



Planning and Zoning Commission August 10, 2017

17-066CU – ST. JOHN'S WIRELESS TOWER

Reviewing Board

Planning and Zoning Commission

Site Location

South side of Rings Road, approximately 400 feet east of the intersection with Avery Road

Proposal

Conditional Use (CU) for a stealth Wireless Communication Facility (WCF)

Zoning

Restricted Suburban Residential District

Property Owner

St. John's Lutheran Church

Applicant/Representative

Rob Ferguson, United Acquisition Services, Inc.

Applicable Land Use Regulations

Zoning Code Section 153.236 and Chapter 99 of the Dublin Code of Ordinances

Staff Recommendation

A. Approval of CU with four conditions

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Case Manager

Logan Stang, Planner I

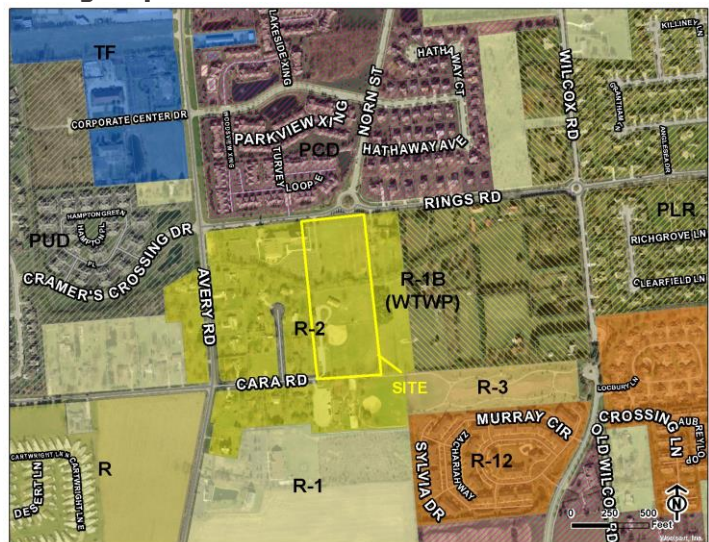
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Summary

The applicant is proposing the construction of a 104-foot wireless communications facility designed as a bell tower on an existing church site. The stealth tower is located in the southeast corner of the parking lot at the end of the drive aisle extending from Rings Road.

