



ZOTA-23-1 – Telecommunication Tower Setbacks

Planning Commission Work Session
March 19, 2024

Request – Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

Reduce the setback requirement for telecommunication towers in the Public-Semi-Public (PSP) District to less than 100% of the tower height.

Zoning Ordinance Article 9, Section 9-18 - Telecommunications Facilities

- Section 9-18.10 – Setbacks

Towers shall be set back a distance of at least one hundred (100) percent of the height of the tower from the boundaries of the property on which the tower is located.

Applicant - Proposed Text Language:

Towers shall be set back a distance of at least one hundred (100) percent of the height of the tower from the boundaries of the property on which the tower is located. The required setback distance may be reduced to a distance of at least one hundred (100) percent of the certified fall zone, as certified by a Virginia Professional Engineer in a letter which includes the Professional Engineer's signature and seal.

Telecommunications Facilities – Setback Requirements

Setback reduction allowed to less than the full height of the tower.

Jurisdiction	Setback Reduction Allowed	Setback Requirements
Fairfax City	Yes	Minimum setback equal to 110% of the tower height, except for monopoles certified by an engineer where the setback is reduced to the minimum setback for the district.
Fauquier County	Yes	Towers must be set back a distance equal to the height of the tower, except where the setback is reduced to no less than the fall zone as determined by an engineering design as a part of the legislative approval process.
Culpeper County	No	Towers must be designed to collapse within the lot lines.
Town of Culpeper	No	Towers must be set back at least the minimum setback for the district, and must be designed to fall within the boundaries of the property, except where a permanent easement is obtained from an adjoining property owner. No habitable structure shall be located within the fall zone.
Prince William County	No	Setback of twice the tower height for all property lines that abut residential or agricultural properties; minimum setback of 200 feet from all public streets, with an additional setback equal to the tower height for all towers over 200 feet in height. The tower must be designed to collapse within the property boundaries.
Rappahannock County	No	For any tower over 50 feet in height, a minimum setback equal to 110% of the tower height is required, and must be contained entirely within the subject property. Within the setback, the property owner may erect structures at their own risk.
Spotsylvania County	Yes	Towers must be set back from property lines at least the minimum setback for the district. A certified engineering statement must be provided to specify the tower design, including breakpoints.
Loudoun County	Yes	Public towers must be set back equal to the height of the tower. Commercial monopoles and towers must be set back 1 foot for every 5 feet of tower height.

Fall Zone – The maximum distance that a tower could potentially collapse, as measured from the center point of a tower.

Certified Fall Zone – The maximum distance that a tower could potentially collapse, as certified by a Professional Engineer, that is generally less than the full height of the tower due to the physical properties of the tower.

Break-Point Technology – A method of designing a tower where a point of failure is chosen, and then that point is designed to be more susceptible to failure, or, the tower structure from that selected point down to the foundation is strengthened, so that in either case should the tower fail due to wind or other conditions, the tower will fold over on itself at that breaking point.

Zoning Ordinance Requirements - Communications Towers

Article 3 – Section 3-4 - *Requirements for Base Zoning Districts*

- Communications Towers are allowed in all Zoning Districts with the approval of a Special Use Permit by Town Council.
- Historic District – Certificate of Appropriateness.

Article 9 – Section 9-18 – *Telecommunications Facilities*

- Standards for lighting, screening, fencing, setbacks.

Article 11 – Section 11-3.10 – *Special Use Permits and Waivers*

- Application process, evaluation criteria.

