



## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

### County Board Agenda Item Meeting of December 12, 2009

**DATE:** November 24, 2009

**SUBJECT:** U-3232-09-1 USE PERMIT for public utility/telecommunications for 2 microwave/dish antennas located at 815 18<sup>th</sup> Street South (RPC #35-005-002).

**Applicant:**

Clearwire Wireless Broadband

**By:**

Phil Stetler  
Site Link Wireless, LLC  
7130 Minstrel Way, Suite 215  
Columbia, Maryland 21045

**C.M. RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the use permit for addition of two (2) dish antennas to an existing telecommunications facility subject to the conditions of the staff report.

**ISSUES:** The applicant is requesting a use permit to install two (2) dish antennas at an existing telecommunications facility on the roof of a multifamily building, and no issues have been identified.

**SUMMARY:** The applicant, Clearwire Wireless Broadband, is requesting a use permit for the addition of two (2) microwave dish antennas to an existing telecommunications facility on the roof of the Abingdon House Apartments. The two (2) antennas are proposed to be mounted lower than the height of the penthouse on the building, and will not create additional visual impact. The proposal is consistent with the *Interim Guidelines for Telecommunications Facilities on County-Owned Property* (Telecommunications Guidelines), which encourages the placement of antennas on existing structures. The Aurora Highlands Civic Association has commented to staff that they have no concerns with the applicant's proposal. Therefore, staff recommends that the site plan amendment be approved subject to the conditions of the staff report.

**BACKGROUND:** The applicant is proposing to mount an additional two (2) dish antennas to an existing telecommunications facility on the roof of the Abingdon House Apartments. The site

County Manager: BMD/GA

Staff: Matthew Pfeiffer, DCPHD, Planning Division

PLA-5399

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is located at 815 18<sup>th</sup> Street South, and is described as follows:

Site: The 78,796 square foot site is bound on the south by 18<sup>th</sup> Street South, on the east by South Hayes Street, and on the west by South Ives Street. The site consists of a residential multifamily building.

Zoning: The site is zoned “RA6-15” Apartment Dwelling Districts.

Land Use: The site is designated on the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) as “Low-Medium” Residential (16-36 units/acre).

Neighborhood: The site is located within the Aurora Highlands Civic Association. The civic association has expressed to staff that they have no issues with the applicant’s proposal.

**DISCUSSION:** The applicant, Clearwire Wireless Broadband, is requesting a use permit for the placement of two (2) dish antennas on the roof of the Abingdon House Apartments. The roof of the subject multifamily building contains an existing telecommunications facility consisting of three equipment shelters, an equipment platform, and a number of panel, microwave dish, and GPS antennas. The applicant’s proposal includes mounting one (1) dish antenna on the northwest corner of the roof at a height of 65’, one (1) dish antenna on an existing sprint shelter at a height of 78’, and coaxial cable connections for the two antennas. The subject microwave dish antennas each measure approximately two (2) feet in diameter.

The *Interim Guidelines for Placement of Telecommunications Facilities on County-Owned Property* (Telecommunications Guidelines), were used to evaluate the application. The Telecommunication Guidelines offer direction in the way of design, visual impact, and compliance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations, among other things. The Telecommunication Guidelines can be applied to telecommunication facilities on privately owned as well as County-owned property. The Telecommunications Guidelines encourage the location of new antennas on existing structures, as opposed to constructing a new pole. The proposed antennas meet these criteria. Attached are plans depicting the location and appearance the proposed dish antennas.

The proposal will not result in a visual impact to surrounding residences. The penthouse on the subject building reaches a height of 80’, and neither proposed antenna will exceed that height. Moreover, the applicant indicates that the antennas will be painted according to the existing color schematics of the building, and all cables will follow existing paths and will be shrouded. The facility will continue to be unmanned, and no ground space will be used in association with this proposal.

**CONCLUSION:** Staff supports the applicant’s proposal because it is consistent with the Telecommunications Guidelines and it will not create an additional visual impact. The Aurora Highlands Civic Association has expressed to staff that they have no issues with the applicant’s proposal. Therefore, staff recommends that the use permit for Clearwire Wireless Broadband for the placement of two (2) microwave dish antennas to an existing telecommunications facility at 815 18<sup>th</sup> Street South be approved subject to the following conditions.

Conditions:

1. The applicant agrees that the two (2) Clearwire dish antennas on the existing building at 815 18<sup>th</sup> Street South will be installed as shown on plans dated June 16, 2009. More than two (2) Clearwire dish antennas on the building would require a use permit amendment.
2. The applicant shall identify a community liaison who shall be available to address any concerns regarding the facility operation. The name and telephone number of the liaison shall be provided to the Aurora Highlands Civic Association and the Zoning Administrator.
3. The applicant agrees that the antennas shall be removed within ninety (90) days after any cessation of use.

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:

There are no previous County Board actions on this property.







