

Proposed Telecommunications Facility

100 Marsh Hill Road
Orange, Connecticut

Prepared for **The United Illuminating Company**
157 Church Street
New Haven, Connecticut

Prepared by **VHB/Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.**
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Middletown, CT 06457

June 2010

Visual Resource Evaluation

The United Illuminating Company (“UI”) seeks approval for the construction of a wireless telecommunications facility (“Facility”) to be located on a portion of a 35-acre, company-owned property at 100 Marsh Hill Road (“Host Property”) in the Town of Orange, Connecticut. The proposed Facility would be constructed in association with UI’s Operations Center and used to facilitate daily operations and internal communications with field crews and remote electric system devices that are responsible for operating and maintaining the electric transmission and distribution systems within UI’s service territory. This Visual Resource Evaluation was conducted to approximate the visibility of the proposed Facility within a two-mile radius of the Site (“Study Area”). Parts of the Towns of West Haven and Milford are located within the southern and eastern portions of the Study Area. Attachment A contains a map that depicts the location of the proposed Facility and the limits of the Study Area.

Project Introduction

The proposed Facility includes the construction of a 100-foot tall, self-supporting lattice tower designed to support various antennas with associated radio and operating equipment to be located within a 13-foot by 20-foot equipment shelter near the base of the tower. The only antennas on the tower would be used solely by UI for its VHF-Low Band mobile radio system, UHF Meter Services mobile radio system, Power Factor Correction control system, Convex wireless communication systems, and Distributor Reclosure control system. The proposed Facility would be located at approximately 91 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). Access to the proposed Facility would be restricted to UI personnel and gained via the Operations Center traffic circulation and parking areas located on the Host Property.

Site Description and Setting

The Host Property includes approximately 35 acres of land located within a Light Industrial District 2 as identified by the Orange Zoning Regulations. Currently vacant, the Host Property was previously occupied by the Showcase Cinema complex which was demolished in June 2009. The proposed Facility would be located in the service and maintenance area of the Operations Center, generally in the central portion of the Host Property. The western portion of the Host Property is protected by a Conservation Easement and is undeveloped woodlands and shrub/scrub wetlands, providing a forested buffer between future developed portions of the Host Property and residences to the west. Land uses within the general vicinity of the Host Property are mainly comprised of commercial and industrial businesses and highway/transportation corridors. Residential development adjoins the Host Property to the west, along the Indian River Road area. Segments of Interstate 95 (I-95), US Route 1, and State Routes 114, 153 and 162 traverse portions of the Study Area. In total, the Study Area contains roughly 173 linear miles of roadways.

The topography in the Study Area is generally characterized by gently rolling hills. Ground elevations within the Study Area range from approximately sea level at the shoreline to

approximately 215 feet AMSL. The tree cover within the Study Area consists mainly of mixed deciduous hardwood species. The tree canopy occupies approximately 3,443 acres of the 8,042-acre study area (43%). During the in-field activities associated with this analysis, an infra-red laser range finder was used to accurately determine the average tree canopy height throughout the Study Area. Numerous trees were selected for measurement and the average tree canopy established, in this case 50 feet. Lastly, the Study Area features approximately 316 acres of surface water that includes the Long Island Sound, Indian River, Indian Lake, Rose Mill Pond, and several smaller bodies of water.



METHODOLOGY

In order to better represent the visibility associated with the Facility, VHB has developed a two-fold approach utilizing both a predictive computer model and in-field analysis. The predictive model is employed to assess potential visibility throughout the entire Study Area, including private property and/or otherwise inaccessible areas for field verification. A balloon float and Study Area drive-through reconnaissance are also conducted to provide a height and locational representation, back checking of the computer model and photographic documentation from publicly accessible areas. Results of the balloon float are analyzed and incorporated into the final viewshed map. A description of the methodologies used in the analysis is provided below.

Visibility Analysis

Using ArcView® Spatial Analyst, a computer modeling tool produced by Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the areas from where the top of the Facility is expected to be visible are calculated. This is based on information entered into the computer model, including Facility height, its ground elevation, the surrounding topography and existing vegetation. Data incorporated into the predictive model includes a digital elevation model (DEM) and a digital forest layer for the Study Area. The DEM was derived from the Connecticut LiDAR-based digital elevation data. The LiDAR data was produced by the University of Connecticut Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR) in 2007 and has a horizontal resolution of 10 feet. In order to create the forest layer, digital aerial photographs of the Study Area are incorporated into the computer model. The mature trees and woodland areas depicted on the aerial photos are manually traced in ArcView® GIS and then converted into a geographic data layer. The aerial photographs were produced in 2006 and have a pixel resolution of one foot.