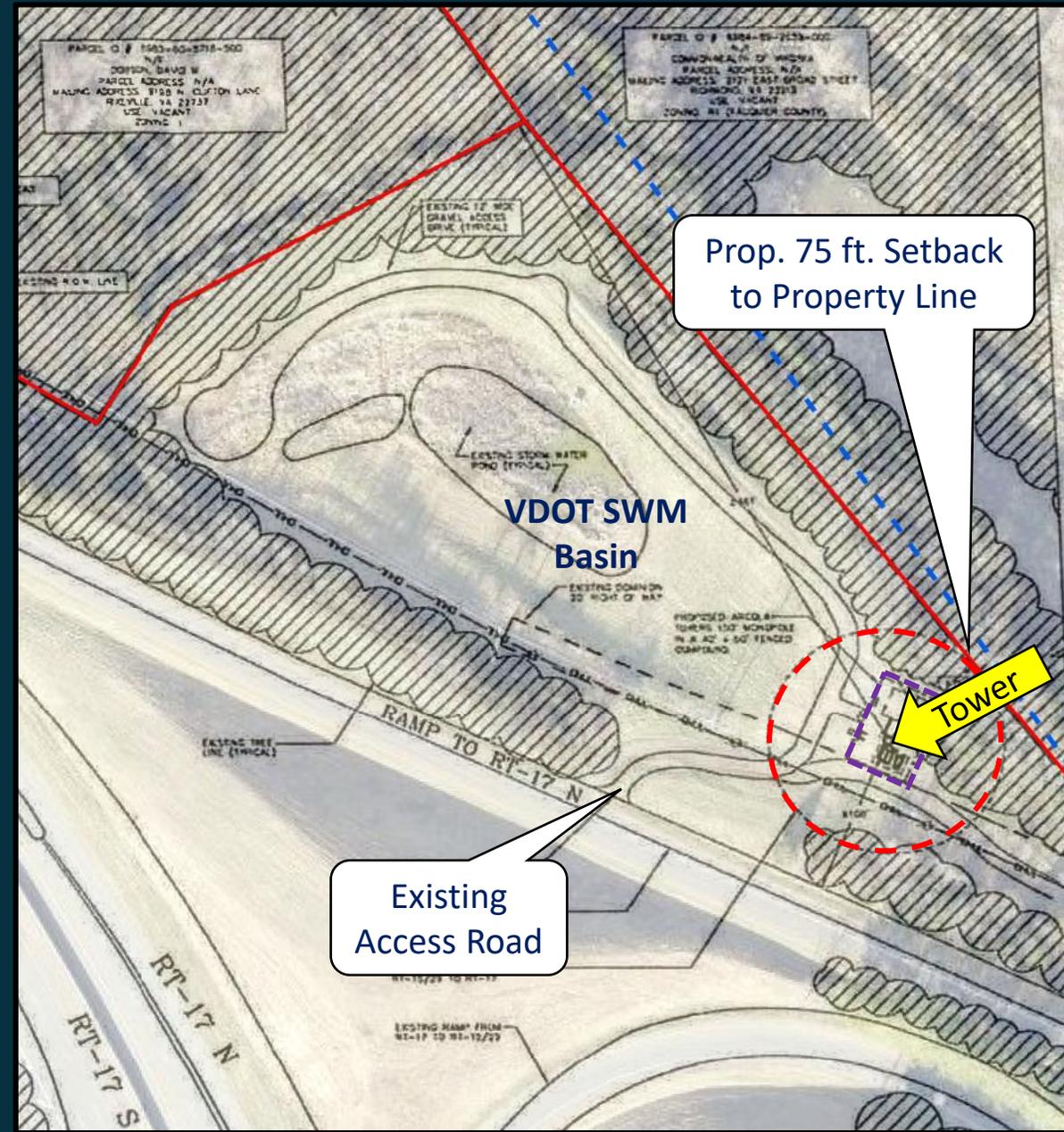
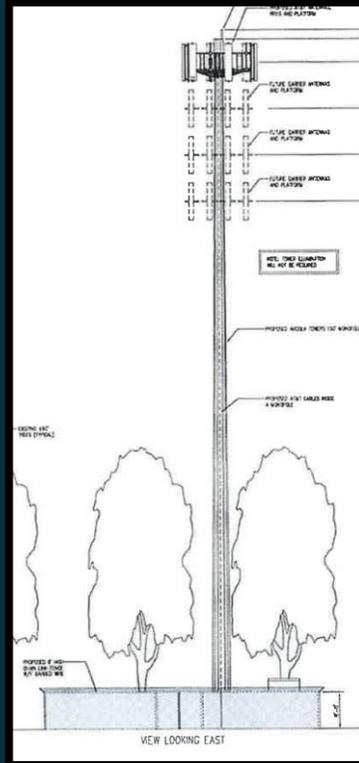
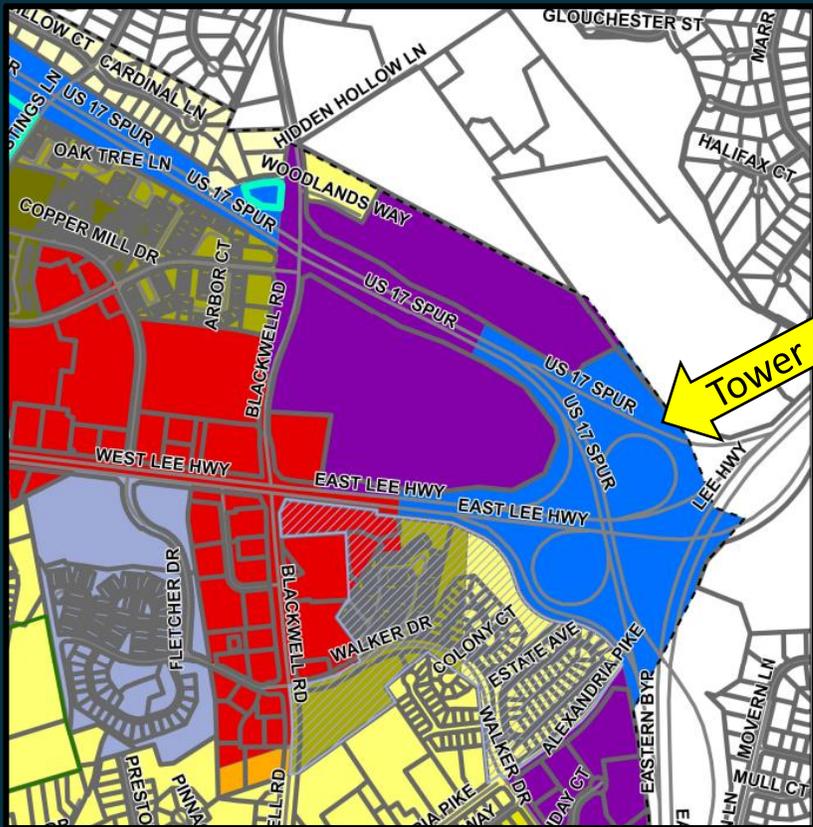
Article 10 – *Site Development Plans*

