

Connecticut Siting Council



At a Glance

Vacant, Chairman

Melanie A. Bachman, Executive Director

Established - 1971

Statutory Authority - Chapter 54, Chapter 277a, Chapter 445

Central office - 10 Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

Number of Employees - 9

Recurring Operating Expenses - \$1,961,297.08

Organizational Structure - 9 per diem appointed members

Mission

The mission of the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) is to balance the public need for adequate and reliable public utility services at the lowest reasonable cost to consumers with the need to protect the environment and ecology of the state.

The Council is within the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) for administrative purposes only. It consists of 9 per diem appointed members - 5 members appointed by the Governor (including the Chairman), 1 member appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, 1 member appointed by the Speaker of the House, the Commissioner of DEEP and the Chairman of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA).

Statutory Responsibility

The Council operates under the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act (UAPA), Public Utility Environmental Standards Act (PUESA) and Sections of Title 22a of the Connecticut General Statutes relating to the siting of hazardous waste facilities. It has jurisdiction over the construction, maintenance and operation of electric transmission lines, fuel transmission lines, electric generating and storage facilities, electric substations and switchyards, community antenna television towers and head-end structures, telecommunications towers and siting hazardous waste facilities.

Telecommunications matters are also regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Telecommunications Act of 1996. Energy matters are also regulated by the electric reliability criteria, standards and procedures developed by the North American Electric

Reliability Council, the Northeast Power Coordinating Council and the Independent System Operator of New England.

Operating under the UAPA and the PUESA ensures that applicants, participants and the public are afforded due process in public proceedings held on applications for Certificates of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificates) and Petitions for Declaratory Rulings relative to proposed jurisdictional facilities and modifications to existing jurisdictional facilities.

Applicants, participants and the public benefit from the standardization and transparency of the review processes, as well as the centralization and availability of information regarding matters pending before the Council. The reports, databases, and related information compiled and published by the Council provide interested persons with access to documented material, including, but not limited to, electric and magnetic fields, costs and life expectancies of transmission lines, forecasted statewide electric supply and demand, telecommunications coverage, and antenna locations within the state of Connecticut.

Public Service

To provide open and transparent information to the public and stakeholders relative to its jurisdiction, the Council continues to expand the content of its website: <http://www.ct.gov/csc>. It maintains databases for telecommunications towers and energy facilities. In addition, agency publications, standard administrative documents and agency forms and procedures are available to review or download from the website.

The agency continually measures the efficiency and effectiveness of its methods through public statements, memoranda of law and informal comments received from its own staff, other state agencies, regional organizations, environmental groups and the public at large. The Council refines its service through recommendations provided by the State Auditors of Public Accounts and legislative committees, as well as through recommendations and suggestions from members of the public regarding content and presentation of information on the website. In addition, the Council reviews and compares different processes and procedures employed by other state agencies throughout the country.

Improvements/Achievements for Fiscal Year 2018-2019

In Fiscal Year 2018-2019, the Council held 12 public hearings to develop substantial evidentiary records and hear public concerns regarding proposed facilities. The Council held 17 energy and telecommunications meetings to render decisions on jurisdictional matters.

Also during Fiscal Year 2018-2019, the Council issued:

- 1 Certificate for a telecommunications facility
- 1 Certificate for an electric substation facility
- 1 Certificate for a natural gas-fired electric generating facility
- 8 Declaratory Rulings for solar photovoltaic electric generating facilities
- 7 Declaratory Rulings for fuel cell electric generating facilities
- 7 Declaratory Rulings for modifications to existing energy facilities
- 13 Declaratory Rulings for modifications to existing telecommunications facilities
- 11 approvals for Development and Management Plans
- 576 approvals for modifications of existing telecommunications facilities
- 12 approvals for modifications of existing energy facilities
- 20 approvals for requests for tower sharing at existing telecommunications facilities
- 6 approvals for FCC Eligible Facilities Requests at existing telecommunications facilities
- 24 approvals for National Electric Safety Code-compliant improvements of existing electric transmission line facilities

The Council posts the complete record of every application for a certificate, petition for a declaratory ruling and tower share request on its website. During fiscal year 2015/16, the Council began posting all past and present modifications of existing energy and telecommunications facilities requests and decisions on the website to further increase efficiency and effectiveness for all interested parties, reduce costs and provide convenient remote access to information.

The Council continuously researches and reviews the latest technological advancements throughout the energy and telecommunications industries it regulates in order to assure the welfare and protection of the citizens of the state. The Council also seeks new opportunities to educate itself and its staff in such advancements and developments so as to anticipate, address and balance the ever-changing needs and demands of the energy and telecommunications industries and the public.

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

All certification proceedings include public hearings held in the host municipality for the convenience of the public. The Council invites full participation by members of the public, state and local representatives, non-profit groups, environmental protection groups, and parties and intervenors to the proceedings, to ensure all interested persons have notice and an opportunity to be heard.

height of all telecommunications towers and antennas in the state. This database is posted on the Council's website, updated on a monthly basis and accessible to the public.

Pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. Sec.16-50ee, the Council shall develop, and revise as necessary, a plan for statewide telecommunications coverage. The plan assesses population growth in the state and an analysis of existing and projected demands for telecommunications coverage. The Council originally drafted the Statewide Telecommunications Coverage Plan (Telecom Plan) in 2006 and annually reviews the Telecom Plan. The Telecom Plan was most recently revised in October 2018 and is available on the Council's website.

