

COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AGENDA TITLE:

ZTA 2015-08 Wireless Amendment – Replacement of Wood Poles with Metal Poles

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST:

ZTA 2015-00008 Wireless – Replacement of wooden pole with metal pole. This ordinance would amend Sec. 18-5.1.40 by requiring a special exception to replace a wooden monopole with a metal monopole if the monopole is located closer in distance than its height to any lot line and the document authorized by Sec. 18-5.1.40(c)(3) does not exist. Currently, such a replacement is allowed by right.

STAFF CONTACT(S):

Mr. Fritz, Ms. Baldwin, Mr. Kamptner

PRESENTER (S):

Mr. Fritz

AGENDA DATE:

June 2, 2015

ACTION: X
INFORMATION:

CONSENT
AGENDA:
ACTION:
INFORMATION:

ATTACHMENTS:
Yes

REVIEWED BY:

BACKGROUND:

Currently the Zoning Ordinance permits by right the replacement of wood monopoles used to support wireless telecommunications equipment with metal poles. The Board of Supervisors directed staff to prepare language that would require Board review of the replacement of wood poles if the pole is located closer to the property line than the height of the pole and no easement exists on the adjacent property.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

Citizen Engagement: Successfully engage citizens so that local government reflects their values and aspirations.

DISCUSSION:

Staff estimates the number of sites potentially affected by this amendment to be approximately three dozen. Review of records shows that two wood poles have been replaced with metal poles. One of the replacements would have been affected by this proposed ordinance.

Under the current ordinance replacements would have to meet all of the design requirements for a facility such as height above the reference tree, pole diameter, routing of cables inside the pole, color, antenna mounting standards and other requirements designed to minimize the facility impact. The use of a metal pole is unlikely to result in more antenna onsite. Because the height of the facility is limited to 10 feet above the reference tree, placing more antenna on the tower, either wood or metal, is limited not so much by the capacity of the tower as it is by the interference caused by vegetation and the reduced effectiveness due to the lower height of the added equipment.

This amendment addresses only the replacement of wood with metal poles. Replacement of wood poles with wood poles is not affected. Any amendment to the ordinance could not affect replacement of wood poles with wood poles because the applicant has the right to utilize the previous approvals. Two wood poles have been replaced with new poles due to decay in the original installation. Metal poles are less likely to have decay and replacement with metal, may, in the long run be preferred due to the stability offered.

BUDGET IMPACT:

This amendment requires replacement of wood poles with metal poles to undergo increased review. A higher level of review has increased costs for the County.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff opinion is that this amendment will result in additional review costs to the County and increased review times. It will not prevent the replacement of decaying poles or result in the removal of any previously approved sites. Staff is unable to support this amendment.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – [Proposed Ordinance](#)

Attachment B – [Resolution of Intent](#)