



To: Urban Design Committee
From: Planning and Preservation Division
Date: August 4, 2016
RE: **Review of encroachments throughout the larger Fan area for Verizon telecommunications equipment on Dominion poles; UDC No. 2016-34**

I. APPLICANT

Cellco Partnership dba Verizon Wireless

II. LOCATION

3545 W Cary Street
3025 Parkwood Avenue
1920 West Cary Street
1520 Lakeview Avenue
1928 Rosewood Avenue
3336 Cutshaw Avenue
3101 Grove Avenue

Property Owner:

City of Richmond right-of-way
Dominion Power poles
Verizon equipment

III. PURPOSE

The application is for review of encroachments of small cell antennas and related equipment on existing poles within the public right-of-way. The equipment will constitute an encroachment.

IV. SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposal is consistent with the recommendation of the Urban Design Guidelines that "new telecommunication devices shall be located on existing infrastructure", which is intended to reduce the proliferation of stand-alone telecommunications devices. In addition, Staff does not find the proposed antennae to be appreciably more intrusive than the utility poles on which they are to be mounted. Therefore, it is Staff's position that the Urban Design Committee should recommend that the Director of Public Works grant approval as submitted.

Staff Contact:

Kathleen Onufer, (804) 646-5207

V. FINDINGS OF FACT

a. Site Description and Surrounding Context

This project would install small cell antennas at multiple locations to form a polygon design network.

b. Scope of Review

The project involves the provision of equipment above public rights-of-way. The City owns the rights-of-way, but the applicant will perform all of the work and will be responsible for all of the maintenance, which puts the improvements in the category of encroachments. The encroachment process is administered through the Department of Public Works, which has requested that the Urban Design Committee (UDC) provide design advice on certain types of encroachments. The UDC does not have the authority to approve encroachments, but rather provides advice to the Department of Public Works.

c. UDC Review History

The Urban Design Committee has reviewed a number of telecommunications projects over the last two decades, including the installation of collocated equipment on new monopoles and upgrades to existing equipment.

d. Project Description

This project is to install seven initial small cell antennas and related equipment in a polygon network at seven different locations throughout the greater Fan area. The goal of the project is to improve wireless communications for Verizon customers throughout the City, by relieving telecommunications load from the existing load.

The initial small antennas will be attached to utility poles owned by Dominion Virginia Power and its affiliates; the plan provides for the replacement of the existing wooden utility poles and attachment of the antennas and related equipment. Power and fiber lines will be provided to the poles across City right-of-way.

In addition to this encroachment request, Verizon is moving forward with a pole attachment agreement that would enable the company to utilize City-owned utility poles for future expansion plans.

Equipment to be installed includes a single cylindrical array attached to the top of the pole, the array of height 28.7" and width 12", other smaller equipment below, and an equipment cabinet mounted at elevation 11' on the pole if over sidewalk and 8' if over ground. 10% of the pole height + 2' is buried underground for stability. Existing wires will be reinstalled at their existing elevation on the new poles.

3545 W Cary St: Existing 27' pole with 24.5' utility line to be replaced with pole and equipment at overall height 42.7', top of utility pole 39'

3025 Parkwood Ave: Existing 37.5' pole with wires at 37.5'; 24.5'; and 19.5' to be replaced with pole and equipment at overall height 49.8', top of utility pole 46'

1920 W Cary St: Existing 40' pole with lines at 34.5', 31', 30', 20', 19', and 17.5' to be replaced with pole and equipment at overall height 52.7', top of utility pole 49'

1520 Lakeview Ave: Existing 46' pole with lines at 30.5', 28.5', 26.5', 24.5', 21.5', 20.5', and 19.0' to be replaced with pole and equipment at overall height 49.6' and top of utility pole 46'.

1928 Rosewood: Existing pole with lines at 32', 28', 26', 20', 17.5' replaced pole and equipment at overall height 44.7', top of utility pole 41'

3336 Cutshaw Ave: Existing 34' pole with lines at 29', 25.5', 24.5', 23.5', 22.6', 20', 19', 18' to be replaced with pole and equipment overall height 46.8'; top of utility pole 43'

3101 Grove Ave: Existing pole with lines at 37', 30.5', 28.0', 27.5', 26.5', 21.0', 20.5', 19.5', 18.5' to be replaced with pole and equipment at overall height 49.7', top of utility pole 46'.

e. Master Plan

The subject properties are part of the Near West Planning District. A recommendation for this area is that "new or expanded electrical and communication cables and any new future technology should be located underground. Existing above-ground cables should be relocated underground when possible, especially when significant repairs, maintenance, or upgrades are implemented" (page 241).

f. Urban Design Guidelines

The Public Facilities section of the Urban Design Guidelines states that "whenever possible, new telecommunication devices shall be located on existing infrastructure" and further that "telecommunication devices that are able to be co-located on existing towers are encouraged" (page 16).

The encroachment section states that "The Urban Design Committee supports the City Planning Commission's Resolution, dated February 6, 1995, which discourages new overhead wire and cable encroachments in the public right-of-way. (see Appendix 4.) All new wires and cables should be placed underground, as feasible. The Committee advocates that all existing overhead utility wires and cables should be relocated underground, as feasible, especially in neighborhood business and residential areas." (page 32).

VII. ATTACHMENTS

- a. Vicinity Map**
- b. Application**
- c. Plans**