Zoning Map

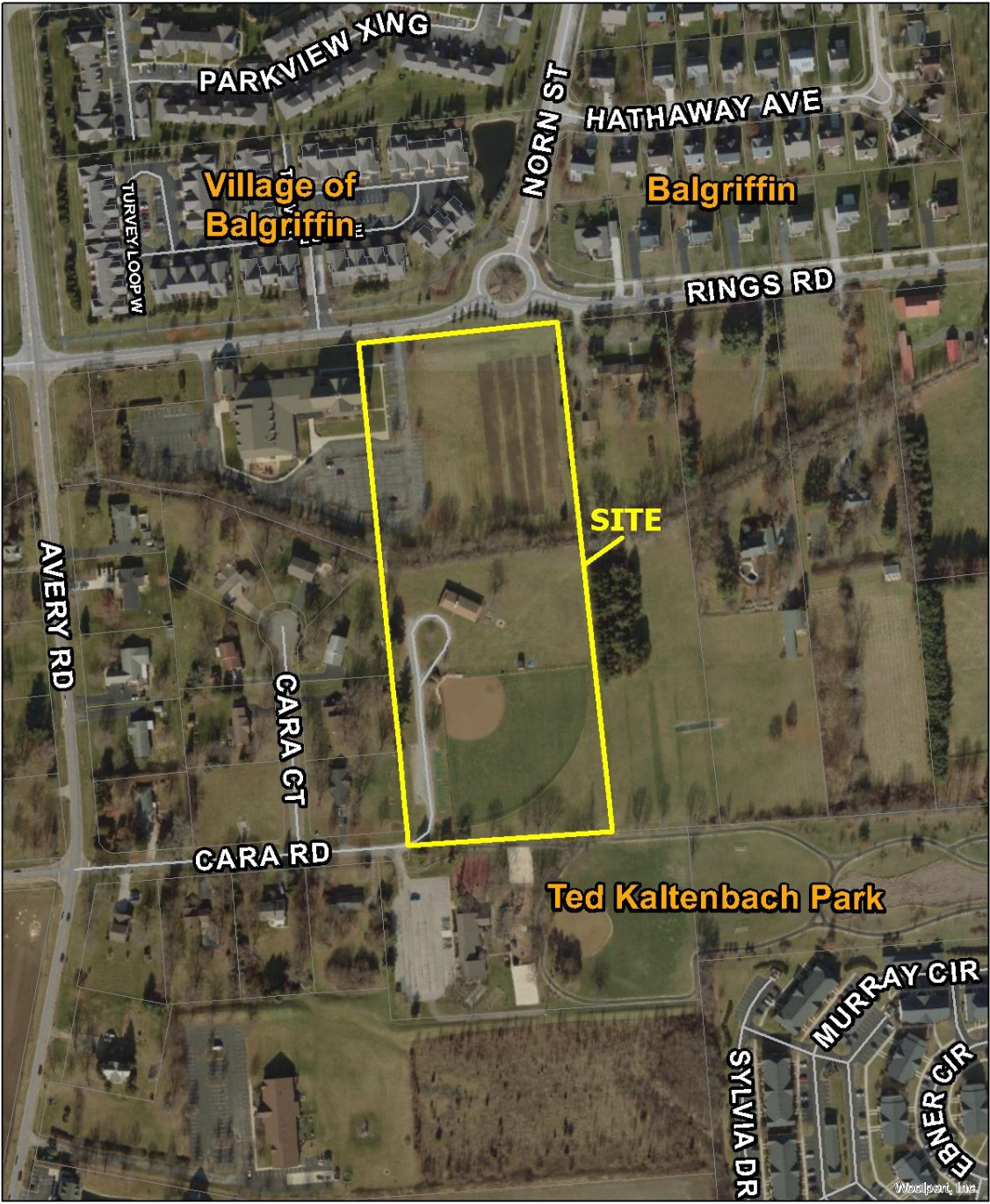


Next Steps

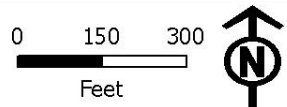
Upon approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission for the conditional use, the applicant will be able to file for building permits for the construction of the wireless communications facility. No additional public review is required for this application.

A. Context Map

The site is located on the south side of Rings Road, southeast of the intersection with Avery Road.



17-066CU
Conditional Use
St. John's Lutheran Church - Bell Tower
6135 Rings Road



B. Overview

1. Process

Chapter 99 of the Dublin Code of Ordinances contains all regulations and review procedures for wireless communication facilities. Wireless facilities are considered as one of four categories; co-location, new tower, alternative structure, and temporary facilities. A brief description of each facility is provided below:

- Co-location: Installation of wireless facilities on an existing tower or structure.
- New Tower: Construction of a monopole tower to house new wireless facilities.
- Alternative Structure: Construction of stealth tower or building mounted structure to house new wireless facilities.
- Temporary Facilities: Portable structures for operation during limited timeframes.

The facility type and zoning district determine the review procedure to ensure conformance with the requirements of Chapter 99. Alternative structures in residential zoning districts require Conditional Use review by the Planning and Zoning Commission and are the only tower type permitted in residential zoning districts. In addition to the criteria for a conditional use, the wireless chapter identifies a number of criteria specific to the unique use of wireless communication facilities. These criteria are listed in the analysis section of this report and Section 99.07 of the Dublin Code of Ordinances.

2. Background

The City of Dublin and Verizon Wireless have been working in conjunction for a number of years on identifying locations throughout the City to improve service. The locations are targeted to provide the widest coverage area while limiting the construction of new towers and alternative structures. The Saint John's Lutheran Church site has been identified as a candidate to provide a new alternative structure with the capabilities of holding multiple service providers. The City has been working with the applicant on finalizing the design and has encouraged the applicant to meet with surrounding residents on the proposal.

The church located on the adjacent parcel to the west is within the Architectural Review District and therefor falls within the purview of the Architectural Review Board which approved site and architectural modifications for a drop-off canopy with drive aisle and landscaping for the existing church on April 24, 2013.