Once the data are entered, a series of constraints are applied to the computer model to achieve an estimate of where the Facility will be visible. Initially, only topography is used as a visual constraint; the tree canopy is omitted to evaluate all areas of potential visibility without any vegetative screening. Although this is an overly conservative prediction, the

initial omission of this layer provides a reference for comparison once the tree canopy is established and also assists in the evaluation of potential seasonal visibility of the proposed Facility. The average height of the tree canopy, in this case 50 feet, is determined in the field using a hand-held infra-red laser range finder. The forested areas within the Study Area were then overlaid on the DEM with a height of 50 feet added and the visibility calculated. The forested areas are then extracted from the areas of visibility, with the assumption that a person standing among the trees will not be able to view the Facility beyond a distance of approximately 500 feet. Depending on the density of the vegetation in these areas, it is assumed that some locations within this range will provide visibility of at least portions of the Facility based on where one is standing. Please note that this analysis did not take into account the presence of the Operations Center buildings that will be developed on the Host Property. This analysis was conducted as if the telecommunications facility were to be constructed on vacant land.

Also included on the map is a data layer, obtained from the Connecticut State Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP), which depicts various land and water resources such as state parks and forests, recreational facilities, dedicated open space and CTDEP boat launches and other categories. This layer is useful in identifying potential visual impacts to any sensitive receptors that may be located within the Study Area. Lastly, based on a review of available data published by the Connecticut Department of Transportation and discussions with municipal staff, it was determined that there are currently no state- or locally-designated scenic roadways within the Study Area.

The preliminary viewshed map (using topography only) was used during the in-field activity to compare the results of the computer model with observations of the balloon float and to assist in determining if significant land use changes have occurred since the aerial photographs used in this analysis were produced. Information obtained during the reconnaissance was then incorporated into the final visibility map.

Balloon Float and Study Area Reconnaissance

On April 13, 2010 Vanasse Hangen Brustlin Inc., (VHB) conducted a balloon float at the proposed Facility location to further evaluate the potential viewshed within the Study Area. The balloon float consisted of raising and maintaining an approximate four-foot diameter, helium-filled weather balloon at the proposed site location at a height of 100 feet. Once the balloon was secured, VHB staff conducted a drive-by reconnaissance along the roads located within the Study Area with an emphasis on nearby residential areas and other potential sensitive receptors in order to evaluate the results of the preliminary viewshed map and to document where the balloon was, and was not, visible above and/or through the tree canopy. During the balloon float, the temperature was approximately 65 degrees Fahrenheit with mostly calm winds and sunny skies.

Photographic Documentation

During the balloon float, VHB personnel drove the public road system within the Study Area to inventory those areas where the balloon was and was not visible. The balloon was photographed from several vantage points to document the actual view towards the proposed Facility. Several locations where the balloon was not visible are also included. The locations of the photo view points are described below:

1. Marsh Hill Road at entrance to Host Property.
2. Adjacent to #65 Marsh Hill Road.
3. Adjacent to #10 Salamme Road.
4. Marsh Hill Road at Frontage Road.
5. Across Marsh Hill Road.
6. Marsh Hill Road.
7. Morgan Lane on I-95 overpass.
8. Route 1 southwest of Orange Center Road.
9. Adjacent to #6 Ridge Hollow Road.
10. Toll Road at Island Lane.
11. Adjacent to #13 Perry Merrin Drive.
12. Adjacent to #6 Sunflower Circle.
13. Adjacent to #313 Benham Hill Road.
14. Old Tavern Road Recreational Area.
15. Adjacent to #200 Margaret Lane.
16. Adjacent to #266 Mallard Drive.
17. Adjacent to #535 Roses Mill Road.
18. Heron Drive at Indian River Road.
19. Adjacent to #322 Saybrook Road.
20. Racebrook Road (Route 114) at US Route 1.

Photographs of the balloon from the view points listed above were taken with a Nikon D-80 digital camera body and Nikon 50 mm zoom lens. "The lens that most closely approximates the view of the unaided human eye is known as the normal focal-length lens. For the 35 mm camera format, which gives a 24x36 mm image, the normal focal length is about 50 mm."¹

The locations of the photographic points are recorded in the field using a hand-held GPS receiver and are subsequently plotted on the maps contained in the attachments to this document.

