

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL**

IN RE:

APPLICATION OF OPTASITE TOWERS LLC  
AND OMNIPOINT COMMUNICATIONS, INC.  
FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED FOR  
THE CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND  
OPERATION OF A TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
FACILITY AT 1027 MIDDLE TURNPIKE EAST  
MANCHESTER, CONNECTICUT

DOCKET NO. 328

Date: APRIL 5, 2007

**PRE-FILED TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL KOPERWHATS**

Q1. Mr. Koperwhats, please state your name and position.

A. Michael Koperwhats and I am a planner working with Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. ("VHB"). VHB is located at 54 Tuttle Place in Middletown, Connecticut.

Q2. Please state your qualifications.

A. I have a masters degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Hunter College of the City University of New York. My background includes nearly eleven years of professional planning experience, including over seven years of experience of various telecommunications regulatory and support work. As such, I have assisted in the permitting of more than 300 wireless telecommunications facilities in New York and New England during the past seven years. My responsibilities include coordination and oversight of site screenings and environmental assessments to fulfill National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") requirements, visual impact analyses and regulatory permitting support.

Q3. Please describe your involvement in this matter.

A. VHB was responsible for preparing a Visual Resources Evaluation report for the proposed site at 1027 Middle Turnpike East, Manchester (the "Site"), which is located on property owned by Urban Realty Company and is currently undeveloped. The purpose of this Visual Resources Evaluation Report was to evaluate the potential visibility of the proposed telecommunications facility ("Facility") from the surrounding areas.

Q4. Please describe the process for conducting the Visual Resource Evaluation.

A. At the request of Optasite, VHB conducted the Visual Resource Evaluation (found at Exhibit J of the Application), which included the preparation of a computer-generated viewshed map and performing a crane test at the Site on June 18, 2006. The crane test consisted of raising a crane arm to the height of 130 feet at the Site. Once the crane arm was extended, VHB staff photographed the crane from numerous vantage points within a two-mile radius (the "Study Area") to determine the actual locations where the proposed tower will be visible. The location of each photograph was recorded using a hand-held GPS receiver and subsequently plotted on a USGS 7.5 Minute topographic quad map, utilizing ESRI's ArcView® Spatial Analyst software, to indicate their approximate distance and relative location to the proposed Facility.

Q5. How were the representative locations chosen?

A. Several photo locations were selected prior to the in-field evaluation, utilizing a preliminary version of the viewshed map to identify areas adjacent to public roads from where the proposed Facility might be visible. Other locations were identified based on in-field observations made during the time that the photographic documentation was being conducted, including areas along public roadways where the tower may be partially visible.

Q6. Please describe how you prepared the viewshed analysis for the Visual Resources Evaluation.

A. Using ERSI's ArcView® Spatial Analyst, a computer modeling tool, the areas from which the top of the tower is expected to be visible are calculated. This is based on information entered into the computer model, such as tower height, its ground elevation, existing vegetation and surrounding topography. Data incorporated in the model includes 7.5 minute digital elevation models ("DEMs") and a digital forest layer for the project area. The forested areas within the study area are overlaid on the DEMs and then a series of constraints are applied to the computer model to achieve a realistic estimate of where the tower will be visible from within the surrounding landscape.

Also included in the viewshed model is a data layer, obtained from the Connecticut State Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP"), which depicts various land and water resources such as state parks and forests, recreational facilities, dedicated open space and DEP boat launches.

Additionally, information is gathered from the Connecticut State Department of Transportation (“DOT”) and local officials to determine if there are any state or locally designated scenic or historic roadways.

Q7. Please describe the visibility of the proposed Facility.

A. Areas from which the proposed Facility will be at least partially visible year-round comprise only 30 acres or less than ½% of the entire study area, with much of that visibility occurring on the host property itself and the immediate vicinity thereof. The proposed Facility will be visible along portions of Middle Turnpike East, Route 6/Route 44 and Lake Street. The size of the host property and the existing mature vegetation on the site serve to minimize the visual effects of the proposed Facility. We estimate approximately 12 residences will have partial views of the proposed Facility.

In addition, the proposed Facility will be at least partially visible seasonally (during “leaf off” conditions) from an additional 50 acres and approximately an additional 9 residences.

Q8. Please describe any mitigation measures that have been taken by the Applicants that will reduce any potential visual impact of the proposed Facility.

A. The design of the proposed tower, a flush-mounted monopole painted brown, will allow the proposed Facility to blend into the surrounding vegetation and act to minimize the potential visual impact of the proposed Facility. In particular, this design will largely mitigate potential seasonal views of the proposed Facility.

Q9. Will the proposed Facility have any impact on any sensitive visual receptors such as scenic, historic or recreational sites or parks?

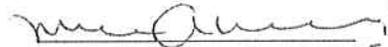
A. No, the proposed Facility will not impact any sensitive visual receptors.

There are no state or locally designated scenic roads within a 2-mile radius of the proposed Facility. Portions of the Shenipsit Trail, part of the Connecticut Blue Blaze System, are located within a 2-mile radius of the proposed Facility.

However, based upon our analysis, the proposed Facility will not be visible from any portion of this trail.

The statements above are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

04/05/07  
Date

  
Michael Koperwhats

Subscribed and sworn before me this 5 day of April, 2007.

By:   
Notary

My Commission expires 8-31-10