

STAFF PERSON: Rebecca Ragsdale, Senior Planner
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: August 9, 2017
PROJECT: Building Permit # B201701389ATWR
PROPERTY OWNER: Lawrence D. Howell
APPLICANT: Crown Castle USA, Inc. on behalf of SmartSky
LOCATION: 5722 Wyant Road
TAX MAP/PARCEL: 07200-00-00-02100

PROPOSAL:

This is a Tier I request to add wireless equipment to an existing 98' treetop wireless tower. With this proposal, six (6) antenna would be mounted at 60' on the existing tower, which is approximately 30' below the existing treeline, to provide Wi-Fi service to aircraft. Ground equipment changes can be accommodated within the existing 30'x30' lease area and the existing driveway to the property will be used to access the site. The application includes the following special exception requests:

- 1) § 18-5.1.40.b(3) – to waive the requirement of a tree conservation plan
- 2) §18- 5.1.40.b(2)(a) – to modify the permitted number of arrays
- 3) §18- 5.1.40.b.(2)(b) – to modify the permitted antenna size
- 4) §18-5.1.40.b(2)(c) – to modify the permitted projection of antenna from the existing tower

CHARACTER OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA:

This wireless facility was approved March 21, 2001 with SP200000075. The site is 154.94 acres in size, is zoned RA Rural Areas, and is located between Wyant Lane and I-64. The wireless facility is located in a wooded area of site, 153 feet from the I-64 right-of-way. Surrounding properties include a mix of residential and agricultural uses with some properties heavily wooded.

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 well-sited treetop structure. The addition of wireless service antenna to the structure does not increase 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.

§ 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.

§18- 5.1.40.b(2)(a) number of arrays; §18- 5.1.40.b.(2)(b) antenna size; §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 the zoning ordinance related to the proposed 4th array of antenna. The ordinance limit is three array of antennas. The proposed antenna would project a distance of 4'4", an increase from the ordinance limit of 18" from the existing tower, and each antenna would be approximately 1873 square inches in size, which is 473 square inches greater than the 1400 square inches allowed by ordinance. Given that the additional antenna array will be mounted at 60', which is approximately 30' below the treeline in a heavily wooded area, along with its distance from vantage points, the increase in antenna size and projection is not expected to cause negative visual impacts.

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