



County of Albemarle
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING

Architectural Review Board

mmaliszewski@albemarle.org

434-296-5832 ext. 3276

ARB ACTION MEMO/MINUTES

Date: October 4, 2021

Time: 1:00 PM

Meeting Room: Virtual Meeting

Members:

Frank Stoner: Present (arrived at 1:01)

Frank Hancock: Present

Fred Missel, Vice-Chair: Present

Chris Henningsen: Present

Dade Van Der Werf, Chair: Present

Staff:

Margaret Maliszewski

Khris Taggart

Bill Fritz

Carolyn Shaffer

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Van Der Werf called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and established a quorum. Mr. Stoner arrived at 1:01 PM.

DISCLOSURES: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

CONSENT AGENDA: None.

Regular Review Items

a. ARB-2021-106: Southside Tier 2 PWSF

Location: 2415 Southside Drive, North Garden

Proposal: To construct a personal wireless services facility consisting of an 87'-tall monopole and associated equipment, including a request for a Special Exception.

Staff Contact: Margaret Maliszewski

Representative: Hadisha Gordon, Todd Marimpietri

Margaret Maliszewski summarized the staff report in a PowerPoint presentation. ARB members asked for clarification about the screening recommendation (the revised drawings address the concern about accurately showing all proposed equipment), the location of vegetation shown in the image (likely on site, not in the right-of-way), the reason for flying the balloon in an alternate location (density of wooded area and size of balloon), whether topography was included in the plan (some was), and the height of the balloon compared to the proposed tower height (balloon was flown at the proposed height). ARB members asked if there were other similar installations with this type of offset approved in other rural area locations (not typically), and if the ARB could request that the balloon be flown from the actual location (it would be really difficult to do due to the density of the trees). Mr. Van Der Werf confirmed that redundancy and proximity issues mentioned in the correspondence are not relevant to ARB review and Mr. Henningsen clarified that there is no screening proposed at ground level for equipment or fencing.

Bill Fritz noted a few rural area installations (on existing power lines; at Western and Albemarle High Schools) and stated that the balloon was flown at the proposed pole height and accounted for terrain difference. He agreed that the tree cover limited opportunities to fly the balloon from the proposed pole location.

Hadisha Gordon, representing the applicant, explained that recent changes have been made to the proposal, including shifting the pole approximately 18' to the north so that trees can stay surrounding the area; that flying the balloon at the exact location of the pole was not possible; that some trees will remain and some will be removed for tower installation; that those details are unclear on the plans because they aren't sure yet which trees need to be removed (that is usually done closer to construction); that they believe there will be enough trees remaining to screen sufficiently; and that other options are available in the event there is more visibility than desired, like wood fence. Ms. Gordon noted that the standoff is desired to maximize and optimize coverage, but she's asked her engineers for information on flush-mounting in terms of coverage and visibility. She noted that photo-simulations would be provided.

Mr. Missel noted that Ms. Gordon said she thought the screening would be sufficient, and asked if there would be a tree survey. Ms. Gordon responded that moving the pole back does help, but they are in the process of getting the detail on which trees will remain and which will be removed. Todd Marimpietri said, regarding tree clearing, the goal is to keep as many trees as possible; the concern is for safety related to the crane and installing the pole. Mr. Henningsen noted that the applicant was assembling more information, which would be helpful. Mr. Stoner asked if a drone could be used to simulate the pole location and height. Mr. Marimpietri said it could be done. Mr. Hancock asked if trees to remain are in the lease area (trees outside of compound will remain; any that can be saved within compound will be retained), and asked if clearing will be required for the access road (minimal trees to be cleared).

Tracey Themak, Esq., with Donohue & Stearns, PLC, representing SBA, referenced a letter of opposition submitted by her firm and summarized some of its points, including the flush-mounted design of the current AT&T site and coverage.

In discussion, Mr. Stoner noted the need for additional information and wondered why the project was happening. Ms. Gordon responded, noting that AT&T was experiencing logistical and financial challenges in its current location. Mr. Van Der Werf confirmed that the ARB review was not about coverage. Mr. Missel noted the success of the County's telecommunications policy regarding reducing visibility, suggested the applicant study the past work that has been done and the success of that work in limiting visibility because it makes a huge difference. He said that there have been numerous applicants who have had to accommodate flush-mounting. He urged the ARB to be careful about the precedents set in the past and the design parameters within which other applicants have had to work to keep the aesthetic and visibility in line with the intent of the guidelines. He added that the applicant used non-objective terminology when

talking about trees to remain and trees to be removed and indicated that accurately showing trees to remain and to be removed is a “must”. Mr. Hancock agreed with Mr. Missel and Mr. Stoner and with staff’s recommendations. He said he looked forward to seeing a more complete picture of what this will look like. Mr. Henningsen said he was on the same page as the other members, that there was not enough information to make a determination, and that Mr. Missel’s comment about meeting the precedent that’s already been established is important. Mr. Van Der Werf said he agreed with the other members and noted that the County’s standards result in minimal visibility and others have managed to find technical solutions and encourage the applicant to look at the precedents and look for a way to comply with the guidelines.

The ARB took the following actions:

Regarding the Certificate of Appropriateness for the ground equipment and base station:

Motion: Mr. Missel moved to require that the following information be submitted for further consideration of the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness because there is insufficient information provided to confirm that visibility of the ground equipment and chain link fence will be eliminated:

1. Provide a tree plan that locates individual trees and trees to be removed, keyed to a list that provides species, caliper and height. Ensure that there are sufficient trees to remain on site to eliminate visibility of the ground equipment and chain link fence from Rt. 29.
2. Confirm that there is no ground equipment proposed beyond the utility H-frame with meter and cabinet as currently illustrated on the plan. If additional equipment is proposed, show it on the plan.

