

Commissioner Jones moved to approve the February 6th Agenda as presented. Commissioner Lankford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Mendenhall opened the floor for public comments.

There were no public comments.

Chairman Mendenhall closed the time for public comments.

PUBLIC HEARING/PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION AGENDAS

Request to rezone a 100 x 100, (10,000 sq. ft.) leasehold area for the construction of a 195ft. wireless telecommunication tower facility with a 4 ft. lightning rod, total height is 199 ft. Total tract 31.18 acres. The proposed lease lot is (.23 acres), 10,000 sq. ft. (100 ft. x 100 ft.) owned by Melvin W. and Pensie K. Dodson.

Public Hearing

Chairman Mendenhall opened the Public Hearing for comments regarding the request to rezone a 100 x 100, (10,000 sq. ft.) leasehold area for the construction of a 195ft. wireless telecommunication tower facility with a 4 ft. lightning rod, total height is 199 ft. Total tract 31.18 acres. The proposed lease lot is (.23 acres), 10,000 sq. ft. (100 ft. x 100 ft.) owned by Melvin W. and Pensie K. Dodson.

There were no public comments.

Chairman Mendenhall closed the Public Hearing.

Presentation and Discussion by Planning Director David Sudderth

Planning Director David Sudderth presented the following information regarding the Rezoning request to rezone a 100 x 100, (10,000 sq. ft.) leasehold area for the construction of a 195ft. wireless telecommunication tower facility with a 4 ft. lightning rod, total height is 199 ft. Total tract 31.18 acres. The proposed lease lot is (.23 acres), 10,000 sq. ft. (100 ft. x 100 ft.) owned by Melvin W. and Pensie K. Dodson.

REQUEST: TowerCom IV, LLC is requesting to rezone a 100 x 100, (10,000 sq. ft.) leasehold area for the construction of a 195ft. wireless telecommunication tower facility with a 4 ft. lightning rod, total height is 199 ft.

SITE OWNER: Melvin W. and Pensie K. Dodson

APPLICANT: TowerCom IV, LLC

APPLICANTS AGENT: Nexsen-Pruet – Thomas H. Johnson Jr.

INITIAL SERVICE PROVIDER: T-Mobile

TOWER SITE IDENTIFIER: Prestonville

SITE LOCATION: property is located on the west side of NC 704 behind the home located at 6138 NC Hwy 704 East in Sandy Ridge, NC

Map: 6979
Deed Book: 567

Parcel: 8994
Page: 1782

PIN #: 6979518994
Township: Snow Creek

SITE INFORMATION:

PARCEL SIZE: Total tract 31.18 acres

PROPOSED LEASE LOT: The proposed lease lot is (.23 acres), 10,000 sq. ft. (100 ft. x 100 ft.)

PROPOSED TOWER HEIGHT: 195 ft. with a 4 ft. lightning rod, total height is 199 ft.

PROPOSED TOWER TYPE: Monopole tower located within a 70 ft. x 70 ft. fenced equipment compound.

CAPACITY: (4) Antennae arrays

CURRENT ZONING DISTRICT: RA (Residential Agricultural)

PROPOSED ZONING DISTRICT: The proposed zoning classification is RA-CZ (Residential Agricultural Conditional Zone) for a Telecommunication Tower.

FLOOD HAZARD AREA: The proposed site is not located within the special flood hazard area.

FIRM MAP #: 3710696800J

FIRM MAP ZONE: N/A

WATERSHED DISTRICT: N/A

EMERGENCY SERVICES: Northeast Stokes VFD, EMS – Station 5
Danbury

ACCESS: Access for the site will be from a proposed 30 ft. access easement beginning at NC Hwy 704 East following the driveway through the site owner's property and terminating at the leased area. The easement is incorporated entirely within the Dodson property.

SURROUNDING LAND USE: The immediate surrounding land use is scattered mixed residential development, and agricultural land.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER:

- Increasing telecommunication capabilities throughout the county
- Visual impact, aesthetics on surrounding properties
- Any issues brought up at the Public Information Meeting

STAFF COMMENTS: The proposed site meets the requirements as set forth in Appendix B (Wireless Telecommunication Facilities Requirements) of the Stokes County zoning ordinance. Carolina Telecommunication Services has given us a letter of approval stating that the applicants have fulfilled the technical requirements of the ordinance, (see attached). A staff review of the application and site concur with this recommendation. This rezoning request will help to expand service areas and fill in gaps in the county for telecommunication services and specifically help in providing better service along the NC Hwy 704 corridor.

