October 13, 2020

**VIA OVERNIGHT MAIL**
Don Lowe
First Selectman
Town of Sherman
Mallory Town Hall
9 Route 39 North
PO Box 39
Sherman, CT 06784

Re: Homeland Towers, LLC and New Cingular Wireless PCS LLC ("AT&T")
    Proposed Wireless Telecommunications Tower Facility
    16 Coote Hill Road, Sherman, Connecticut

Dear First Selectman Lowe:

We are writing to you on behalf of Homeland Towers, LLC ("Homeland Towers") and New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC ("AT&T") to start a formal consultation process for a proposed wireless telecommunication tower facility to be located at 16 Coote Hill Road in the Town of Sherman (the “Parcel”). Enclosed you will find a detailed Technical Report which includes information on AT&T’s need for the new tower, alternatives evaluated, and the environmental effects of the project as identified at this time. We also thought it might be helpful to you and the community if our letter provided some background on the applicants, the public need for this specific project, and prior history associated with the development of a tower site to serve this part of the community.

1. **Homeland Towers and AT&T**

Homeland Towers is an innovative company that provides wireless infrastructure solutions to meet the wireless communication needs of communities. Homeland Towers works closely with municipalities, commercial wireless carriers and public safety agencies and has installed numerous facilities (communications towers, antennas, and supporting equipment shelters and other infrastructure) throughout Connecticut, New York and New Jersey. AT&T and its predecessors have been providing wireless services in Connecticut since the 1980s and is the exclusive partner of FirstNet providing a nationwide interoperable public safety communications network.

2. **The Need for a Tower in this Part of Sherman**

All commercial wireless carriers who serve parts of Sherman have gaps in their network services in southern Sherman, including major parts of Routes 37 and 39. Existing facilities to the south in New Fairfield (Girl Scout property along Candlewood Lake) and north in Sherman (Happy Acres and White Silo Farms) simply cannot serve this part of the community given the terrain.
The result is that residents, the traveling public and visitors to the area are without reliable wireless services that are so critical in today’s day and age.

This specific project is the result of over ten years of AT&T and Homeland Towers’ extensive independent site search investigations to identify a viable location for construction of a new wireless communications facility to fill coverage gaps in the southern portion of the Town. It’s also located in an area that the Town itself has noted requires some form of new tower infrastructure to address gaps in public safety emergency communications coverage. Indeed, a previously Town commissioned report recommended the desirability of working with the private sector for construction of a tower facility in the south end of Sherman and predicted the need to work with FirstNet for First Responder communication needs.

3. Communications Services to the Public this Tower will Provide

The proposed tower facility is planned as a multi-use facility to address the wireless communications needs of the public now and in the future from AT&T and other wireless carriers, FirstNet, and local public safety agencies. As shown in the Technical Report materials which includes data from AT&T, this proposed tower facility would provide reliable 4G LTE service along State Route 37 and State Route 39, to as many as 3,500 vehicles, as well as the surrounding secondary roads, residences and some of the properties that are used by the community in southern Sherman. The tower is also being planned to support public safety communications from the very top of the facility to maximize its reach for local agencies that serve Sherman.

4. History of Tower Projects in Southern Sherman

Over the last decade, numerous tower site locations have been privately and publicly vetted in this part of Sherman. AT&T had proposed a tower site along Leach Hollow Road a decade ago. Then in June of 2013, AT&T submitted a Technical Report (“AT&T’s 2013 Technical Report”) proposing a wireless telecommunications tower facility on this Parcel highlighting over 30 sites it had studied in the community. AT&T completed the municipal consultation process with Sherman and had an intention to file a Siting Council application, but simply deferred the site that next year.

In the intervening time, Homeland Towers began its own independent investigation for a tower in this area of Sherman. Like AT&T before it, Homeland Towers identified the Parcel as a viable candidate and entered into a long-term lease with the owners. Homeland Towers plans to construct, own and operate a wireless telecommunications tower facility on the Parcel and has also coordinated with the Coote Hill Road private road owner to obtain its permission for access and other work associated with the project.

AT&T more recently reactivated its site search ring in the southern area of Sherman to address the significant gap in service in the community and deploy FirstNet spectrum for first responders. The company confirmed that there have been no material changes in this area of Sherman since its last proposal in 2013 (i.e. still a coverage problem for all companies and no new towers have
been built). AT&T then entered into an agreement with Homeland Towers for its use of the proposed tower facility and support for the state application process.

5. The Proposed Tower Facility

The project as proposed would consist of a 170’ monopole with 2 municipal whip antennas to support municipal emergency communications extending an additional 20’ above the top of the pole. The monopole will be located within a fenced compound in the southeast portion of the 19.87-acre parcel. The tower and fenced compound are designed to support the antennas and equipment of other FCC licensed wireless carriers. The facility will be unmanned with no sanitary or water facilities and will generate an average of one vehicle trip per month by each carrier at the site, consisting of a service technician in a light duty van or truck.

In designing the proposed facility, Homeland Towers did review prior Town comments as part of the AT&T's 2013 Technical Report and consultation with Sherman. The facility, as it is now proposed, is in a slightly different location than what was proposed then and with a re-configured access drive to balance wetland, visual, stormwater and other effects and provide access to the rear of the Parcel where the tower needs to be located. Many other aspects of the facility are similar to the prior proposal including areas of visibility in this part of Sherman.

6. State Siting Council Jurisdiction

Connecticut State policy generally recognizes the need for new towers to serve the public and has designated the Connecticut Siting Council as the state agency with responsibility for reviewing and approving any specific tower proposals. The Siting Council will evaluate this project once an application is filed with the agency. The Siting Council's evaluation is focused on balancing the need for a tower on a case by case basis with any significant adverse environmental impacts. Jurisdiction over any proposed cellular telecommunications facility rests exclusively with the Siting Council and in lieu of any local zoning, wetlands and other types of municipal land use review and approvals.

7. Town Consultation & Procedural Next Steps

Homeland Towers and AT&T are providing the enclosed Technical Report to the Town of Sherman in accordance with Section 16-50l of the Connecticut General Statutes. The statute requires consultation with a municipality in which a tower facility is proposed prior to submission of an application with the Siting Council. The purpose of the local consultation is to give the municipality in which the facility has been proposed an opportunity to provide the prospective applicant with any recommendations or preferences it may have prior to the filing of an application with the Siting Council.

Upon review of Section 16-50l(g) of the Connecticut General Statutes, you will note that municipalities also have the option of conducting a noticed public information session on any proposed wireless telecommunications tower facility. State law requires any such information session to be held by the Town during the first 60 days of the 90-day period afforded to the municipalities for consultation with a prospective Siting Council applicant. As such, should
Sherman elect to conduct a public information meeting regarding this project, it should occur on or before December 13, 2020. For such public information sessions, our typical practice is for introductions to be made by a municipal official, have the project team make a presentation (usually a power point) and then respond to public questions moderated by a local official or agency.

In advance, we thank you for your consideration and will follow this correspondence with a call to your office to discuss next steps regarding the municipal consultation process. We look forward to meeting with you further on this project and learning more about Sherman’s interests, concerns and any recommendations prior to filing an application with the Siting Council.

Very truly yours,

Christopher B. Fisher

Enclosure

cc: Planning & Zoning Commission
    Manuel Vicente, Homeland Towers
    Raymond Vergati, Homeland Towers
    Harry Carey, AT&T
    Lynn Brady, AT&T
    Project Consultant Team