The Architectural Review Board approved a building expansion for a sanctuary and mezzanine with associated site improvements on May 27, 1998. The case was reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission on June 19, 1997 due to the height of the proposed addition exceeding the maximum height permitted.

3. Site Characteristics

a. Natural Features

The site consists of a large open area used for community gardens near Rings Road with a stream that bisects the property running west to east. South of the stream is a baseball diamond with outbuilding that connects to Ted Kaltenbach Park.

b. Historic and Cultural Facilities

There are no historic or cultural facilities present on this site. The adjacent property to the west contains a historic church that is connected to the main church facility.

c. Surrounding Land Use and Development Character

- North: PCD, Balgriffin (Attached condominiums)
- East: R-2, Limited Suburban Residential (Single-family residence)
- South: R-2, Limited Suburban Residential (Ted Kaltenbach Park)
- West: R-2, Limited Suburban Residential (Single-family residences)

d. Road, Pedestrian and Bike Network

The facility is proposed a private site in the southeast corner of an existing parking lot. No new sidewalks or shared paths are proposed with this application.

e. Utilities

The site is served by public utilities with sanitary and water provided on Rings Road.

4. Proposal

a. Location

The applicant is proposing to construct the alternative structure and associated mechanical pads at the southeast corner of the parking lot. The applicant is leasing a portion of the property from the property owner identified in the submitted documents as the land space. Mechanical pads are proposed either within the structure or to the south. The proposed location will allow access from the west using the existing drive aisle and parking area along the edge of the parking lot.

Code requires that new towers or alternatives structures are located a minimum of 100 feet from any nearby property lines. The proposed location places the structure at approximately 93 feet from the property line that bisects the church. This is primarily due to floodplain concerns to the south and east from Cramer Ditch that extend around the outer edge of the proposed land area. Additionally, the property owner is unable to combine parcels due to the school district boundary being located on the shared property line. The Planning and Zoning Commission has the authority to modify setbacks for new towers and alternative structures if the applicant demonstrates other locations are unreasonable.

Floodplain exists on the parcel as identified by FEMA FIRM Panel 39049C0134K. The tower is proposed within the subject land space and is shown outside of the floodplain. Should any work be proposed within the floodplain the applicant will be required to submit a Special Flood Hazard Area Development Permit Application (SFHADPA) and will be subject to Chapter 151 – Flood Control of the Dublin Code of Ordinances.

b. Tower Design

The proposal disguises the wireless communications facility as a 104 foot independent bell tower. The existing church has a height of approximately 52 feet to the peak of the sanctuary and approximately 67 feet to the top of the cupola located in the center of the roof. The structure, next page, will include a faux brick texture, arched windows, and a steeple design that matches the existing church steeple. Code requires that the design

of alternative structures be architecturally compatible with the surrounding environment using materials, colors, textures, and screening. The proposed windows are decorative elements to break up the massing of the structure and are non-operational. Utility doors are proposed at the ground level to allow access to the mechanical equipment cabinets and wireless antenna.

The applicant is requesting with this application to exceed the maximum permitted height for residential districts. Code limits wireless communications facilities to a height of 80 feet unless the Commission approves an alteration to the requirement through the conditional use review. The additional 24-feet requested is to allow function of the wireless communications facilities while achieving the architectural element of the steeple. The requested height is not to the sole benefit of the wireless operation. This request is appropriate to ensure compatible design with the existing structures, however the applicant has provided an alternative design meeting the height requirement, shown right, where the steeple element is removed from the design.



c. Building Materials

The proposed material is a fiberglass panel installed at a size of 4 feet by 8 feet. The proposed material is colored and textured to replicate the brick on the existing church and provide a cohesive design. The panels are attached to the underlying structure that houses the wireless communication equipment. The applicant will need to submit a Fire Resistance Study for the proposed building material that demonstrates compliance with all applicable regulations to be reviewed and approved by the Fire Marshal.