¹ Warren, Bruce. *Photography*, West Publishing Company, Eagan, MN, c. 1993, (page 70).

Photographic Simulation

Photographic Simulations were generated for the 13 locations identified above where the balloon was visible during the in-field activities. The Photographic Simulations represent a scaled depiction of the proposed lattice tower from these locations. The height of the Facility is determined based on the location of the balloon in the photographs and a proportional lattice tower image is simulated into the photographs. The simulations are contained in Attachment A.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on this analysis, areas from where the proposed 100-foot lattice tower would be visible above the tree canopy year-round comprise approximately 48 acres. As depicted on the attached viewshed map (included as Attachment B), the majority of year-round visibility associated with the proposed Facility occurs on the Host Property and its immediate vicinity (generally within approximately 0.25 mile), primarily to the north and east along Marsh Hill Road. Since most of the residential development within the Study Area occurs at distances of 0.5 mile from the Site and beyond, the number of properties where potential views of the proposed Facility are anticipated is fairly minimal. The nearest residences to the west, located on Heron Road and Indian River Road, would not be affected visually by the proposed Facility (see photograph 18) because of the dense vegetation between the Site and these homes. In total, VHB estimates that at least partial views of the proposed Facility may be achieved from select portions of a total of approximately 10 residential properties within the Study Area. This includes two (2) residential properties located on Marsh Hill Road; one (1) property on Ridge Hollow Road; three (3) properties located on Island Lane; one property Salamme Road; and three (3) properties located on Sunflower Circle. In general, most of these views would be distant (approximately one mile from the proposed Facility) and feature only the upper portion of the proposed lattice tower. The exceptions would be select properties on Marsh Hill Road and Salamme Road, located approximately 0.25 mile to the southeast (see Photos #2 and #3). Overall, year round visibility is minimized by both the relatively low height of the proposed tower and the intervening topography and vegetative screening. No views are anticipated from Town Open Space properties, including the Old Tavern Road Recreation Area, or the Long Island Sound.

The viewshed map also depicts additional areas where seasonal (i.e. during "leaf off" conditions) views through the trees are anticipated. These areas comprise approximately 35 additional acres and are located generally south and east of the Site, including portions of the Host Property, Marsh Hill Road and I-95. Potential seasonal views from the areas depicted on the map would be largely obstructed by existing vegetation, even during "leaf-off" conditions. In total, VHB anticipates that approximately 3 additional residential properties could achieve seasonal views of the proposed Facility from select portions of their respective properties. These residences are located approximately 0.9 mile to the east on Ridge Hollow Road and 0.5 mile to the west along Margaret Lane.

As previously stated, this analysis did not include the approved development of UI's Operations Center that will occur on the Host Property. Any views of the proposed Facility will be further diminished by the presence of the planned buildings and infrastructure. Specifically, the Facility's compound/shelter and at least the lower thirty (30) feet of the tower will be obscured by the Operations Center's structures from all of those locations where potential visibility has been identified in this analysis.

Attachment A

Photolog Documentation Map, Project Area Photograph, Balloon Float Photographs and Photographic Simulations

Photographic Documentation

Proposed United Illuminating Facility

Marsh Hill Road
Orange, CT

SUBMITTED TO:

