



Development Review Center
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NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION MEETING NOTES

Meeting Date March 23, 2017

These notes capture staff's interpretation of questions, comments and ideas from the meeting.

PROJECT: Southside Baptist Church Wireless Telecommunication Facility

DATE: March 29, 2017

PLANNER: Clay Frickey, City Planner

PROSPECTIVE APPLICANT: Caleb Crossland, Atlas Tower

City Planner Clay Frickey introduced the purpose of the meeting, the agenda, and the City's Land Use Code which addresses the placement and design of cell tower facilities and equipment. FCC regulations limit local government authority and specifically restrict State or local governments from regulating wireless facilities on the basis of the environmental effects of radio frequency emissions to the extent that a facility complies with FCC regulations on such emissions.

The proposed facility would need to proceed through the City's Development Review process with submittal of plans, staff review of plans, and a public hearing. Plans would be available online for public inspection, and a mailing notice would be sent for the hearing in accordance with the code.

Caleb Crossland explained the proposal and rationale.

- Service providers are seeing a need for more, smaller towers closer to users based on the increasing demands of communication devices.
- Why a tower here? Demand. It is needed to service this area. There is coverage but service level is declining corresponding to increasing demand. The nearest tower is about a mile away.
- The FCC views this communication infrastructure as basic utility infrastructure. It is viewed as a safety issue. Emergency services use it on over half of 911 calls.
- Works best when surrounded by users, and near busy streets. This location is ideal.
- The design concept is a bell tower. The church would decide on the actual design. Shown is a conceptual illustration at 65 feet in height.

Caleb explained the FR or radio frequency waves used in wireless communications. RF waves are a form of non-ionizing radiation. They are on the spectrum that includes light, radio, xrays, and other forms of radiation.

There are zero studies of a cell antenna causing cancer. A phone next to the ear works at a higher power level than at a typical distance from an antenna tower. Written material handouts are available showing facts and information about RF waves.

Any questions or requests for information are welcome at:
Caleb.crossland@gmail.com, phone 303.448.8896

Questions and Discussion:

Q = Question
R = Response
C = Comment

Q: Where is the tower proposed on the site?

R (City): close to the building, on the east side of the building.

Q: Is the church the best route to stop or deny this?

R: Yes, that would be a good way. Otherwise, it would be approved, changed, or denied after the City review process.

C: This is the largest metro area I've ever been in with the worst coverage.

R: Fort Collins is a hot spot for providers looking to improve coverage.

Q: How far would it be from the east property line?

R: Much closer to the church than the property line. Outside the east wall of the church building.

Q: A church on Prospect backed out of a deal like this. Do you know why?

R: Not specifically but typical reasons would be that the owner was never really serious, or they received opposition that persuaded them.

C: Southridge Greens is a denial example. It was close to 2 schools. Children's health is important. Do you have any studies on children specifically?

R: Yes, a UK study sort of looked at that. It found no association of cancer with antennas. In general, schools are a common spot for these antennas. They generate revenue for the schools. No peer-reviewed studies show risk for cancer.

Q: Why are there no studies that show definite proof? Can you name any studies?

R: Studies have found no statistical increase in cancer related to these facilities. But it's a different challenge to prove that there's no effect. The studies have been done. Results are there. You should look at how experts test it, and look at the studies. You can look at the example of water in other cities – people have died from that. That shows that there was a problem, the problem was found, and known, and dealt with. No problem has been found with this.

Q: Where are the antennas in Fort Collins?

R: There may be about 100. They are ubiquitous. Many shopping centers have them, and they are right next to houses. Scotch Pines, King Soopers at Taft and Elizabeth. There's a church on Laporte Street right across from Poudre High School that has a bell tower facility.

C: I feel they're safe. The signals are everywhere. They're on your house, in the meter.

Q: What's the time frame to construct?

R: About 8 weeks.

C: I was against this when I heard about it. A neighbor has a defibrillator and I went to see if he was coming to this meeting to oppose this. His defibrillator runs on Verizon and he needs the coverage. It is sometimes weak. This is the safety aspect.

Q: DESIGN is the key thing. Can it be built into the steeple?

R: It's hard to get the height needed, and the ground equipment, and there are structural challenges. It needs to get above trees, and have capacity for multiple carriers.

C: We sold a house in another state that had powerlines in back. It's been found that there's no risk. But there was a PERCEPTION. So, it's important to make it stealth. There's more danger from having your phone at your ear. But DESIGN for stealth to avoid the perceptions.

R: That is the plan, we would work with the City on the design. And the church.

C: I did read that children are more susceptible. They have thinner skulls, little reproductive organs. Some countries are banning WiFi. Non-ionizing waves CAN disturb cells. So there IS information out there. Maybe the internet just gives too much, maybe that's what's happening here.

R: There is an established distrust of medical organizations. Acknowledge that. But be real careful with the source. Look for peer review.

C: There are lots of overseas studies. I've had a medical condition for years, and needed electromagnetic frequency treatment. So it does affect DNA and cells. And property values ARE affected.

Q: What IS the power?

R: I'm not an expert or engineer but this would follow FCC rules. Being close to users, it'll be limited. It won't be a strong signal.

C: I bet everybody here has a cell phone. If you look around, you'll find these towers in all of our backyards.

C: I'm a realtor – I can say that some clients see a tower, and say no. Southridge was an example, with a big electrical tower.

C: Design, design, design.

Clay Frickey dismissed the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.