



TO: Longview Planning Commission

FROM: Steve Langdon, Planning Manager

HEARING

DATE: May 4, 2016

SUBJECT: CASE NUMBER PC 2015-4: Proposed update to the City's Wireless Facilities codes.

TYPE OF

DECISION: Legislative

BACKGROUND

At the urging of the Washington Cities Insurance Authority, the City decided to undergo an update of the city's municipal code regarding wireless facilities. The existing wireless facility code (Chapter 16.75 Wireless Communications) is outdated. The Planning Commission held their first workshop on the matter at their September 2015 regular meeting. Several workshops on the update have taken place since then. At their regular April 2016 meeting, the Planning Commission set a public hearing on the two draft chapters.

The new wireless facilities chapters will be applicable citywide.

PROPOSAL

Under the proposal, the existing Chapter 16.75 will be repealed and then replaced with a new Chapter 16.75 titled "Wireless Communication Facilities." This chapter would regulate the siting of new wireless communication facilities. In addition, a new chapter will be created; Chapter 16.80 titled "Eligible Wireless Facilities Modifications." This chapter will regulate modification to existing facilities such as adding antennas to an existing cell phone tower. Draft Chapter 16.75 is attached as Exhibit A. Draft Chapter 16.80 is attached as Exhibit B. Exhibit C contains municipal code reference changes needed to address the new chapters.

S.E.P.A. Determination

An Environmental Checklist for the proposed zoning code revisions was reviewed pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act and a determination of non-significance was issued on December 22, 2015. [E 2015-17 SEPA checklist] The comment period

for the SEPA checklist ended on January 5, 2016. SEPA documents are attached as Exhibit D.

Additional Information

Pursuant to Chapter 19.81 of the Longview Municipal Code, a legal notice was published in the Longview Daily News on April 24, 2016 and May 1, 2016.

Citizen Correspondence

As of this writing, the City has received no written comments.

Comprehensive Plan Goal and Policies

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Comprehensive Plan goals and policies that address telecommunications facilities are given below.

Goal UT-A To ensure that energy and telecommunication providers make efficient use of facilities, improve service and aesthetic qualities of facilities, and accommodate growth in a timely matter.

Policy UT-A.1.1 Ensure that City regulations allow for improvements and additions to electric, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities as needed to accommodate growth and provide reliable service.

Policy UT-A.1.7 Require communication facilities and poles, including cell or radio towers, to consider existing sites and co-locating prior to establishing new sites.

Goal UT-B - To promote and support energy conservation.

Policy UT-B.1.4 Encourage state of the art telecommunication services as a means to mitigate the transportation impact of development and growth.

Staff comment: The draft codes require that providers look at co-location first which helps ensure efficient services without the aesthetic impacts of multiple sites.

STAFF DISCUSSION

None

STAFF FINDINGS

Staff has examined the merits of the proposal to amend the Longview Zoning Code and makes the following findings:

1. The City's comprehensive plan calls for improvements to the telecommunication facilities to accommodate growth and provide for reliable service. The draft

- wireless facilities code allows for new wireless towers and new building mounted antennas and the expansion of those facilities.
2. Comprehensive plan policy calls for communication facilities providers to first consider existing sites and co-locating prior to establishing new sites. Under the draft code, new towers are not allowed until the provider demonstrates there is a gap in coverage, there are no other viable alternatives and the new facility is the least intrusive upon the surrounding area.
 3. The City's comprehensive plan calls for providers to consider the aesthetic qualities of facilities. The draft code has standards and requirements regarding aesthetic qualities of facilities.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council to adopt the subject wireless facilities and zoning code amendments.

EXHIBITS

- A. Draft Chapter 16.75 Wireless Communication Facilities
- B. Draft Chapter 16.80 Eligible Wireless Facilities Modifications
- C. Draft modifications to municipal code that refers to LMC 16.75
- D. SEPA Documents

Report Date: April 25, 2016