

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
AMES ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**

AMES, IOWA

JULY 24, 2024

The Ames Zoning Board of Adjustment met, pursuant to law, in Regular Session at 6:00 p.m. on July 24, 2024, in the Council Chambers of City Hall. The following members were present: Chad Schneider, Caleb Whitehouse, Leah Patton, Julie Kruse; Marshall McDaniel (absent). Also, present were Assistant City Attorney Jane Chang, and City Planner Benajamin Campbell.

Approval of Minutes; June 12, 2024:

Moved by Whitehouse, seconded by Patton, to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2024, Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting.

Vote on Motion: (4 -0). Motion declared carried unanimously.

Withdrawn Item for 143 Sheldon Avenue.

Moved by Kruse, seconded by Whitehouse, to approve the withdrawal of the item at 143 Sheldon Avenue.

Vote on Motion: (4 -0). Motion declared carried unanimously.

CASE NO. 24-08

Public Hearing for an Amendment to a Special Use Permit to remove a portion of the existing stealth tower and replace it with a larger diameter stealth canister, including new antenna and equipment, on the existing cellular tower located at 106 South Dakota Avenue. (Parcel Number 09-08-101-010)

Planner Benjamin Campbell stated the applicant is seeking to amend the existing Special Use Permit (SUP) to change the second highest, 10-foot-tall canister on the cell tower at 106 South Dakota Avenue. The property is home to Ames Woman's Club. An SUP was originally approved for the property in 2003. At that time, the stealth monopole was consistent in width and appearance. Subsequent changes were approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustments in 2014, which allowed for additional antennas below the top four, and in 2020, which allowed for the canisters to increase in diameter. There is a fenced enclosure around the base of the tower that is 50 x 50 feet, surrounded by mature arborvitae. The proposal is to increase the canister size from 48 to 84 inches. Staff recommends approval of the request.

Questions for Staff:

Mr. Schneider questioned the terminology of stealth. Mr. Campbell stated it is stealth because the equipment is enclosed within the canister, each of which is 10 feet tall. The canister in question is proposed to be visibly larger. Mr. Schneider asked if there had been any feedback from the public. Mr. Campbell stated there was one call to ask what was happening.

Applicant:

Rob Viera, 229 Byrondale Ave, Wayzata, MN, representing US Cellular, was sworn in. He stated that the proposed equipment is to fit the new 5G system. When the tower was erected in 2003, the thought was that the antennas would get smaller, and the slimline profile was the way of the future. The current request would be the second modification done to accommodate more equipment. Mr. Viera explained that 20 years ago, people weren't forward thinking about capacity: there is coverage everywhere but there are capacity issues. There is a need to accommodate 5G service, which means adding more equipment. He stated that this request is to expand one of the canisters at the 105-foot level and that the equipment, six antennas, will still be enclosed in a stealth canister, albeit one that needs to increase in size. He said that the capacity issue in the area would be addressed with the new antennas. Mr. Viera stated that T-Mobile has antenna below the canisters

that are exposed, a design that was considered for this request. It was determined to keep the stealth appearance and increase the canister size to make the antennas not visible. Mr. Viera concluded that this project will hopefully get built as soon as possible to increase the data speed.

Julie Kruse asked if the increase in size of the canisters would have any effect on the other antennas above or below due to the increase in size. Mr. Viera stated that US Cellular occupies the first, second and third canisters, 3G on top 5G and 4G below. He said that they operate on different frequencies so there is no issue with the equipment.

Discussion:

Caleb Whitehouse asked if the T-Mobile antennas below the canisters were approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustment in 2014. Mr. Campbell stated that the Board did approve those changes. Mr. Schneider said he would not have assumed they were separate, just different modules.

Moved by Kruse to accept Alternative 1, seconded by Whitehouse.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment may approve the Amended Special Use Permit for a Cell Tower with Antennas to allow for the replacement an existing 10-foot-tall, 48-inch-wide stealth canister with a new 84-inch stealth canister and the addition of new interior mounted antennas and associated equipment, located at 106 South Dakota Avenue based on the findings of fact and conclusions stated herein, as detailed on the submitted Site Plan and Elevations and the stipulations below:

- a.) The final color of the pole and cannisters shall match. This may require repainting the pole to match the cannisters. Any fittings and straps of the cannisters shall also be aligned and secured to ensure a consistent aesthetic and appearance. The pole and cannisters shall be maintained in an ongoing manner with a consistent color and fit.

Roll Call: Schneider, aye; Whitehouse, aye; Kruse, aye; Patton, aye.

Vote on Motion: (4-0). Motion declared carried unanimously.

Mr. Schneider stated that this decision can be appealed through the District Court within 30 days after the filing of the Decision and Order.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Schneider, seconded by Whitehouse, to adjourn the meeting at 6:11 PM.

Vote on Motion: 4-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.



Natalie Rekemeyer, Recording Secretary



Chad Schneider, Chair