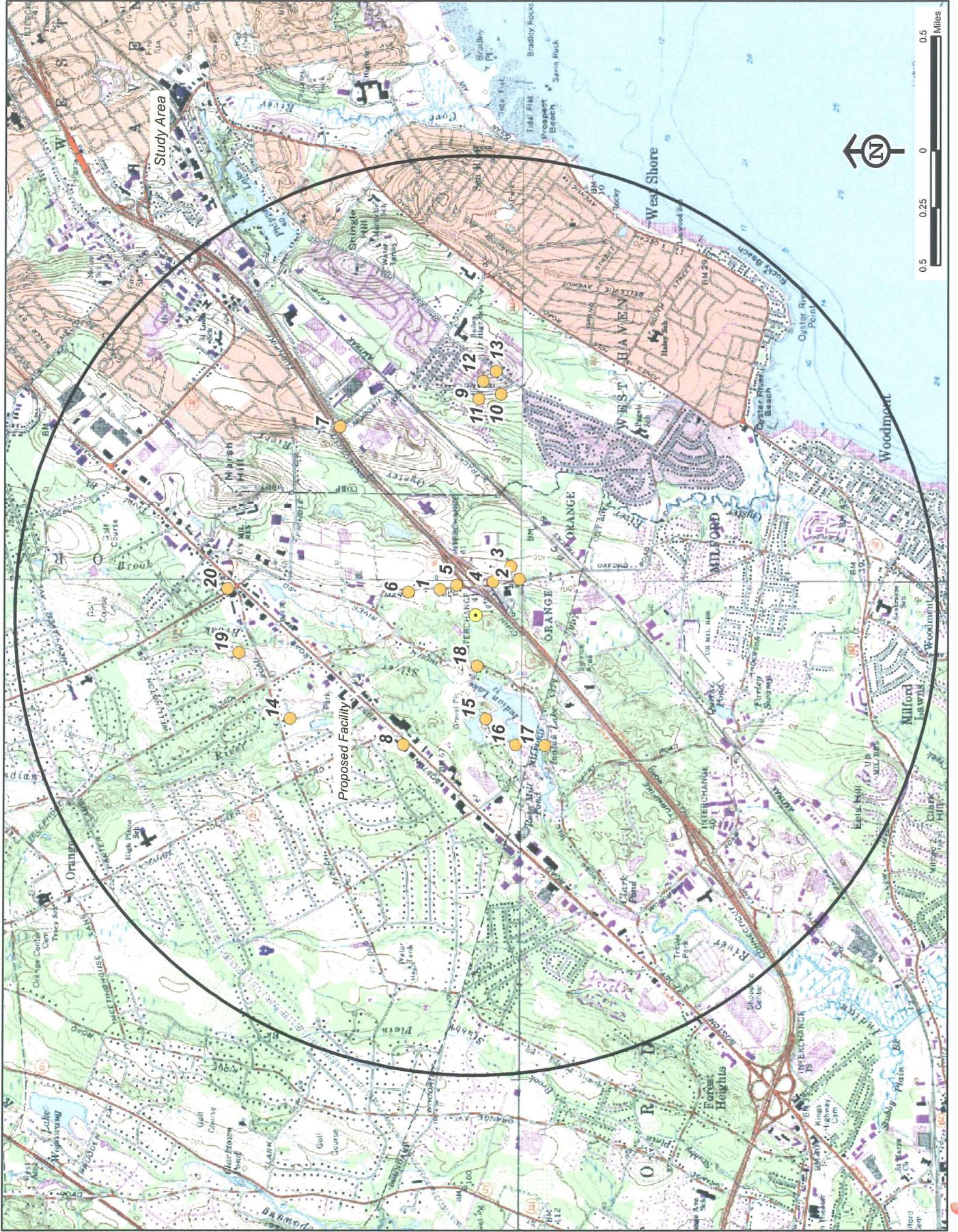


The United Illuminating Company

SUBMITTED BY:

