratory Ruling). AT&T proposed to install a 15-foot extension on an existing 119-foot monopole. Antennas were to be installed at a centerline height of 130 feet above ground level (agl) and the tower would have extended to a height of 135 feet agl. Associated equipment including a backup diesel generator would have been installed within the existing fenced equipment compound.

The Council did not impose a construction deadline in its May 15, 2014 Declaratory Ruling. AT&T did not complete installation of the approved wireless telecommunications facility.

On February 16, 2021, the Council received a petition from AT&T to amend its Declaratory Ruling pursuant to CGS §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed modifications to its approved installation of a wireless telecommunications facility located at 174 South Grand Street, Suffield, Connecticut (Petition).

AT&T's proposed modification consists of extending the existing 119-foot monopole by 20 feet, installing platform mounted antennas on the extended tower at a centerline height of 135 feet above ground level (agl), and installing ground equipment within the existing equipment compound.

Notice was provided to the Town of Suffield (Town) and abutting property owners on February 16, 2021. Notice was provided to the property owner on February 23, 2021.

On February 23, 2021, the Council sent correspondence to the Town stating that the Council has received the request to amend a declaratory ruling to modify the existing telecommunications facility and invited the municipality to contact the Council with any questions or comments by March 18, 2021. No comments have been received to date.

The Council submitted interrogatories to AT&T on March 18, 2021. AT&T submitted responses to the interrogatories on April 5, 2021.

Jurisdiction

Pursuant to CGS §16-50x, the Council has exclusive jurisdiction over telecommunications facilities throughout the state.

In February 2012, Congress adopted the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act (referred to as the Spectrum Act) to advance wireless broadband service for both public safety and commercial users. The Act established the First Responder Network (FirstNet) Authority to oversee the construction and operation of a nationwide public safety wireless broadband network. The Act contributes to the twin goals of commercial and

public safety wireless broadband deployment through several measures that promote rapid deployment of the network facilities needed for the provision of broadband wireless services.

In October 2014, the FCC issued an order under the Spectrum Act for streamlined siting of certain wireless facilities referred to as “eligible facilities requests” (EFR). An EFR is defined as: 1) collocation of new transmission equipment; 2) removal of transmission equipment; or 3) replacement of transmission equipment. The FCC order requires a state or local government to approve an EFR.

Existing Facility

The existing 119-foot monopole was approved by the Council on December 10, 2010 in Docket 403. It is located on a 17.6 acre residential parcel owned by Robert G. and Darian P. Paganelli. The site property is located in a low density residential area and is accessed from South Grand Street. The tower was constructed and the facility commenced operation in March 2014. The facility was designed to support a 20-foot extension.

Currently, Verizon Wireless maintains a wireless facility on the existing tower with platform mounted antennas located at a centerline height of approximately 119 feet agl and an equipment shelter within the fenced equipment compound.

Proposed Extension

AT&T proposes to install a 20-foot extension on the existing tower which will bring the overall height of the tower to 139 feet agl. AT&T would install 6 panel antennas; twelve 12 remote radio head units and 2 surge arrestors on a platform mount at a centerline height of 135 feet agl. The antennas would support its commercial LTE network, 5G services and the FirstNet National Public Safety Broadband Network.

AT&T would install a walk-in equipment cabinet shelter on a new 8.5-foot by 8.5-foot concrete pad within the existing fenced compound. AT&T’s ground equipment would be located within a 12-foot by 20.6-foot lease area within the existing compound. No expansion of the compound is necessary or proposed.

A 20-kilowatt diesel-fueled generator unit would be installed on a 4-foot by 6-foot concrete pad within the compound. It could run for 51 hours before refueling is required, assuming full network loading.

Commercial Mobile Radio Service (CMRS) providers are licensed by and are under the jurisdiction and authority of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). At present, no standards for backup power for CMRS providers have been promulgated by the FCC. Every year since 2006, AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon have certified their compliance with the CTIA Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Program and the Communications Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council standards and best practices to ensure network reliability during power outages.

Environmental

No ground disturbance is required for the proposed tower extension.

The tower extension would increase year-round visibility to the surrounding area by 27 acres, from 20 acres to 47 acres, primarily from open field areas within 0.5 mile of the site. Seasonal visibility (leaf-off conditions) would increase by approximately 60 acres, from 100 acres to 160 acres. Overall, the total predicted seasonal and year-round visibility of the extended tower is estimated to occur from \pm 207 acres, or approximately 2.59 percent of the area within two miles of the facility (8,042-acre Visibility Study Area).

