



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

DATE: December 8, 2011

TO: Peter F. Murphy, Jr., Chairman
Fairfax County Planning Commission

FROM: Chris Caperton, Chief, Facilities Planning
Department of Planning and Zoning

SUBJECT: Modifications to pole and sled mount antennas

Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) Staff receives hundreds of 2232 amendment applications for telecommunications facilities each year. Many of these applications propose changes to antennas previously approved for a pole or sled mount antenna configuration on a building. On September 29, 2003, the Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to the Policy Plan determining that this type of configuration is no longer a Feature Shown of the Comprehensive Plan. Due to some confusion on the part of applicants, this correspondence to the Planning Commission clarifies the amendment process as it pertains to non-flush mounted antennas.

Comprehensive Plan Provisions

The Feature Shown Guidelines in the Mobile and Land Based Telecommunications section of the Policy Plan state:

Policy c: In determining that proposed telecommunication facilities are a feature shown of the Comprehensive Plan, ensure that the following general factors are met:

- the proposed installation has no material adverse impact on the visual quality or character of the general area in which it is to be placed including any surrounding residential properties;
- the proposed installation is located and designed to blend with the structure on which it is placed such as flush-mounting antennas or screening the antennas and equipment as appropriate to the site;
- the proposed installation, when in a grouping of other similar structures, is consistent with the pattern of those surrounding structures;
- building rooftop antennas should be either flush mounted to surface walls, screened or placed to not be visible from the surrounding area.

In reviewing proposed modifications to existing pole or sled mounted antennas, DPZ Staff attempts to consistently apply Policy C in the following manner:

The approved carrier may install/maintain the antennas as approved without further 2232 review. The approved carrier may also reduce the size of the antenna in the approved configuration without further 2232 review. However, if the carrier proposes to increase the size of the approved pole or sled mounted antennas then the carrier must meet the Feature Shown Guidelines in the Comprehensive Plan as they are currently written which requires flush-mount or full screening. If the modifications do not meet the Feature Shown Guidelines then a public hearing is required.

Please let me know if you have any questions about this particular issue.

cc: Barbara Lippa, Executive Director, Planning Commission

Lorrie Kirst, Deputy Zoning Administrator, Zoning Administration Branch, DPZ