Mr. Henningsen seconded the motion.
The motion was carried by a vote of 5:0.

Regarding visibility of the facility:

Motion: Mr. Hancock moved to forward the following recommendation to the Agent:

The ARB finds that the proposed location will not sufficiently minimize the visibility of the monopole from the Rt. 29 Entrance Corridor. The ARB recommends the following changes/submittals for additional consideration:

1. Revise the proposal to flush mount antennas.
2. Provide photo-simulations of the proposed facility.
3. Provide to-scale drawings showing the pole and antennas and the distances from pole to antennas and mounting equipment.
4. Show the reference tree accurately on all relevant plans. Include the distance from the pole to the tree trunk. Note that to qualify as a Tier II facility, the site must retain a reference tree with a trunk no more than 25’ from the monopole.
5. Submit a paint sample for SW2924.

Mr. Stoner seconded the motion.
The motion was carried by a vote of 5:0.

Regarding the Special Exception:

Motion: Mr. Missel moved to forward the following recommendation to the Agent:

The ARB does not recommend approval of the Special Exception due to the intrusive and incompatible appearance of the proposed standoff. The ARB recommends the following

changes/submittals for additional consideration:

1. Revise the proposal to flush mount antennas.
2. Provide photo-simulations of the proposed facility.
3. Provide to-scale drawings showing the pole and antennas and the distances from pole to antennas and mounting equipment.
4. Show the reference tree accurately on all relevant plans. Include the distance from the pole to the tree trunk. Note that to qualify as a Tier II facility, the site must retain a reference tree with a trunk no more than 25' from the monopole.
5. Submit a paint sample for SW2924.

Mr. Hancock seconded the motion.

The motion was carried by a vote of 5:0.

WORK SESSIONS:

a. ARB-2021-67: Discount Tire

Location: 1368 Seminole Trail

Proposal: To construct a 7,680 sq. ft. building to accommodate a Discount Tire vehicle service facility with associated site improvements.

Staff Contact: Khris Taggart

Representatives: Ryan Yauger, Quoc Truong, Chi-Lun Lee

The ARB held a work session to discuss the design of the northern elevation of the proposed building. Mr. Henningsen asked if the applicant submitted a revised landscape plan. Khris Taggart explained that the applicant did submit a revised landscape plan, but staff recommended that the applicant limit their submittal to a single issue to conform to ARB policy regarding work sessions. He said the ornamental trees were either serviceberry or crepe myrtles. Mr. Hancock asked if the previous review was a review of an initial plan and architecture in July. Mr. Taggart confirmed that it was. Ryan Yauger, representing the applicant, said that he was trying to limit the focus to the northern elevation but the site as a whole works in unison. He shared drawings and explained that the building was shifted back 15' to provide frontage landscaping, looked at a material type change, added screening planters along the north elevation, and minor tweaks to the retaining walls. He added that horizontal area could not be expanded along the building for planting, and the goal is to get feedback on the northern elevation for resubmittal. Mr. Missel said that there were no planting beds along the north elevation. Mr. Yauger said that they would have areas carved out on the next plan. Mr. Missel noted that the Stonefield green screens had corresponding architectural details (inset panels) and regular spacing that create relief; that material or color change could highlight the trellises. Mr. Yauger stated that they could take another look at the design with that in mind. Mr. Stoner asked if the rendering accurately showed the landscaping along the northern boundary. Mr. Truong said that no rendering is 100% accurate, but he estimates 80-90% accuracy. Mr. Lee said the trees would be maintained to achieve the appearance shown in the rendering. Mr. Stoner asked what shrub was shown there (compact Japanese holly). Mr. Van Der Werf questioned the guidelines requirement (large shade trees, 40' on center). Mr. Henningsen said the trellises seemed small and suggested mirroring the scale of the bay doors on the south elevation. Mr. Hancock noted that with large trees with upright canopy on the north side, the trellis work on the north elevation might be more visible. He agreed that the scale of the trellises was "off" and suggested combining architectural detailing with the planted element in some sort of rhythm along the façade. Mr. Van Der Werf emphasized some of the previous comments that were made.

OTHER BUSINESS

a. Minutes Approval: September 7, 2021

Motion: Mr. Van Der Werf moved for approval of the minutes from the September 7, 2021, ARB meeting.

Mr. Missel seconded the motion.

The motion was carried by a vote of 4:0. (Stoner abstained)

b. Entrance Corridor Guidelines

Mr. Stoner asked about the status of the guidelines update. Staff noted that there had been no recent discussions by the ARB, that staffing gaps have resulted in slow progress on the formatting, and that ARB members should be continuing gathering information on their assigned corridors.

c. Telecommunications facilities

Mr. Missel noted that the wireless conversation was interesting, especially regarding the two carriers, and wondered if we would start having a lot more poles due to competition. Mr. Van Der Werf said 5G technology works on a different wavelength and needs to be more densely signalized. Mr. Hancock asked if there were regulations regarding the distance between poles. Mr. Van Der Werf said that the FCC regulates that.

Next ARB Meeting: MONDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2021, 1:00 PM – VIRTUAL MEETING

All ARB members indicated that they planned to attend the October 18 meeting. However, Mr. Missel, Mr. Henningsen and Mr. Van Der Werf noted conflicts with the November 1 meeting date.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m. to the next Virtual ARB meeting on Monday, October 18, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.