

ORIGINAL

DOCKET NO. 30

AN APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY CENTURY NORWICH CORPORATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED TO CONSTRUCT A COMMUNITY ANTENNA TELEVISION TOWER IN NORWICH, CONNECTICUT. : CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL : November 1, 1982

O P I N I O N

Century Norwich Corporation applied for a certificate of environmental compatibility and public need for the construction of a community antenna television tower on Plain Hill Road in Norwich, Connecticut. The tower is proposed to receive broadcast signals from 18 stations.

Following the issuance of due notice, Council members inspected the proposed site and held a public hearing on the application at City Hall in Norwich on September 13, 1982. The applicant presented testimony and exhibits to support its claim that the tower was necessary, that adverse environmental effects would be minimal, and that alternative sites and technologies were not available or appropriate. Several persons were made party to the proceeding and provided testimony on the matter.

The Council considered the potential adverse environmental effects of the proposed tower and concludes that they are not sufficient to deny the certificate. In reaching this determination, the Council recognized that the installation of a 300-foot tower, replacing one existing 80-foot and four existing 40-foot towers, will have substantial adverse visual effect. This effect will be accentuated by the Federal Aviation Administration painting and lighting requirements. Thus the tower will be visible, day and night, from residential areas, state highways, and local roads, while the existing towers have a relatively limited visual impact.

Other environmental concerns are of relatively minor impact: no

clearing or right-of-way acquisition are required; an access road and underground utility service to the site already exist; no wetlands or historic, scenic, or recreational areas are expected to be affected adversely; and no power density changes will occur at the receive-only facility. While the tower is designed to be capable of supporting microwave telecommunication equipment, none is proposed at this time, and the Council will require notification of any plans to add additional equipment to the tower.

Recognizing that the State Legislature and the Department of Public Utility Control have determined that a need exists for CATV service, the Council looked to the need for the proposed facility to meet those service requirements. The applicant states that the tower is necessary to receive signals from New York City TV stations which are in demand by its customers. In this regard, several parties supported the applicant. Further, the tower is expected to improve the quality of reception of all channels. The 300-foot height was chosen as the optimum; an additional 100 feet would be required for any incremental improvement. The applicant asserts that there are no practical alternative technologies or tower locations that could meet the company's requirements. Although the record does not indicate that an exhaustive analysis of alternative sites was conducted, the proposed site is already owned and developed as a head-end facility and is thus at least as appropriate as any other possible site.

It is apparent to the Council, therefore, that this facility is necessary to provide CATV service to the applicant's franchise area, and that the possible environmental effects are not sufficient to deny the application. Therefore, the Council will order that a certificate of

environmental compatibility and public need be issued to Century Norwich Corporation for the construction of a CATV tower as proposed.