

Memo

To: Planning Commission
From: Bryan Myrkle, Community Development Director
Date: August 31, 2018
Re: Site Plan Review – Central Dispatch Wireless Tower

Your September meeting agenda includes a site plan review for a proposed wireless communication tower at the Eaton County Central Dispatch terminal located at 911 Courthouse Drive in Charlotte.

While this is a proposed public safety facility, the tower must still adhere to local code requirements. I have worked with the project engineer to ensure the proposed plan and associated documents meet our local requirements. The engineer will be present at your meeting to discuss the project, but I will lay out the basic requirements here for you.

- **The facility shall not be detrimental to the public safety and welfare.** I think it's obvious that this new tower, if properly constructed, will pose no danger, but instead directly improve public safety and welfare.
- **The facility shall be located and designed to be harmonious with the surrounding area.** The surrounding area is a county government complex that is already home to a nearly identical tower, so this would be in keeping with that environment.
- **The applicant shall demonstrate a justification for the proposed height that includes a discussion of any possible alternatives.** This is addressed directly in the letter from the project engineer.
- **The tower is to be the minimum effective height.** This is also addressed in the engineer's letter.
- **There is to be a 30 foot setback from any neighboring residential property.** There are no residential properties within 30 feet of the proposed location.
- **The tower must be at least a distance equal to its height (180 feet) away from any public roadway.** It appears from the site plan that it is at least that far away from Courthouse Drive, which is the nearest roadway.

- **There must be unobstructed access to the structure for maintenance by way of an easement.** Since the structure is located directly on public property, no easement is necessary.
- **The Planning Commission is to review the proposed color of the structure in order to minimize visual impact.** In this case, the tower is proposed to be galvanized metal.
- **The applicant must provide a long-term maintenance plan for the structure.** This is included in the engineer's letter.
- **The applicant must include the submission of a soils report from a geotechnical engineer demonstrating the structural suitability of the site.** This report is included herein.
- **There is also supposed to be a landscape screening plan.** However, the base of this tower location is completely screened from view by the Central Dispatch building in front of it.
- **There must be an agreement between the City and the applicant to remove the facility in a timely manner once it is no longer being used.** Such an agreement is being executed between the City and Central Dispatch.

There is no public hearing requirement for this site plan, and as its installation is the result of a plan recently approved by county voters, I think it's safe to say this project is desirable for the community. There are also no residential properties potentially affected by this project.