d. Mechanical Screening & Landscaping

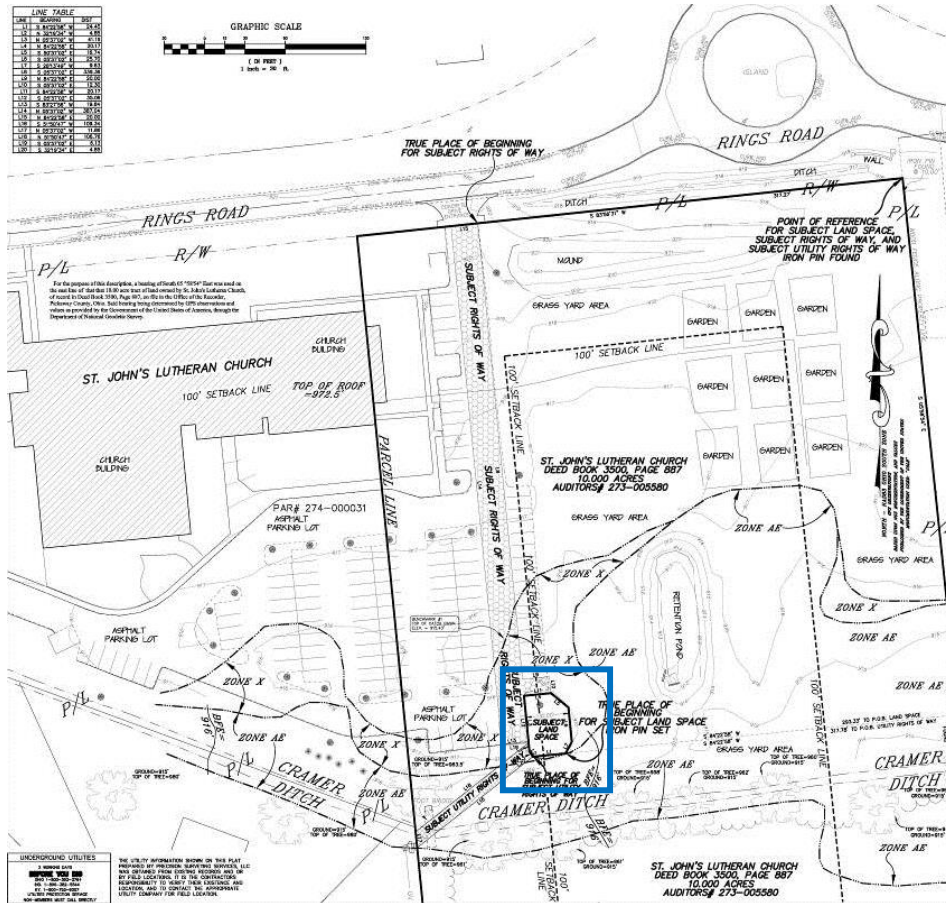
The proposal includes the construction of a six-foot wooden fence around the perimeter of the land area to screen the mechanicals while providing a safety measure. Fencing is a permitted screening material in the wireless code and is required to extend one foot taller than the equipment being screened. An identical gate is proposed on the west side of the land area to provide access to the structure and equipment cabinets. In addition to the fence, the applicant is proposing to provide landscaping around the south, east, and northern portions to soften the visual obtrusiveness. The landscaping will be provided in more detail with the building permit to ensure compatibility with the surrounding foliage.

e. Stormwater Management

The proposal will add less than 2,000 square feet of impervious area therefore a feasibility assessment is required per the Stormwater Design Manual. The applicant has submitted a feasibility assessment but additional storm calculations will need to be submitted to demonstrate compliance with Stormwater requirements as defined in Chapter 53 of the Dublin Code of Ordinances.

C. Site Plan

The accompanying site plan delineates the location of the alternative structure and existing site conditions.



D. Criteria Analysis

Conditional Use Analysis [§153.236(C)]

- 1) The proposed use will be harmonious with and in accordance with the general objectives or purpose of the Zoning Code and/or Community Plan.**
Criteria met.

This proposal is consistent with the purpose, intent and applicable development standards of the wireless code requirements and Community Plan.

- 2) The proposed use will comply with all applicable development standards, except as altered in the approved conditional use.**
Criteria met.

This proposal is consistent with the purpose, intent and applicable development standards of the Zoning Code requirements except as altered for the height and setback measurements in the conditional use application.

3) The proposed use will be harmonious with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity.

Criteria met with condition.

