

STAFF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Plan Commission
Prepared By: Latika Bhide, Development Planner
Meeting Date: July 22, 2015
Date Prepared: July 17, 2015
Project Title: Dolan Realty Advisors on behalf of Verizon Wireless
Address: 800 W. Oakton Street

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Petitioner: Douglas K. Dolan, Dolan Realty Advisors, LLC (on behalf of Verizon)
Address: 144 W. Lockwood Ave., Suite 200
 Webster Groves, MO 63119

Existing Zoning: I, Institutional

Requested Action:

- A Special Use Permit for a rooftop wireless antenna.

Variations Identified:

- Chapter 28, Section 6.12-1 from the requirement to provide a traffic study and parking analysis prepared by a qualified professional engineer;
- Chapter 28, Section 6.13 from the requirement that fences shall not exceed a height of five feet to allow eight feet eleven inches and a six foot fence for the equipment shelter.



Surrounding Properties

Direction	Zoning	Existing Land-Use	Comprehensive Plan
North	R-3	Single Family Residences	Single Family Detached
South	R-3	Single Family Residences	Single Family Detached
East	R-3	Single Family Residences	Single Family Detached
West	R-1	Single Family Residences	Single Family Detached Estate

Background

The subject property, 800 W. Oakton Avenue, is zoned I-Institutional and is approximately 73.6 acres in area. The northern portion of the site, which is an independent senior living development, is known as Luther Village. The southern portion of the site is known as Lutheran Home, and includes several components including a skilled nursing facility, a memory support wing, senior assisted living, a child and adult day care facility, and a chapel. Verizon Wireless would like to install rooftop cellular antennas at Lutheran Home, on the southern portion of the site. The petitioner is proposing to add the antennas within a fiberglass enclosure that would be an extension of the existing elevator shaft/penthouse. The proposed enclosure is 10 feet in height and the overall height of the building, lower penthouse, elevator shaft and the proposed extension would be 70 feet to the highest point. The antenna will be located approximately 350 feet from Oakton Street and approximately 465 feet from Kennicott Boulevard. In addition to the antennas, the petitioner is proposing to add a generator on a 4' x 10' concrete pad behind a brick screen wall 8 feet 11 inches tall and a 11'-6" x 16'-10 1/2" lessee equipment shelter on the west side of the building.

Radio and Telephone Antenna are required to obtain a Special Use Permit in the 'I', Institutional District per Chapter 28, Section 6.14-2.



The petitioner initially applied for a Special Use Waiver pursuant to Chapter 28 Section 6.14-2.3. The Planning Department rejected the application for a Special Use Waiver because the additional antennas constitute a substantial increase to the number of existing antennas at this location (it appears that there are 12 antenna at this location now); the proposed antennas project more than 12 feet from the highest point of the roofline of the building and it was questionable whether they would blend in with the existing architectural character of the building.

Verizon Wireless has indicated that they have evaluated other alternatives in the search area, including building a new tower, existing towers and collocating on the Arlington Heights Water Tank. They have indicated that they cannot provide a site with more concealment than the proposed site as the proposed antennas will be concealed behind a screen wall that will be painted to match the existing penthouse.

As the antennas are located deep within this site, farther away from the right-of-way and are proposed as a stealth application where antennas will be enclosed within an enclosure, the Staff Development Committee recommends approval of this Special Use.

Zoning and Comprehensive Plan

The site is currently zoned I, Institutional. Because the use is permitted as a Special Use in the 'I' district, therefore the petitioner has submitted a written justification (please see document Justification.PDF on NOVUS) based on the following special use criteria:

- **That said special use is deemed necessary for the public convenience at this location.**
- **That such case will not, under any circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, morals or general welfare of persons residing or working in the vicinity.**
- **That the proposed use will comply with the regulations and conditions specified in this ordinance for such use, and with the stipulations and conditions made a part of the authorization granted by the Village Board of Trustees.**

Based on the written provided justification provided, staff believes that the Special Use Criteria are met.

Additionally, the following standards are considered when determining whether approval of an application for a commercial antenna structure is in the public interest:

- **The petitioner must demonstrate that there is not technically suitable space available on an existing tower or structure within the geographic area to be serviced.**

The petitioner has stated that the search Area provided by Verizon Wireless' RF Engineer depicting the vicinity where Verizon requires a wireless communications site in order to improve its coverage and capacity encompassed the following Village of Arlington Heights zoning districts: I, R-E, R-1, R-3, R-6, and B-2. Of those districts, commercial antennas are allowed with a Special Use Permit in I and B-2 zoning districts and are prohibited in the remainder of the Search Area per the Zoning Ordinance.

