

**STAFF PERSON:** Rebecca Ragsdale, Senior Planner  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:** December 14, 2016  
**PROJECT:** Building Permit #B201602090ATWR  
**PROPERTY OWNER:** Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority  
**APPLICANT:** Cellco Partnership dba Verizon Wireless  
c/o Stephen Waller  
**LOCATION:** 2226 Woodburn Road  
**TAX MAP/PARCEL:** 04500000000720

**PROPOSAL:**

This is a Tier I request to add wireless equipment on top of an existing 123' water tank. With this proposal, twelve (12) panel antenna, along with nine (9) remote radio heads mounted behind the antenna, would be placed on the tank with a 10-foot high extension. The antenna must be mounted to the water tank in this manner because the existing handrail is currently used by other wireless service providers and cannot support any additional antenna. Ground equipment changes can be accommodated within a proposed 14'x26' lease area and the existing driveway to the property will be used to access the site, which is inside the existing security fence.

The request includes the following special exceptions to County Code § 18-5.1.40:

- 1) § 18-5.1.40.a(4)(f)-waive tree survey
- 2) § 18-5.1.40.b(3)-waive tree conservation plan
- 3) § 18-5.1.40.b(2)(c)-modify projection of antenna to allow a stand-off beyond 18" from the top of the water tank, provided that the antenna project no more than 10' above the water tank as show on Sheet C-3.

**CHARACTER OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA:**

The site is 1.26-acres in size, is zoned RA Rural Areas, and is located in the Rural Area of the comprehensive plan on the edge of Neighborhood 1 in Places 29. The back portion of the site is wooded and the front portion of the site is developed with a 123' water tank, water pump buildings, and ground equipment for existing wireless service providers who have antenna located on the water tank. Existing wireless antenna are mounted to the handrail of the water tank and were approved through Tier I applications. Surrounding properties on the northwest side of Woodburn Road are zoned RA Rural Areas and include a mix of residential and wooded areas. Along the eastern side of Woodburn Road, properties are residential zoned properties and properties owned by VDOT.

**PERSONAL WIRELESS SERVICE FACILITIES POLICY:**

The wireless policy encourages the construction of facilities that have limited visual impact on the community. Visibility is the primary focus in the review of personal wireless service facilities, and facilities with limited visibility are encouraged. This wireless facility utilizes an existing structure which is visible from surrounding locations. However, the addition of wireless service antenna to the structure does not increase its visibility of the structure, does not adversely impact resources identified in the Open Space Plan and is not in an Avoidance Area. The policy encourages the use of existing structures where possible.

**ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUEST:**

Requests for modifications must be reviewed under the criteria established in County Code § 18-33.9(a), taking into consideration the factors, standards, criteria and findings for each request; however, no specific finding is required in support of a decision.

- 1) **§ 18-5.1.40.a(4)(f) tree survey**-The applicant requests to eliminate the requirement to identify and label all trees within 50' of the facility and all trees to be removed. The applicant does not propose to remove trees or vegetation with this proposal. Tree

surveys are typically required during review of tree top towers to identify the reference tree. This facility utilizes an existing water tank structure and is not relying on a reference tree for the 10' height about the tower.

- 2) **§ 18-5.1.40.b(3) tree conservation plan**-The applicant requests to eliminate the requirement for a tree conservation plan, which requires submittal of a plan showing tree protection measures, identification of trees to be removed, identification of dead and dying trees. Existing vegetation will remain and limits of disturbance are clearly identified on the proposed plans. No tree removal will be permitted and no plan is necessary to enforce this requirement.
- 3) **§ 18-5.1.40.b(2)(c) projection of antenna beyond 18" from tower structure**-This proposal includes a special exception request to modify the requirements of County Code § 18-5.1.40b(2)(c), which limits the standoff distance to 18" from the tower structure to the back of the antenna. The proposed antenna would project a distance of 10' from the top of the tower structure. The method of attachment on top of the structure is necessary because the water tank hand rail located around the middle of the tank cannot support additional antenna. Given the size and scale of the existing water tank, along with its distance from most vantage points, the antenna extension on top of the water tank is not expected to cause additional negative visual impacts.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends that the Board adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment E) approving the special exceptions, subject to the condition attached thereto.