

Memorandum

To: Planning Commission Members
From: The Development Department
CC: Honorable Members of City Council, Clerk of Council, City Departments
Date: June 3, 2011
Re: Staff Report for South-Western City Schools Transportation Facility – Special Use Permit (Radio Tower)

**Item #4 – South-Western City Schools Transportation Facility– Special Use Permit
(Radio Tower) (PID# 201105200014)**

Application: Special Use Permit
Location: 3427 Southwest Blvd
Applicant: Mark Waller
Zoning: IND-2 (Heavy Industry)
Use: Transportation Facility (School Bus Lot)

Relevant Code Section(s):

- 1135.09 (b) (12) Special Use Permits
- 1137.15 Radio and Television Antennas and/or Antenna Towers

Project Summary:

The applicant is requesting approval of a special use permit to install a new radio antenna at the South-Western City Schools transportation facility located at 3427 Southwest Blvd. The proposed antenna will be 130 feet in height and will replace the existing 70 foot tower in order to provide reliable coverage throughout the district. The proposed antenna will support the district's new two-way communication system, which includes a direct channel of communication to the Grove City Police Department for school buses and immediate connectivity to any or all buildings during an emergency. The proposed tower will be located directly behind the existing building on the site, set back more than 180 feet from the nearest property boundary, to the east. A chain link fence and bollards will be installed at the perimeter of the tower base.

Section 1137.15(f) requires that a landscape buffer be installed directly around the base of tower. The applicant has stated that a landscape buffer around the base would create a hazard for both bus traffic as well as pedestrians on the lot created by visibility concerns. Staff would be supportive of a variance from the BZA for the landscape standards outlined in 1137.15, given the existing fencing and landscaping around the perimeter of the site. The site is currently surrounded by fencing, supplemented by trees along

the west, south, and east property lines. Other requirements outlined in section 1137.15 have been met, including the distance from abutting property and fencing around the tower base.

The Transportation Facility is bordered by a warehouse to the east, Beulah Park on the south and west, and industrial uses across Southwest Blvd to the north. The applicant has indicated that an attempt was made to utilize existing towers at several high school sites, but that all other sites did not provide reliable reception throughout the district.

Code Analysis:

Per Section 1135.09, the Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing Special Use Permit requests and recommending approval, approval with modifications or denial to City Council based on findings of compliance with the standards and requirements of this Code (*see relevant code sections*) and subject to the conditions established by the Planning Commission to ensure compliance with the letter and intent of this Code. The following is the Development Department's evaluation based on code standards and requirements.

1. *The proposed use shall be in harmony with the existing or intended character of the district and nearby affected districts and shall not change the essential character of the districts;*

Standard is Met: The proposed antenna tower does not change the intended character of the district.

2. *The proposed use shall not adversely affect the use of adjacent property;*

Standard is Met: The proposed radio tower will not affect the use of adjacent property. The tower will be set back more than 100% of the tower height from all property boundaries.

3. *The proposed use shall not adversely affect the health, safety, morals, or welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood;*

Standard is Met: The proposed tower will not adversely affect the health, safety, morals, or welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood. The proposed tower will improve the communication and safety of South-Western City School District facilities as well as school buses.

4. *The proposed use shall be served adequately by public facilities and services such as, but not limited to, roads, police and fire protection, storm water facilities, water, sanitary sewer, and school;*

Standard is Met: The proposed tower will not place any further demand on public services. The installation of the tower is part of a partnership with the Grove City Division of Police and Franklin County Sheriff's Office to improve communications in the district.

5. *The proposed use shall not impose a traffic impact upon the public right-of-way significantly different from that anticipated from permitted uses of the district;*

Standard is Met: The proposed tower will not impact the right-of-way.

6. *The proposed use shall be in accord with the general and specific objectives, and the purpose and intent of this Zoning Code and the Land Use Plan and any other plans and ordinances of the City;*

Standard is Met: The use is in accordance with the intent of all applicable code requirements and ordinances of the City.

7. *The proposed use complies with the applicable specific provisions and standards of this Code;*

Standard is Met: The use is in accordance with the intent of all applicable code requirements.

8. *The proposed use shall be found to meet the definition and intent of a use specifically listed as a special use in the district in which it is proposed to be located;*

Standard is Met: The site is located in the IND-2 district, in which antenna towers are permitted with a Special Use Permit.

9. *A completed application indicating the Specific Special Use permit activity intended by the applicant shall be submitted to the Department of Development by the Council approved submittal dates;*

Standard is Met: The applicant properly submitted a completed application.

Recommendation(s):

After review and consideration, the Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Special Use Permit with the following stipulation:

1. The applicant shall obtain a variance to the landscape requirements in Section 1137.15(f) from the BZA.