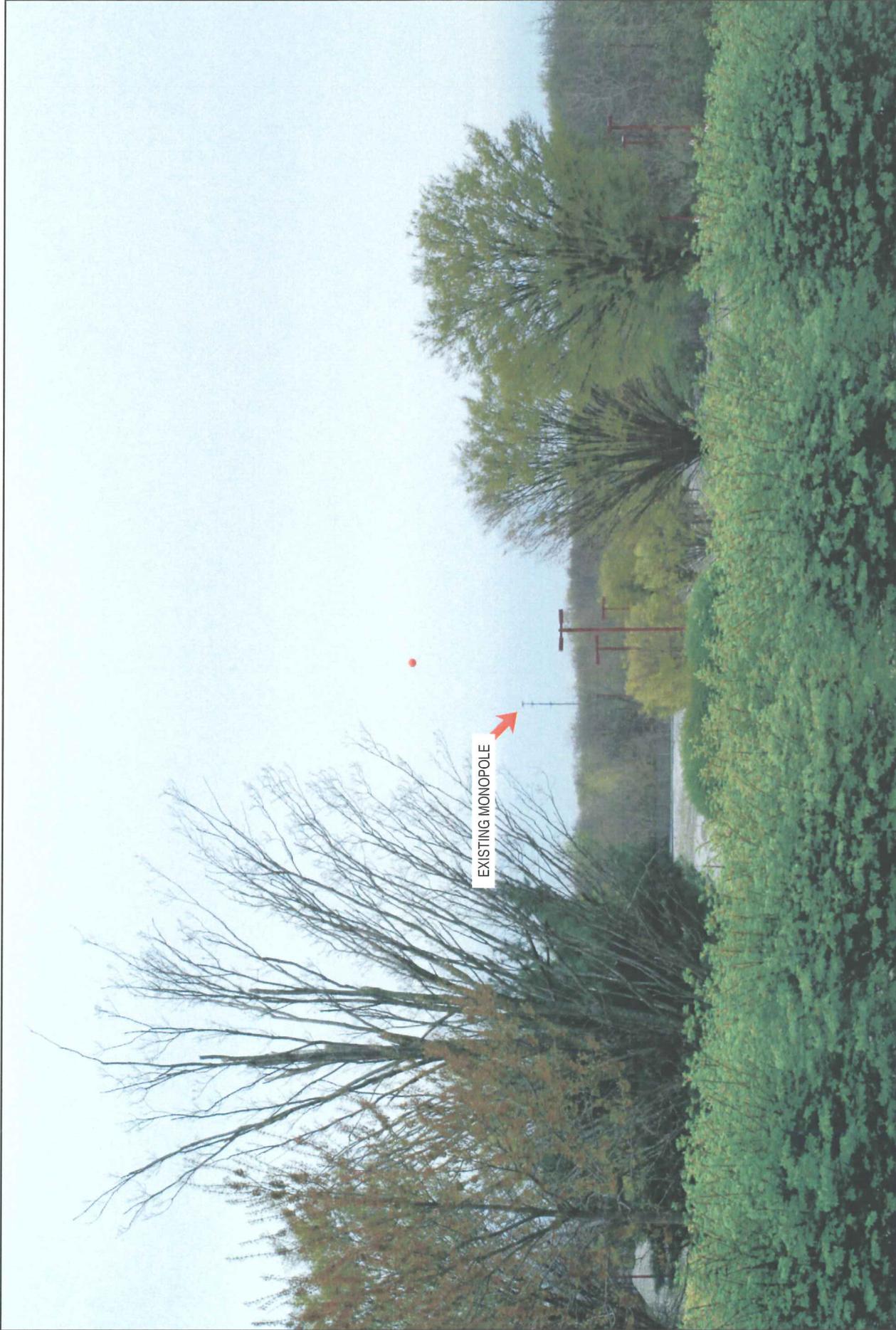


PHOTOLOG MAP



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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
1	MARSH HILL ROAD AT ENTRANCE TO HOST PROPERTY	SOUTHWEST	0.19 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
1	MARSH HILL ROAD AT ENTRANCE TO HOST PROPERTY	SOUTHWEST	0.19 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
2	ADJACENT TO #65 MARSH HILL ROAD	NORTHWEST	0.24 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
2	ADJACENT TO #65 MARSH HILL ROAD	NORTHWEST	0.24 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
3	ADJACENT TO #10 SALAMME ROAD	NORTHWEST	0.26 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
3	ADJACENT TO #10 SALAMME ROAD	NORTHWEST	0.26 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



