



ZONING EXAMINER

REPORT TO MAYOR AND COUNCIL

April 15, 2016

SE – 15-93 Verizon – Harrison Road

BACKGROUND

This is a request by Adam Brixius of Pinnacle Consulting, on behalf of Verizon Wireless, for approval of a wireless communication facility. The Special Exception site is located approximately 75 feet west of Harrison Road and 150 feet south of Speedway Boulevard. The overall subject property is divided into C-1 and R-2 zone sections.

Land use policy direction for this area is provided by Land use policy direction for this area is provided by the *Pantano East Area Plan (PEAP)* and *Plan Tucson*.

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY (Minutes Attached)

On March 31, 2016 at the Zoning Examiner public hearing, Planning and Development Services Department, presented the staff report with a recommendation for approval. Staff commented that there are two written protests and one written approval were received.

The applicant's agent, presented the rezoning request and agreed to the recommended staff conditions of rezoning. No one spoke from the public.

FINDINGS OF FACT

This is a request for approval of a wireless communication facility. The Special Exception site is located approximately 75 feet west of Harrison Road and 150 feet south of Speedway Boulevard. The overall subject property is divided into C-1 and R-2 zone sections.

Site Description - The preliminary development plan proposes a wireless communication tower with eight antenna panels concealed within an artificial palm tree or monopalm, 60 feet in height to its topmost feature. The facility will be placed within a 14 by 14 feet leased area near the north edge of the subject property in the C-1 zone and the ground equipment will be located in an irregularly shaped second leased area near the southeast corner of the subject property in the R-2 zone. The subject property is used as a veterinary clinic

Surrounding Land Uses - To the north of the site is a City transit lot zoned C-1. To the south and east are single family residences zoned R-2 and R-1 respectively. To the west is a single family and multi-family residential development zoned R-2. The nearest residentially zoned land to the proposed monopalm is about 100 feet to the south and west.

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Land Use Plans - Land use policy direction for this area is provided by the *Pantano East Area Plan (PEAP)* and *Plan Tucson*. Two commercial land use policies of *PEAP* support commercial uses along arterials and further support commercial uses to be designed to be compatible with surrounding residences.

Plan Tucson identifies the area in the Future Growth Scenario Map as a Neighborhood Center Building Block. This Building Block supports a mix of small businesses surrounded by residential uses and is accessible by walking, cycling or transit. Policy LT28.1.2 requires wireless facilities to be installed and maintained to minimize visual impacts and preserve views. LT28.1.3 also requires well-designed facilities and that any installed facility provide improved wireless services in the surrounding area. The applicant states the facility will improve telecommunication services in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Plan Tucson policies protect established residential neighborhoods by supporting compatible development, including non-residential uses, where the scale and intensity of use is compatible with adjacent uses. Policy LT28.1.2 requires that, if possible, wireless communication facilities be located, installed and maintained to minimize visual impacts and preserve views.

According to the *Major Streets and Routes Plan*, Harrison Road and Speedway Boulevard are both designated as arterial streets with 120-foot designated rights of way. The Pima Association of Governments - Transportation Planning Division (PAG-TPD) estimates that the proposed development will not generate additional measurable vehicle trips per day.

Design - The proposed ground equipment is located within an area screened by a 9-foot 4-inch tall masonry wall. A proposed diesel generator and cabinets will be located on concrete pads. Staff recommends the wall be painted and textured to match existing nearby architectural styles.

The proposed monopalm will include four antennas per sector with three sectors for a total of twelve antennas. The applicant has submitted a photo-simulation of the monopalm showing the antennas concealed by the artificial fronds of the monopalm. The monopalm will be set back about 75 feet from Harrison Road right-of-way and about 130 feet from the south edge of the Speedway Boulevard right-of-way. The monopalm will be visible from surrounding commercial and residential development. The monopalm design reduces the visual impact on the area. There are some desert trees, pine trees and palm trees in the general area. Any landscaping disturbed during construction of the monopalm should be replaced. While the monopalm will be visible from the surrounding commercial and residential development, the proposed design of the monopalm is intended to provide concealment and reduce the visible impacts on the area.

Use Specific Standard - The proposal requires approval as a Mayor and Council Special Exception (Sec. 3.4.4). Additionally, the proposal must comply with Use-Specific Standards Sec.4.9.13.O and 4.9.4.1.2,3, and 7. The Mayor and Council may forward the request to the Design Review Board for design review and recommendation.

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Sec. 4.9.4.I.7 allows towers that may not meet the requirements of other wireless communication review processes to be review and approved by the Mayor and Council. In this case, the tower is taller than allowed in the subject zones and, it is closer than one-mile to the next tower which the applicant states is not a suitable site for collocation. As part of the process, the tower design, as has already been described, is using stealth design as a monopalm. Adequate notice was provided. The proposal is in substantial compliance with the standards of the above noted section.

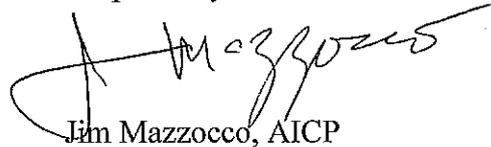
CONCLUSION

The Zoning Examiner has reviewed the evidence and finds the proposed tower to be in compliance with the UDC Use-Specific Standards. The proposed stealth tower is in compliance with the performance criteria for a wireless communication facility. The Special Exception request is consistent with the policies and intent of the *PEAP* and *Plan Tucson*, considering the use of a stealth design, in this case a monopalm that will limit the visual impact of the facility. Approval of the request is appropriate subject to compliance with the attached preliminary recommended conditions. The applicant agrees with the conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

The Zoning Examiner recommends approval of the Special Exception request subject to the proposed preliminary conditions.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Mazzocco", written over a horizontal line.

Jim Mazzocco, AICP
Zoning Examiner

ATTACHMENTS:

Public Hearing Minutes