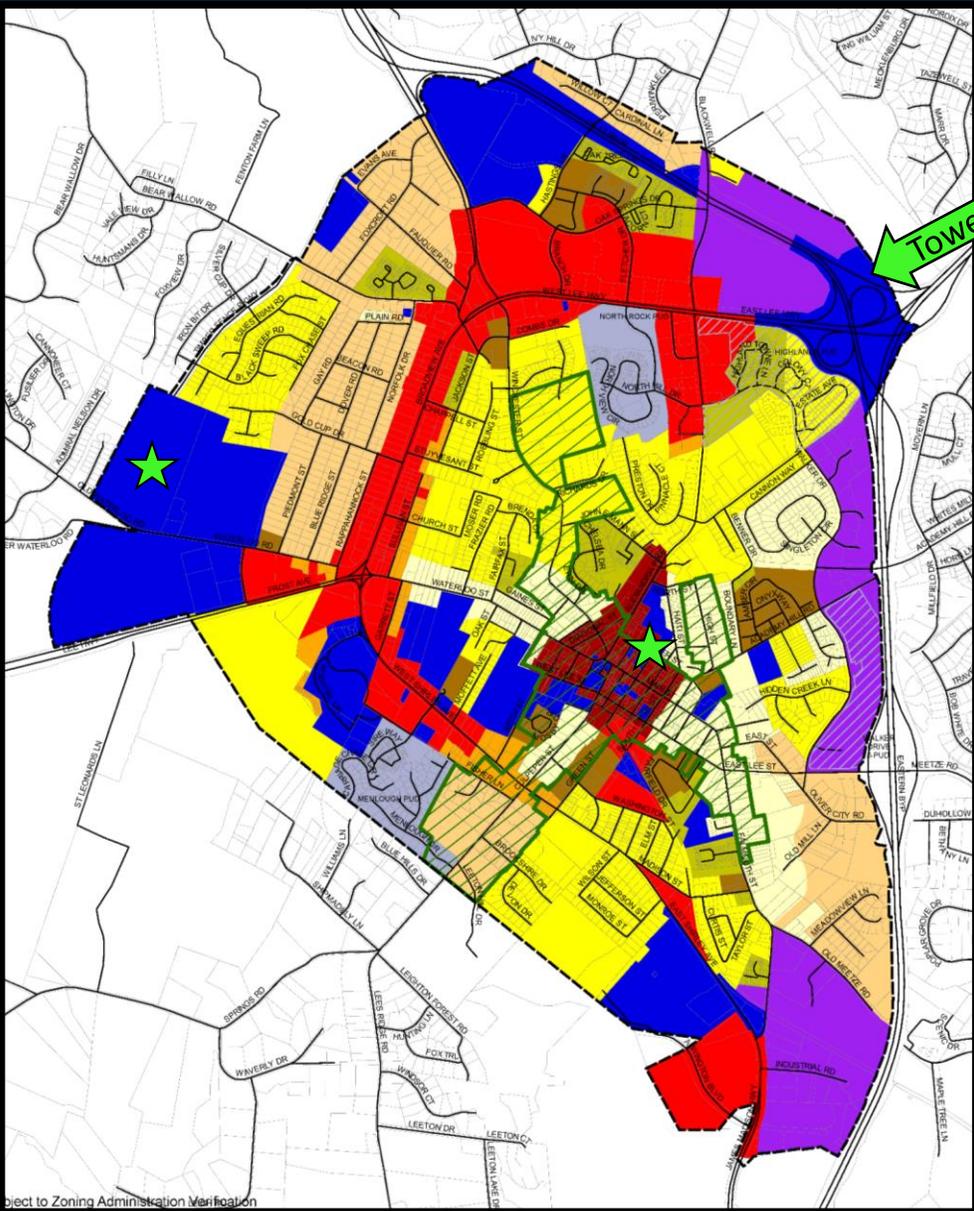
- Administrative application & approval process, minimum standards required – landscaping, screening, lighting, fencing, access, bonding.