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VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
4	MARSH HILL ROAD AT FRONTAGE ROAD	NORTHWEST	0.16 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
4	MARSH HILL ROAD AT FRONTAGE ROAD	NORTHWEST	0.16 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
5	ACROSS MARSH HILL ROAD	SOUTHWEST	0.15 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
5	ACROSS MARSH HILL ROAD	SOUTHWEST	0.15 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
6	MARSH HILL ROAD	SOUTHWEST	0.31 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
6	MARSH HILL ROAD	SOUTHWEST	0.31 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
7	MORGAN LANE I-95 OVERPASS	SOUTHWEST	1.02 MILES +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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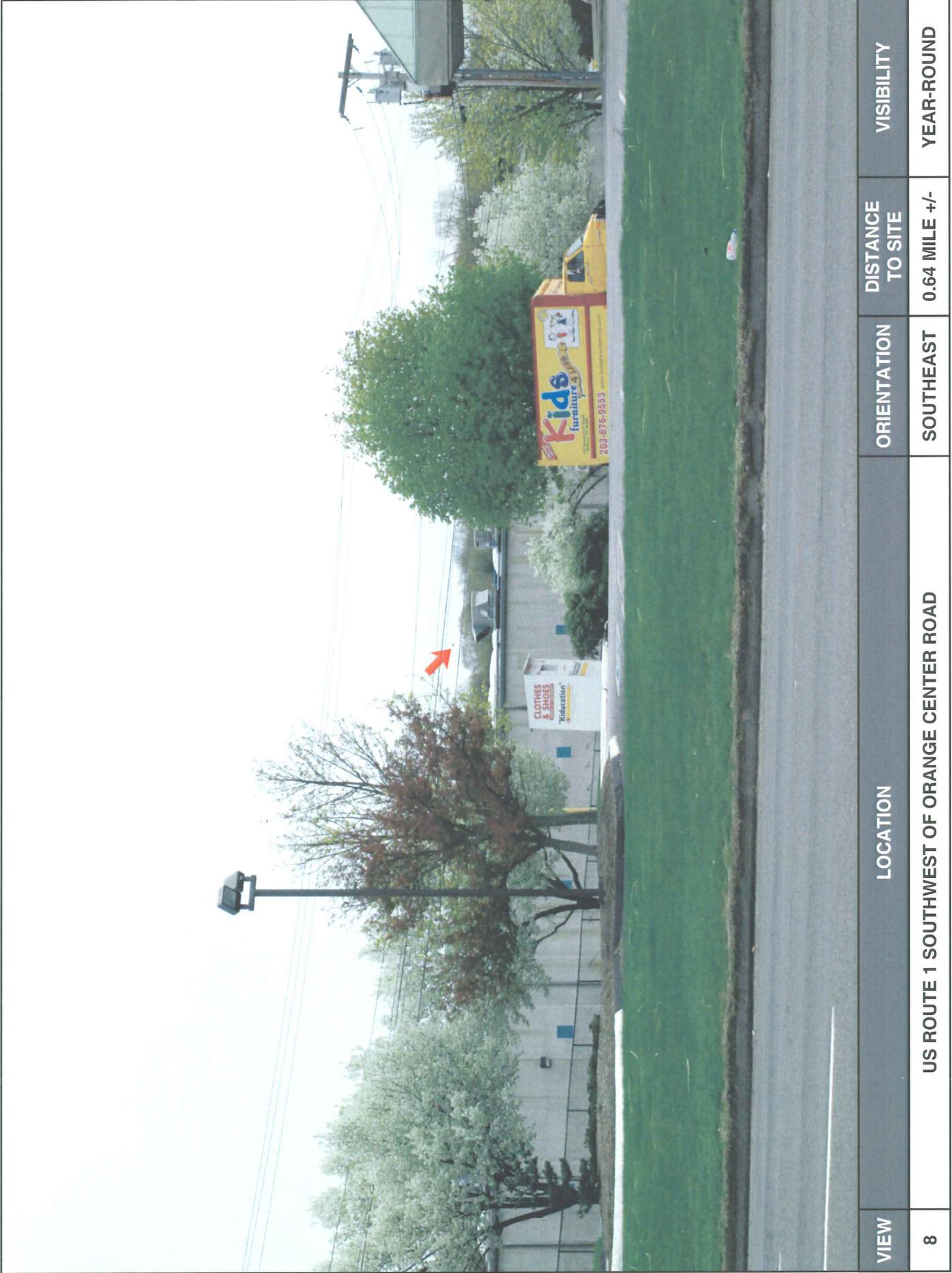
PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
7	MORGAN LANE I-95 OVERPASS	SOUTHWEST	1.02 MILES +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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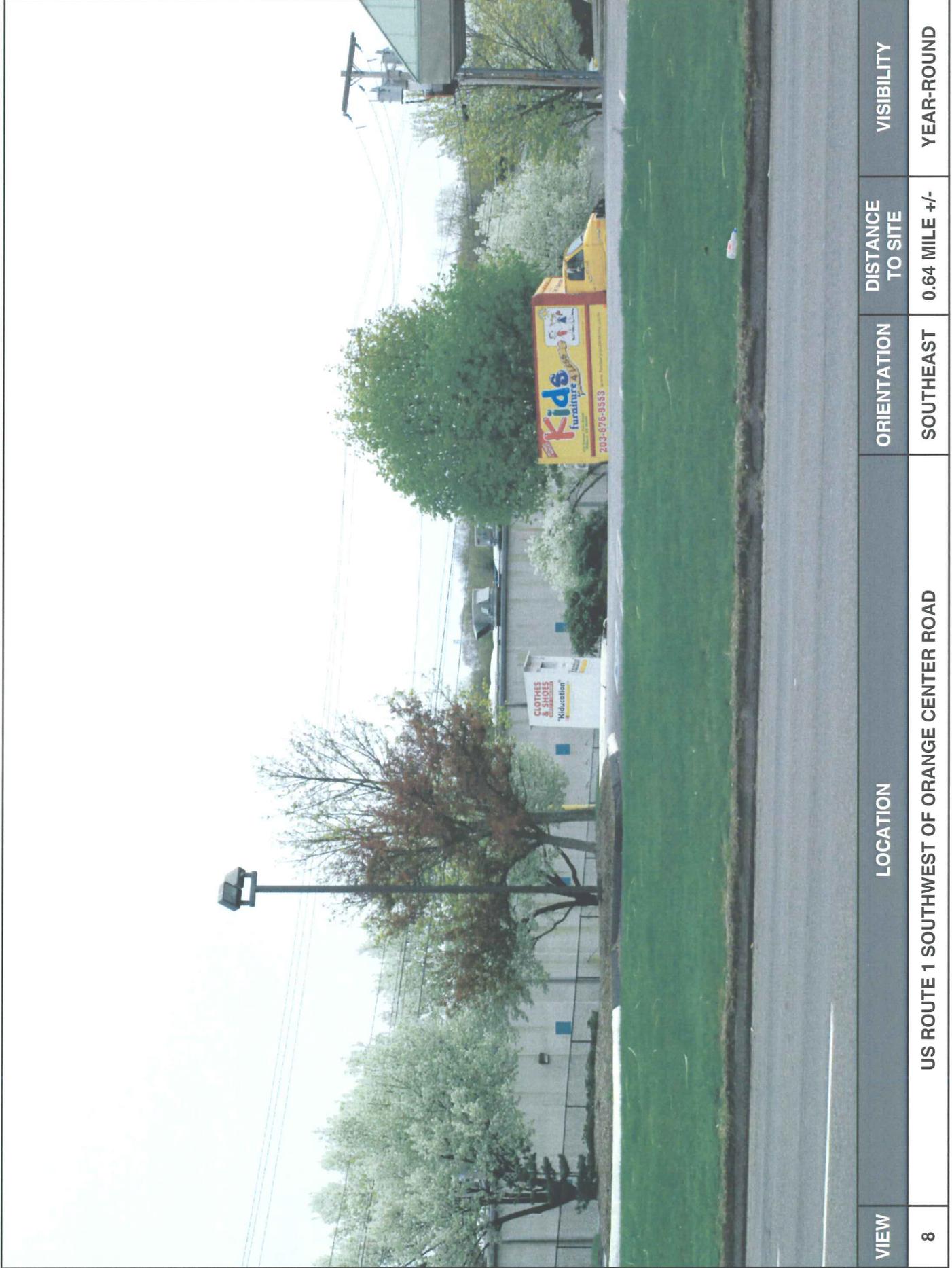
PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