Public Safety

The proposed tower extension would not require notice to the Federal Aviation Administration.

The emergency generator unit includes a double walled fuel tank and a tank rupture alarm.

The Project would be constructed in accordance with the 2017 National Electric Code, 2018 Connecticut State Building Code and the American National Standards Institute “Structural Standards for Steel Antenna Towers and Antenna Support Structures” Revision G.

A Professional Engineer duly licensed in the State of Connecticut has certified that the tower is structurally adequate to support the proposed loading.

Noise from the operation of the emergency backup generator is exempt from DEEP Noise Control Regulations §22a-69-1.8(f).

The calculated power density of AT&T’s proposed equipment and Cellco’s existing equipment would be 15.3 percent of the applicable limit using a -10 dB off-beam adjustment.

Construction Schedule

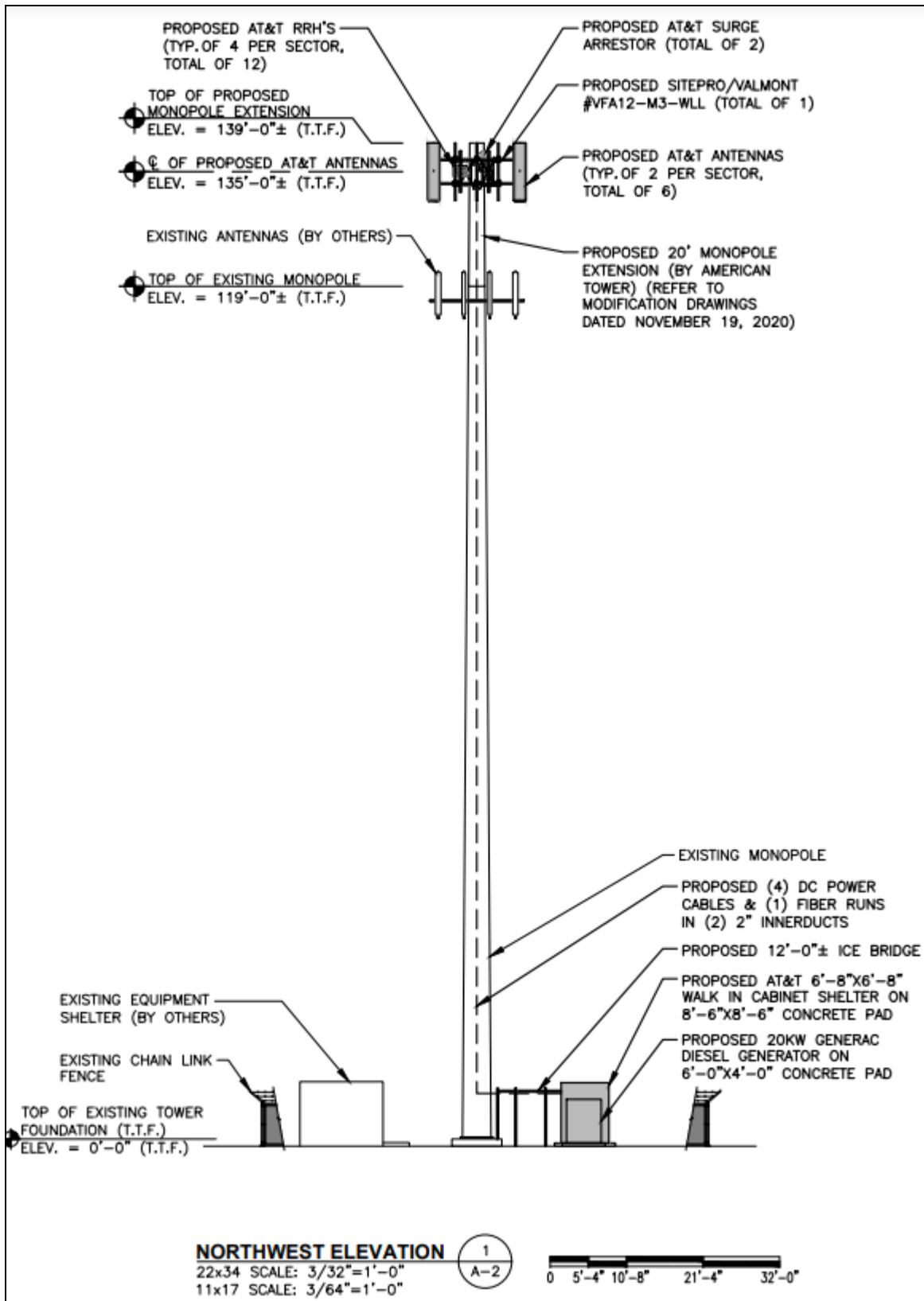
Construction is anticipated to commence on July 13, 2021 and would be completed on August 31, 2021. Construction hours would be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Conclusion

