

DOCKET NO. 124 - AN APPLICATION OF SNET
CELLULAR, INC., FOR A CERTIFICATE OF
ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED
FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION, AND MAINTENANCE
OF A CELLULAR TELEPHONE TOWER AND ASSOCIATED
EQUIPMENT IN THE TOWN OF LISBON, CONNECTICUT.

CONNECTICUT
SITING
COUNCIL
March 12, 1990

OPINION

On September 28, 1989, SNET Cellular, Inc., (SNET) applied to the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) to construct, operate, and maintain a cellular telephone antenna tower and associated equipment in the Town of Lisbon, Connecticut.

The public need for cellular telephone facilities has been determined by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The Council must therefore balance the need to develop the proposed site as a cellular telephone facility with the need to protect the environment and minimize damage to the State's historic and recreational values. The proposed Lisbon tower is designed to overlap with coverage from an existing cell site in the City of Norwich and future planned cell sites within the Windham Rural Service Area. The proposed Lisbon tower site would provide coverage to Connecticut routes 2, 12, 97, 138, 164, 201, and Interstate 395, within the Towns of Lisbon, Norwich, Sprague, Preston, and Griswold.

The proposed Lisbon tower site is off of Mell Road, 230 feet north of Interstate 395. The proposed site is zoned R-60, low density residential, and is presently used as a pasture for livestock grazing. There are no inland wetlands on or adjacent to the proposed site.

During its search for a tower site in the Lisbon area, SNET investigated several properties. Two properties with elevations higher than the proposed site were considered but rejected due to lengthy access roads and surrounding wetlands. Other properties on Mell Road and Route 12 were investigated but rejected because of their close proximity to residences.

SNET would construct a 180-foot monopole at the proposed site. Between four and six omnidirectional whip antennas, each 12 feet in length, and a 15-foot cellular message alert antenna would be attached to the top of the tower. The total height of the tower structure, including antennas attached to a four-foot support platform, would be 199 feet.

The proposed tower would be visible from where Mell Road passes over I-395, from the intersection of Route 169 and Mell Road, and from the intersection of Mell Road and Nygren Road through a nearby existing electric transmission line right-of-way.

To house its electronic equipment, SNET would construct a 12-foot by 26-foot equipment building near the base of the proposed tower. Both the tower and equipment building would be surrounded by an 8-foot chain link fence.

Electromagnetic radio frequency power densities are a concern to many residents living in the vicinity of any telecommunications tower. In the present case, however, the power density level at the base of the proposed tower would be well below the American National Standards Institute safety standards for the proposed frequencies.

SNET has developed plans for both a proposed access road and an alternative access road to the proposed site. With the proper specifications and mitigation measures, either access road could be developed without significant environmental effect. The choice and specifications of such a road would be finalized within a Development and Management Plan, which would be subject to Council approval.

There are no known existing populations of Connecticut species of special concern or federal endangered or threatened species occurring at the proposed site. The construction of the proposed tower would have no effect on historic, architectural, or archaeological resources listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Based on its record in this proceeding, the Council finds that the effects associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of a cellular tower and associated equipment building at the proposed Lisbon site, including effects on the natural environment; ecological integrity and balance; public health and safety; scenic, historic, and recreational values; forests and parks; air and water purity; and fish and wildlife are not significant either alone or cumulatively with other effects, are not in conflict with the State policies concerning such effects, and are not sufficient reason to deny the proposed site.

Therefore the Council will issue a Certificate for the construction of the proposed Lisbon tower site. The Council will require the Certificate Holder to submit a Development and Management Plan (D&M Plan) for approval to the Council prior to the commencement of any construction or clearing at the tower site. This D&M Plan shall include detailed plans for erosion and sediment control; access road specifications, choice, and location; and seeding, loaming, and landscaping around the tower site.