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VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
8	US ROUTE 1 SOUTHWEST OF ORANGE CENTER ROAD	SOUTHEAST	0.64 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
8	US ROUTE 1 SOUTHWEST OF ORANGE CENTER ROAD	SOUTHEAST	0.64 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
9	ADJACENT TO #6 RIDGE HOLLOW ROAD	WEST	0.94 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
9	ADJACENT TO #6 RIDGE HOLLOW ROAD	WEST	0.94 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
10	TOLL ROAD AT ISLAND LANE	NORTHWEST	0.96 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
10	TOLL ROAD AT ISLAND LANE	NORTHWEST	0.96 MILE +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
11	PERRY MERRIN DRIVE	NORTHWEST	0.91 MILE +/-	NON-VISIBLE

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
12	ADJACENT TO #6 SUNFLOWER CIRCLE	WEST	1.03 MILES +/-	YEAR-ROUND

PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
12	ADJACENT TO #6 SUNFLOWER CIRCLE	WEST	1.03 MILES +/-	YEAR-ROUND

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
13	ADJACENT TO #313 BENHAM HILL ROAD	WEST	1.06 MILES +/-	NON-VISIBLE

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
14	OLD TAVERN ROAD RECREATIONAL AREA	SOUTHEAST	0.91 MILE +/-	NON-VISIBLE

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
15	ADJACENT TO #200 MARGARET LANE	NORTHWEST	0.46 MILE +/-	SEASONAL

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
16	ADJACENT TO #266 MALLARD DRIVE	NORTHEAST	0.58 MILE +/-	NON-VISIBLE