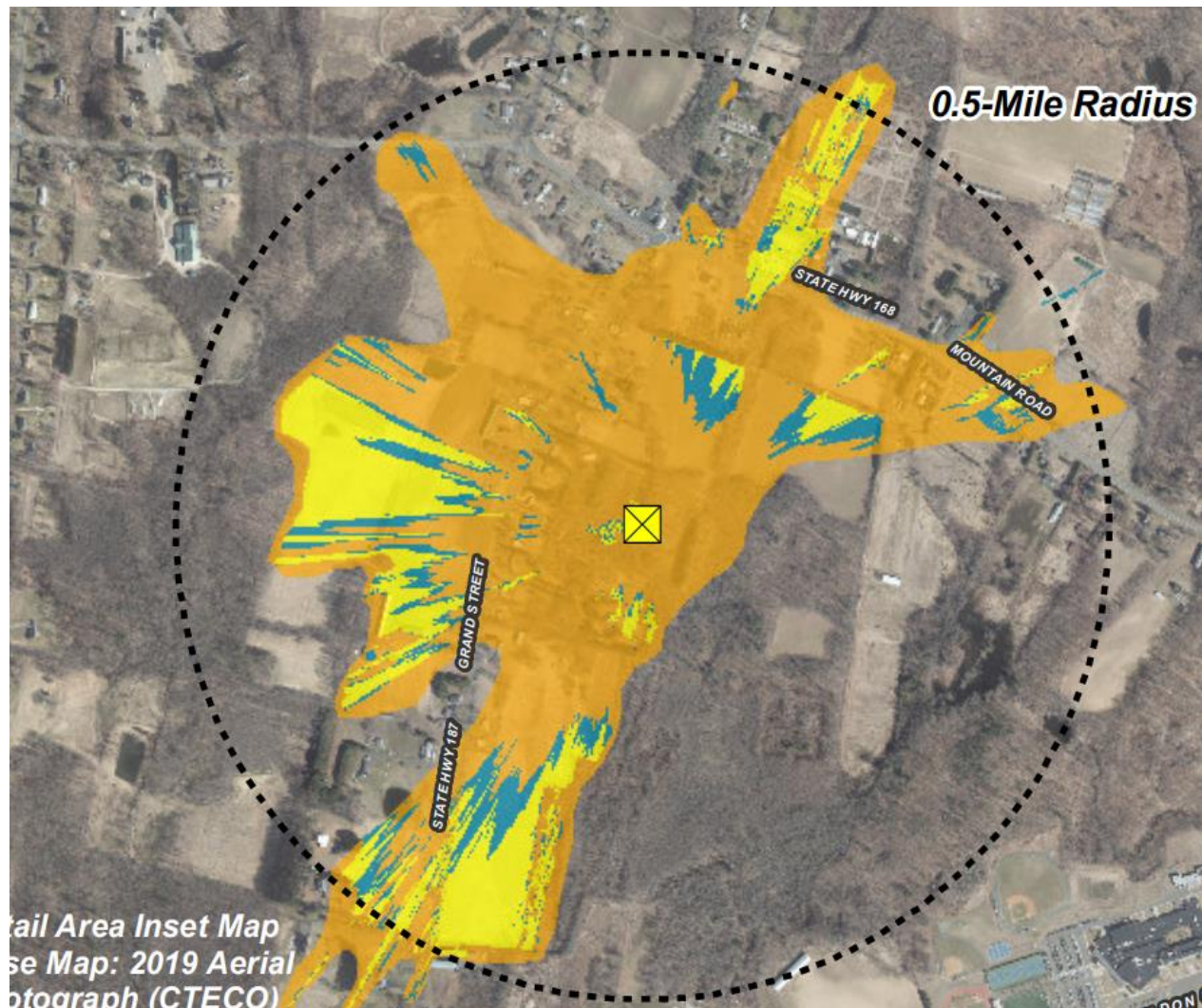
If approved, staff recommends the following condition:

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

Site Plan



Visibility within 0.5-Mile



Proposed Site



Year-Round Visibility 120' AGL And 139' AGL (47 Acres)



Year-Round Visibility 139' AGL (27 Additional Acres)



Areas of Potential Seasonal Visibility - 120' AGL and/or 139' AGL (160 Acres)