Article 11 – *Zoning, Building & Land Disturbing Permits*

- Administrative application & approval process, standards for issuance.

Applicant: Arcola Towers, LLC
Representative: James Downey
Proposed Tower Site: 17 Spur; PSP District
Proposed Tower Height: 150 foot Monopole
Proposed Tower Setback: 75 feet





★ Existing Tower Locations

- Fauquier High School
- Horner/N. 4th Street Water Tower

Zoning Ordinance Article 9, Section 9-18 – Telecommunications Facilities

- Governs appearance, lighting, security, landscaping, setbacks, other
- Section 9-18.10 – Setbacks – requires a setback equal to the full height of the tower.

Text Amendment Process:

- Text Amendment Initiated by Citizen Request – June 7, 2023
- Planning Commission – 1st Work Session – November 28, 2023
- Planning Commission – 1st Public Hearing – December 19, 2023
 - Applicant requested Deferral until February meeting.
- Planning Commission – 2nd Public Hearing – February 20, 2024
 - Discussion of the CityScape Memo
 - Representative requested a Deferral, and waived the 100-day deadline for Commission action.
 - On February 28, 2024 the Representative submitted revised Ordinance language.
- Planning Commission – 2nd Work Session – March 19, 2024
- Town Council
 - Work Session or Public Hearing – as directed
 - Final Decision on ordinance language



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