



INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Charles S. Cox
City Manager

DATE: May 9, 2017

SUBJECT: Ordinance 3444 – Specific Use Permit for Cellular Communication Antenna

Existing Conditions:

The subject property is located north of Valley View Lane and east of Marsh Lane. This site is located within the One Family Residence-2 (R-2) Zoning District, which requires that all telecommunication towers and antennas obtain a Specific Use Permit. This site is surrounded by residential land uses to the west and south and Brookhaven Community College to the north.

The applicant, Crafton Communications is requesting a new Specific Use Permit to allow three (3) additional telecommunications antenna panels, for a total of twelve (12) antenna panels, to be placed on the Farmers Branch Justice Center Water Tower. The current Specific Use Permit (Ordinance 2298) passed in 1997. The city renewed the lease contract (Resolution 2016-108) in November 2016 which give AT&T the license to operate on the tower for an initial term of five (5) years with options of renewing for three (3) additional five-year terms.

An amended specific use permit is required when an existing carrier proposes to increase the size or number of antennas on the water tower support pedestal or increase the number of penetrations through the pedestal for cables or antenna support hardware.

Site Design:

The subject site is the City's water tower located immediately east of the Farmers Branch Justice Center. The existing tower supports antennas and equipment for three carriers, AT&T, Sprint/Clear Wireless, and T-Mobile. The antenna systems are currently located at separate levels on the tower support pedestal and occupy three equipment shelters at its base.

The ground equipment is located within AT&T's existing equipment shelter. The shelter is approximately 228 square feet. There are no proposed changes to the shelter with this Specific Use Permit request. However, as part of this SUP request, the applicant has agreed to make improvements to the shelter including power washing and fixing a portion of the roof.

AT&T is proposing to add one antenna per sector, (3) total (north, southeast, and southwest). The three (3) proposed antenna panels will be approximately 48" x 10", which are the same dimensions as the existing nine (9) antennas.

Staff has verified the following conditions in order to approve the proposed Specific Use Permit:

- The antennas and associated equipment shall match the color of the water tower.
- AT&T or authorized contractors shall make arrangements with the City of Farmers Branch Public Works Department before obtaining access to the Justice Center Water Tower or associated equipment shelters on City of Farmers Branch Property for any installation, repairs or testing of antennas, equipment or other appurtenances associated with the facility.
- AT&T or subsequent owner of the antenna system and equipment shelter shall remove the wireless communications antenna, associated equipment shelter, and all appurtenances within ninety (90) days subsequent to such time that the antenna and equipment shelter become obsolete and the use is abandoned.

Landscaping and Screening:

No supplemental landscape or screening is required at this location. Additionally, staff did not find any opportunity for additional landscaping due to the location of the tower behind the existing building and screening wall.

Thoroughfare Plan:

Valley View Lane is identified on the Thoroughfare Plan as a six-lane divided roadway adjacent to the subject property. Valley View Lane is currently six lanes, divided. Improvements are currently underway to portions of Valley View Lane.

Access for the Justice Center Water Tower is provided from westbound Valley View Lane and L.C. Tribble Way and from eastbound Valley View via the existing median opening to L.C. Tribble Way. Exit from the facility is provided by the same roadways.

Comprehensive Plan:

The Central Area Comprehensive Plan has identified "Public/Semi-Public" as the appropriate long-term development for the subject property and states the need for the City to continue providing superior public services to the community and its citizens.

Therefore, the request is consistent the Comprehensive Plan by providing superior public services to the community by increasing collocation of communications facilities on the water tower and avoiding the need for a freestanding antenna tower to provide increased service for this area.

Public Response:

Twenty-One (21) notification letters were mailed to the surrounding property owners on April 13, 2017. Two zoning notification signs were also placed on the site on that same day. As of April 20, 2017 one (1) written opposition to this SUP request has been received by the City. (See Opposition Letter).

On April 24th, the Planning & Zoning Commission voted to recommend approval of this Specific Use Permit as outlined in Ordinance 3444. The vote was unanimous.

Possible Council Action:

1. I move to adopt Ordinance 3444
2. I move to adopt Ordinance 3444 with the following modification(s)...
3. I move to table the item or take no action.