

AN APPLICATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF : POWER FACILITY
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR A CER-
TIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATI- : EVALUATION COUNCIL
BILITY AND PUBLIC NEED FOR A MICRO-
WAVE TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITY IN
THE TOWN OF GLASTONBURY, CONNECTICUT. : APRIL 1, 1981

O P I N I O N

I. GENERAL

The Department of Environmental Protection has filed an application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the construction of a telecommunication tower on a state owned parcel of land east of Birch Mountain Road on John Tom Hill in Glastonbury. The proposed tower will be shared by the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Transportation, and the Capitol Region Council of Governments. The proposed tower will support six microwave and two UHF antennae.

A public hearing on the application was held at the Academy School 2143 Main Street, Glastonbury, Connecticut on February 11, 1981. Prior to the hearing, Council members and staff inspected the proposed site. Notice of the hearing was duly advertised and notice was mailed in accordance with law.

The applicant presented testimony to support the application. The applicant contends that the proposed tower construction will not have a significant adverse environmental impact.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL

The Council concludes that the proposed facility will not have a significant adverse environmental effect.

The proposed site is zoned as a rural residential area, and some of the Birch Mountain ridge line is classified as open space. The proposed use of this site is not inconsistent with these classifications. The proposed tower site is state owned property tentatively reserved as a tower location and is adjacent to an existing abandoned fire lookout tower which presently supports the Department of Environmental Protection's telecommunication equipment. There already exist twelve to thirteen other towers on John Tom Hill within approximately 1200 feet of the proposed site. Some of the existing towers are taller, wider, and more visible

than the proposed facility.

The proposed 120 foot free standing lattice tower will be visible from only a few locations in the surrounding area. Additionally, the Department of Environmental Protection can remove the existing abandoned fire tower when their equipment is transferred to the new tower. Thus, construction of the proposed facility and removal of the fire tower will not increase the number of towers on John Tom Hill.

The tower will be constructed in sections on three foundations; a small radio building is to be constructed at the base of the tower, and a short access road and a conduit for utility services will be established from Birch Mountain Road to the site. It is the Council's opinion that the construction activity will have no significant adverse environmental effects. The terrain is almost level, the affected area is small, and construction activity of this kind generally takes only a couple of weeks.

The Council continues its concern with possible health effects of electromagnetic radiation and finds that the addition of the proposed facility will not present a health hazard to the public. In this case, the transmitting antennae will be mounted 80 to 120 feet above ground, so the calculated power densities at ground level will be far below known and generally accepted standards. The application was prepared and reviewed by state agencies that share the Council's concern for the public's health, and both the Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Health Services have personnel qualified to review proposals for telecommunication facilities, involving non-ionizing radiation. The record does not suggest that the proposed facility will have any adverse health impacts. In addition, the facility will be surrounded by a chain link fence, the radio building will be locked and protected by an alarm, and there will be no climbing pegs on the tower legs.

The Council is very pleased that the four agencies reached an agreement to share the proposed tower. Such sharing will improve services the agencies provide to the public, reduce long run costs for each agency, and will reduce the number of towers necessary to provide similar service. The Council commends the

the Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Public Safety, the Department of Transportation, and the Capitol Region Council of Governments for their effort and cooperation.

None of the responding state agencies and no members of the public commented that this facility will have a significant adverse environmental effect. No objections to the proposed facility were filed with the Council, and no members of the public were present at the hearing.

III. CONCLUSION

The Council concludes that a telecommunication tower at the proposed site in Glastonbury will not have environmental effects which would justify selection of an alternate site or the denial of this application. The record does not suggest that there would be any adverse effect on, or conflicts with, the policy of the state concerning ecological balance, scenic and recreational values, air and water purity, forests and parks, or fish and wildlife. Constructing the facility in accordance with accepted construction and safety standards should adequately safeguard public health and safety.

The Council has not reviewed the need for this particular facility because under section 16-50i(a)(6) of the General Statutes of Connecticut, its initial determination is whether or not the facility has a substantial adverse environmental effect, and if it does not, a certificate should be granted without further inquiry.

Therefore, the Council concludes that a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need should be issued for the construction of the proposed telecommunication tower on the proposed site.