The petitioner has stated that Verizon Wireless only had 3 potential locations where commercial antennas could be placed. One property is in the 'I', Institutional district where Lutheran Home is located. The other two are zoned 'B-2', General Business District located in the southern portion of the Search Area. The two 'B-2' districts within the Search Area are directly adjacent to an R-3 district. Therefore, Verizon chose to pursue placing antennas on the rooftop of Lutheran Home, shielded from view by a stealth enclosure designed to match the existing facade of the building.

- **A landscaping plan shall be submitted that demonstrates substantial screening of the antenna and related structures from adjacent land uses. Screening must consist of a well-maintained masonry wall of brickwork or stonework, solid wood fence, densely planted compact hedge or berm and hedge.**

The rooftop antennas are proposed within a stealth enclosure and will not be visible from the outside. The petitioner has proposed a screen wall for the generator pad. Staff has asked that landscaping be added along the perimeter of the proposed screen wall to soften the impact of the tall wall. The petitioner had initially indicated that they felt that a brick screen wall (designed to match the brickwork of the existing building) would be the least conspicuous method of screening our equipment shelter. They have since acknowledged that they will provide landscaping along the perimeter of the proposed screen wall.

The Village's Comprehensive Plan designates this property as 'Institutional'.

Plat and Subdivision Committee

On April 8, 2015, the Plat and Sub Committee met to discuss the project. The Committee members felt that since the antennas were located far off the street that was a positive. They stated that the petitioner should move forward, but provide all four elevations and photo simulations as well as hold a neighborhood meeting.

Neighborhood Meeting

The petitioner held a neighborhood meeting on May 19th, 2015, which was attended by one resident. The petitioner has stated that the resident expressed no concerns and was supportive of improving wireless coverage in the area.

Building, Site and Landscape Related Issues

The petitioner is proposing a generator pad and equipment shelter on the west side of the building in question. Per the plans provided, three trees are proposed to be removed to accommodate the generator pad and equipment shelter. The petitioner has provided information on the trees to be removed and acknowledged that replacement trees as required per the Ordinance will be provided. Per Chapter 28, Section 6.15-5.14 a, exchange rate, six trees, four inch in caliper will be required as replacements. The petitioner has indicated that they are working with the landlord before finalizing the location on the property where the replacement trees will be installed.

The petitioner has indicated that the generator on the west side of the building will be screened by a brick wall. The wall is proposed to be two feet higher than the top of the generator and will be 8'-11" tall. Also, a six foot tall wood fence is proposed behind the equipment shelter. Therefore, the following variation is required:

- Chapter 28, Section 6.13 from the requirement that fences shall not exceed a height of five feet to allow eight feet eleven inches for the screen wall for the generator pad and to allow six foot fence for the equipment shelter.

The petitioner has submitted a response to the variation hardship criteria.

- **The property in question cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted to be used only under the conditions allowed by the regulations in that zone; and**
- **The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances; and**
- **The variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.**

Traffic & Parking Related Issues

Per Chapter 28, Section 6.12-1, a traffic study and parking analysis is required for any Special Use that is not located adjacent to a major or secondary arterial. The rooftop antenna will not have any impact on the parking and traffic circulation. Therefore staff supports the request for this variation.

The following variation is required:

- Chapter 28, Section 6.12-1 from the requirement to provide a traffic study and parking analysis prepared by a qualified professional engineer;

The petitioner has submitted a response to the variation hardship criteria (Please see document Justification.PDF on NOVUS.)

Recommendation

The Staff Development Committee recommends **approval** of this Special Use request. The following are recommended as conditions of approval:

1. The stealth wall enclosure/antenna shroud shall be designed to match the existing brick façade of the building.
2. Prior to Village Board consideration, provide a letter from the Northwest Central Dispatch indicating that the proposed frequencies are compatible with Village and other public and private telecommunication frequencies.
3. Prior to receiving a permit, submit any required State or Federal approvals.
4. Landscaping along the perimeter of the proposed screen wall for the generator pad shall be provided. Six 4-inch caliper replacement trees as required per the Ordinance shall be provided.
5. The Petitioner shall comply with all Federal, State, and Village codes, regulations, and policies.

July 17, 2015

Bill Enright, Deputy Director of Planning and Community Development

C: Randy Recklaus, Village Manager
All Department Heads