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
17	ADJACENT TO #535 ROSES MILL ROAD	NORTHEAST	0.64 MILE +/-	NON-VISIBLE

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
18	HERON DRIVE AT INDIAN RIVER ROAD	EAST	0.21 MILE +/-	NON-VISIBLE

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
19	ADJACENT TO #322 SAYBROOK ROAD	SOUTHEAST	1.04 MILES +/-	NON-VISIBLE

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
20	RACEBROOK ROAD (ROUTE 114) AT US ROUTE 1	SOUTHWEST	1.08 MILES +/-	YEAR-ROUND

PHOTOGRAPHIC SIMULATION



VIEW	LOCATION	ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
20	RACEBROOK ROAD (ROUTE 114) AT US ROUTE 1	SOUTHWEST	1.08 MILES +/-	YEAR-ROUND

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



VIEW	LOCATION		ORIENTATION	DISTANCE TO SITE	VISIBILITY
PROPOSED FACILITY	PROPOSED SITE LOCATION (CURRENT CONDITIONS)		N/A	0.00 MILE +/-	N/A

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Attachment B

Viewshed Map

Preliminary Viewshed Analysis
The United Illuminating Company
Central Facility Tower Project
Marsh Hill Road
Orange, Connecticut

NOTE:

- Viewshed analysis conducted using ESRI's Spatial Analyst.
- Proposed Tower height is 100 feet.
- Existing tree canopy height estimated at 50 feet.
- Study Area is comprised of a two-mile radius surrounding the proposed facility and includes 8,042 acres of land.
- Results verified by balloon float on April 13, 2010.

DATA SOURCES:

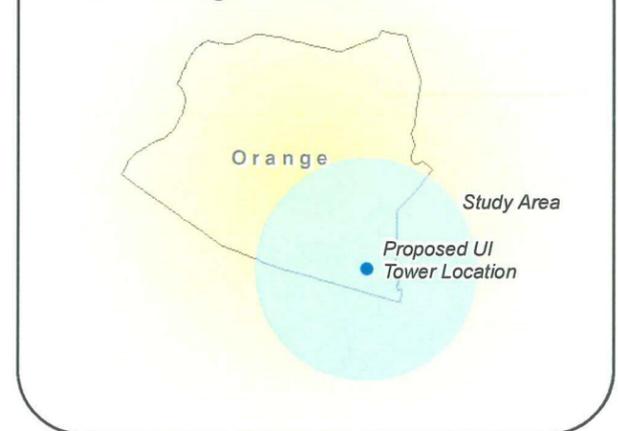
- Digital elevation model (DEM) derived from Connecticut LiDAR-based Digital Elevation Data (collected in 2000) with a 10-foot spatial resolution produced by the University of Connecticut and the Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR); 2007
- Forest areas derived from 2006 digital orthophotos with 1-foot pixel resolution; digitized by VHB, 2010
- Base map comprised of Ansonia (1984), Milford (1984), New Haven (1984) and Woodmont (1984) USGS Quadrangle Maps
- Municipal and Private Open Space data layer provided by CT DEP, 1997
- Federal Open Space data layer provided by CT DEP, 2004
- CT DEP Property data layer provided by CT DEP, Dec 2009
- CT DEP boat launches data layer provided by CT DEP, Dec 2009
- Scenic Roads layer derived from available State and Local listings

Map Compiled May 2010

Legend

- Proposed Tower Location
- CT DEP Property (CT DEP, Dec 2009)
 - State Forest
 - State Park
 - DEP Owned Waterbody
 - State Park Scenic Reserve
 - Historic Preserve
 - Natural Area Preserve
 - Fish Hatchery
 - Flood Control
 - Other
 - State Park Trail
 - Water Access
 - Wildlife Area
 - Wildlife Sanctuary
- Photographs - April 13, 2010**
 - Balloon is not visible
 - Balloon visible through trees
 - Balloon visible above trees
- Year-Round Visibility (Approximately 48 acres)
- Approximate Seasonal Visibility (Approximately 35 acres)
- Protected Municipal and Private Open Space (CT DEP, 1997)
 - Cemetery
 - Preservation
 - Conservation
 - Existing Preserved Open Space
 - Recreation
 - General Recreation
 - School
 - Uncategorized
- Federal Open Space (CT DEP, 2004)
- Boat Launches (CT DEP, Dec 2009)
- Scenic Road (State and Local)
- Town Line

Inset Map
Town of Orange



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