DRAFT

Petition No. 1618
T-Mobile Northeast LLC
Oil Mill Road
Waterford, Connecticut

Staff Report
June 14, 2024

Notice

On March 8, 2024, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) received a petition from T-Mobile Northeast, LLC (T-Mobile) for a declaratory ruling pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) §4-176 and §16-50k for the proposed extension and modification to an existing telecommunications facility and associated equipment on an Eversource-owned electric line transmission structure located on Oil Mill Road, Waterford, Connecticut (Petition or Project).

On February 27, 2024, T-Mobile provided notice of the proposed Project to the Town of Waterford (Town) and abutting property owners.[1] On March 11, 2024, the Council sent correspondence to the Town stating that the Council had received the Petition and invited the municipality to contact the Council with any questions or comments by April 7, 2024. No comments have been received to date.

Pursuant to CGS §4-176(e) of the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act, an administrative agency is required to take action on a petition for a declaratory ruling within 60 days of receipt. During a regular meeting held on April 25, 2024, pursuant to CGS §4- 176(e), the Council voted to set the date by which to render a decision on the Petition as no later than August 5, 2024, which is the 180-day statutory deadline for a final decision under CGS §4-176(i).

The Council issued interrogatories to T-Mobile on May 23, 2024. T-Mobile provided responses to the Council's interrogatories on May 28, 2024.

Existing Facility

The Council issued a Declaratory Ruling to T-Mobile USA, Inc., also known as T-Mobile, for this facility on June 13, 2011 in Petition No. 971. The Declaratory Ruling approved T-Mobile's installation of a 10-foot pipe mast extension on an 85-foot Eversource-owned electric transmission line monopole (Structure 6063B). The top of T-Mobile's antennas extend to 95 feet above ground level (agl).

The existing facility is located on a 22-acre host parcel located at 71 Oil Mill Road. The host parcel is zoned Rural Residential (RU120) and hosts a residence and a tree farm.

T-Mobile's ground equipment is located within an existing locked equipment cabinet approximately 50 feet from electric transmission structure 6063B.

[1] T-Mobile provided notice of the proposed Project to the underlying property owner on May 25, 2024.

Proposed Extension and Associated Equipment

T-Mobile proposes to replace the existing 10-foot pipe mast with a 14-foot pipe mast on the existing transmission tower which would bring the overall height to 99 feet agl. T-Mobile would install three antennas at a centerline height of 95 feet agl. The proposed antennas would be capable provide 5G services.

T-Mobile would remove existing tower mounted amplifiers and install three remote radio units on a new, extended Unistrut frame at ground level.

Cables are proposed to be run underground within a concrete duct bank from the electric transmission structure to the equipment.

No emergency backup power is proposed at this time.

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.

The estimated cost of the project is $150,000. Construction would take place during an Eversource Energy transmission line outage.

Public Health and Safety

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

The Project would be constructed in accordance with the current Connecticut State Building Code, Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) 222-H Structural Standards for Steel Antenna Towers and Antenna Supporting Structures, the National Electrical Code and the Connecticut State Fire Safety Code.

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

The calculated cumulative worst-case power density from the operation of T-Mobile's antennas would be 3.28% of the applicable exposure limit established by the Federal Communications Commission at ground level using a far field approximation.

Environmental Effects and Mitigation Measures

No tree clearing is required. No change to the ground equipment cabinets is proposed.

The four-foot height increase would have a minimal visual impact to the immediate surrounding area.

Conclusion

If approved, staff recommends the following conditions:

1) Approval of any project changes be delegated to Council staff;
2) RF access restriction and caution signage shall be installed at the site in compliance with FCC guidance; and

3) Deployment of any 5G services must comply with FCC and FAA guidance relative to air navigation, as applicable.

Figure 1 - Site Plan

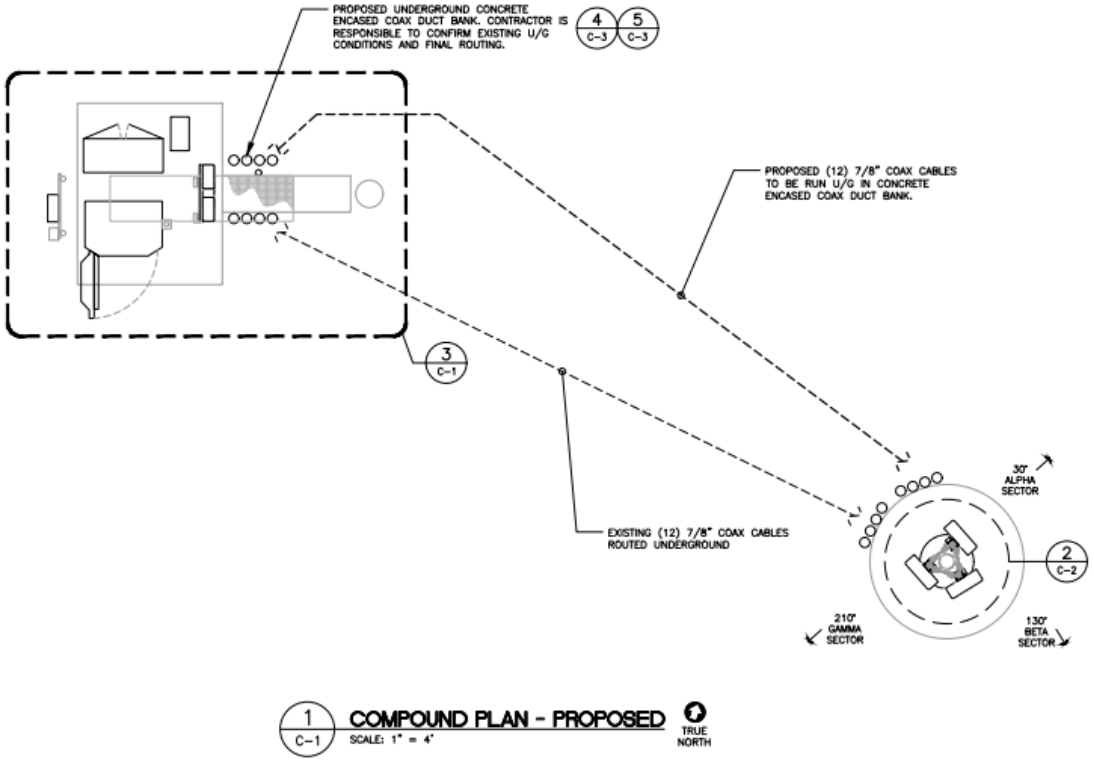

Figure 2 – Tower Elevation