This proposed use is compatible with the surrounding character and will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the vicinity. The applicant will be required to revise the landscape plan to provide a natural buffer along the perimeter of the fence enclosure with the building permit.

4) The use will not be hazardous to or have a negative impact on existing or future surrounding uses.

Criteria met with conditions

The proposed use is appropriately located to minimize impacts on the existing or future uses. The applicant will be required to submit a Special Flood Hazard Area Development Permit Application (SFHADPA) for any work proposed within the floodplain and additional calculations with the feasibility assessment to demonstrate compliance with Chapter 53 of the Dublin Code of Ordinances. The applicant will also be required to submit a Fire Resistance Study for the building material demonstrating compliance with all applicable regulations to the satisfaction of the Fire Marshal.

5) The area and proposed use(s) will be adequately served by essential public facilities and services.

Criteria met.

The proposed use has adequate connections to all public services and facilities.

6) The proposed use will not be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.

Criteria met.

The proposed use is appropriately designed and located so as to not be detrimental to the surrounding community.

7) The proposed use will not involve operations that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare.

Criterion met.

The proposed use will not involve operations that are detrimental to the general welfare or surrounding person or property.

8) Vehicular approaches to the property shall be designed as not to create interference with traffic on public or private streets or roads.

Criteria met.

The proposal will utilize existing access and private circulation provided by the church development.

9) The proposed use will not be detrimental to property values in the immediate vicinity.

Criteria met.

The proposed use is appropriately designed and located so as to not be detrimental to property values in the immediate vicinity.

10) The proposed use will not impede the normal and orderly development of the surrounding properties.

Criteria met.

This proposed use is compatible with the surrounding character and will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the vicinity.

Wireless Communications Facility Analysis [§99.07(B)]

1) Compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

Criteria met.

The proposal is compliant with the requirements of the wireless chapter except as altered for height and setbacks through the conditional use review.

2) Height of the proposed tower or facility and its proximity to residential structures and districts.

Criteria met.

The proposed structure meets the requirements of the height restrictions as approved with the alternative design or through the conditional use application.

3) Nature of the potential for adverse effects on uses on adjacent and nearby properties.

Criteria met.

The proposal will not create any adverse effects on the nearby properties and is appropriately designed to match the character of the community.

4) Relationship of surrounding topography to the view from nearby properties.

Criteria met.

The site is relatively flat but the proposed location provides ample distance from neighboring properties to aid in reducing the massing of the structure.

5) Surrounding tree coverage and foliage and the ability to screen the facilities from the view of nearby properties.

Criteria met.

The proposed location of the structure is adjacent to an existing tree row running along Cramer Ditch, however is designed with the intent of appearing as a standalone structure.

6) Design of the tower or facility, with particular regard to design characteristics that reduce or eliminate visual obtrusiveness.

Criteria met.

The proposed structure uses architectural elements from the neighboring church to minimize visual obtrusiveness and provide a cohesive design for the site.

7) Proposed ingress and egress for maintenance, safety, and prohibition of nuisances.

Criteria met.

The proposal will utilize existing access from Rings Road and the existing parking lot circulation to provide access for maintenance on the structure and/or equipment cabinets.

8) Availability of suitable towers, other structures, or alternative technologies not requiring the use of new towers or structures.

Criteria met.

The proposed site was chosen to provide service to underserved areas and is designed to provide co-location to multiple providers in an effort to reduce construction of new towers or alternative structures.

E. Recommendations

The proposed Conditional Use for a Wireless Communications Facility is consistent with all of the applicable review criteria. **Approval** of the facility, with the alteration of the height to 104 feet and the alteration of the setback to 93 feet, is recommended with the following conditions:

- 1) That the applicant submit a Special Flood Hazard Area Development Permit Application (SFHADPA) for any work proposed within the floodplain;
- 2) That the applicant submit additional calculations with the feasibility assessment to demonstrate compliance with Chapter 53 of the Dublin Code of Ordinances, subject to approval by the City Engineer;
- 3) That the applicant submit a Fire Resistance Study for the building material demonstrating compliance with all applicable regulations to the satisfaction of the Fire Marshal; and,
- 4) That the applicant revise the landscape plan to provide a natural buffer along the perimeter of the fence enclosure with the building permit, subject to staff approval.