

DOCKET NO. 90 - An application of SNET Cellular, Inc., for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for a cellular telephone antenna tower and associated equipment in the Town of Southbury, Connecticut.

: CONNECTICUT SITING
COUNCIL

: March 3, 1988

O P I N I O N

On November 13, 1987, SNET Cellular, Inc., (SNET) applied to the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) to establish a cellular telephone tower site in the Town of Southbury. The application included a proposed site and an alternative site.

The proposed Southbury site is a 100-foot by 100-foot parcel of land 1,300 feet south of Horse Fence Road. The proposed Southbury tower would be a 150-foot monopole, which would be a 167-foot structure including antennas.

There are eight homes within a 1,000-foot radius of the proposed site, which is within a wooded area. Access into the proposed site would be over an existing 1,300-foot roadway. A 350-foot extension of this roadway would be constructed to the leased parcel.

The alternative Southbury site is a 100-foot by 100-foot parcel of land 1,000 feet to the southwest of the proposed site. Due to a higher elevation, a 130-foot monopole would be constructed at the alternative site.

There are four homes within a 1,000-foot radius of the alternative site. Access to the alternative site would be via a new 15-foot wide roadway, 2,000 feet in length. This roadway would traverse a heavily wooded area, and would require the removal of a substantial number of mature trees. The entire 100-foot square parcel would have to be cleared of trees. A 400- to 500-foot section of the new access road would cross an area classified as an inland wetland.

Pursuant to repeated encouragement from the Council, SNET and its competitor, Metro Mobile CTS of New Haven, Inc. had proposed to construct a tower for joint use in Southbury, but objections by the Southbury Planning Commission caused the companies to withdraw their proposal. Consequently, SNET and Metro Mobile have developed their cellular systems on each side of Southbury, which now precludes the use of a shared Southbury tower.

The Council looks forward to receiving such joint use proposals in future applications, and encourages the respective companies to continue the search for such proposals with the cooperation of local authorities, making clear the Federal Communications Commission dual policy and engineering limitations which may force less desirable installations if such opportunities are lost.

Either of the sites included in this application would provide cellular service along Routes 6, 25, 34, 67, 172, 188, and I-84 in the towns of Southbury, Newtown, Oxford, Middlebury, Woodbury, Danbury, and Brookfield. The planned Southbury site would overlap cellular coverage with existing SNET cellular sites in Waterbury and Newtown.

Both of the sites included in this application would be visible from nearby portions of Route I-84, Route 172, Meadow Road, Main Street, Flood Bridge Road, and Horse Fence Hill Road. The similarity in the expected visibility of these towers places greater emphasis on the impact these sites would have on their immediate surroundings. The construction of the alternative site would result in a much greater clearing of trees and impact to inland wetlands for the access road. The alternative site would require the clearing of mature trees from the entire parcel, whereas the parcel at the proposed site would be in an open area not requiring much tree removal.

Additionally, the above-ground utility pole line planned for the alternative site would have a greater visual impact than the underground line which would be installed into the proposed site.

There are no known existing records of rare or endangered species occurring at either of these sites, nor would they have a significant effect on historic or archaeological resources listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Electromagnetic radio frequency power densities at these sites would be well below the current American National Standards Institute safety standards for the expected frequencies.

Based on its record in this proceeding, the council will deny the alternative Southbury site and issue a Certificate to SNET for the proposed Southbury tower site.

1043E