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING: The Public Information Meeting for this proposal was held on December 9, 2017 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the home located at 6138 NC Hwy 704 East Sandy Ridge, NC which is the residence in front of the proposed telecommunication site.

(See attachment for attendance and minutes of the meeting)

PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION: The Planning Board recommended approval of rezoning request #17-939 for a 199 ft. telecommunication tower. The Board voted 6 to 0 to recommend the property be rezoned from RA (Residential Agricultural) to RA-CZ (Residential Agricultural Conditional Zone) and that the request was consistent with Stokes County 2035 Comprehensive plan and was a reasonable request.

**STOKES COUNTY PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**

1014 MAIN STREET PO BOX 20 DANBURY, NC 27016
OFFICE 336-593-2439 OR 336-593-2444 FAX: 336-593-5434

**Conditional Rezoning Petition
Statement of Consistency and Reasonableness**

Case No. #17-939

Applicant: **TowerCom IV, LLC**
Property Owner: **Melvin W. and Pensie K. Dodson**

Parcel ID# **6979518994** Portion of parcel 8994 – **31.18 acres total**

Location: **6138 NC 704 Hwy East in Sandy Ridge, NC**

Proposed Amendment: Rezone approximately 10,000 sq. ft. from RA (Residential Agricultural) to RA-CZ (Residential Agricultural Conditional Zone) for a Wireless Telecommunication Facility - 195 ft. monopole tower with a 4 ft. lightning rod.

The Stokes County 2035 Comprehensive Plan identifies portions of the county through the Land Use Transect methodology, which shows transition zones between rural areas and more urbanized areas of the county. The proposed rezoning location is best described as being situated between transect zones identified as O-2 Reserved Lands/Conservation Growth Sector and (G-1) Low Density Growth Area. The O-2 Reserved Lands/Conservation Growth Sector is an area of Low Density development with limited infrastructure. The (G-1) Low-Density growth area is an area associated with a Low-Density Residential Growth which is adjacent to target growth areas. The rezoning petition is for a 199 ft. monopole telecommunication facility which should fit satisfactorily in both zones. The proposed facility would be consistent with the low density residential development in the area located within the (O-2) Reserved Lands/Conservation Growth Sector and the (G-1) Low-Density Residential Growth area as identified in the comprehensive plan. The proposed site would be located well off of NC Hwy 704 E and would expand communication opportunities in the area which currently has limited telecommunication service. The need for increasing communications and encouraging economic development opportunities throughout the county creates a need to expand infrastructure capabilities such as new telecommunication towers, especially along major highway corridors such as NC Hwy 704. This new telecommunication tower should provide better telecommunication services in the Sandy Ridge area. Locating new wireless facilities in areas of the county currently not served or areas that receive poor service helps promote these goals. The transect zones identified as O-2 Reserved Lands/Conservation Growth Sector and Growth Sector 1(G-1) Low-Density growth area is an area where a 199 ft. wireless telecommunication tower should not undermine the

primary and current use of the surrounding land for residential, agricultural and mixed commercial use

This proposed amendment **is consistent** with the Stokes County 2035 Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans in that: The parcel is currently zoned RA (Residential Agricultural) and the requested zoning district is RA-CZ (Residential Agricultural Conditional Zoning) is suitable for the location of a Wireless Telecommunication Facility. The proposed use of this property and site development plan is consistent with the “Residential Low Density” development as identified in the Stokes County 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

This proposed amendment **is reasonable and in the public interest** in that: **This property is currently zoned RA (Residential Agricultural) and is being proposed to remain in an RA-CZ district for use as a Wireless Telecommunication Facility.**

Chairman Mendenhall opened the floor for any discussion/comments/questions:

Commissioner Jones commented:

- I can attest that Sandy ridge needs the help with their communications.
- I go through there and this area is pretty dead.
- I am thrilled it is T-Mobile and not Verizon.
- The competition is needed.
- I am going to support this.

Vice Chairman Walker:

- Sometimes we approve a tower but it doesn't go active.
- This has caught citizen's attention.
- Why approve a tower that is going to sit there and not go active?
- Do you have something you can share with us that this tower is going to be used in a timely manner?

TowerCom Attorney Tom Johnson responded:

- I believe that George Davis, who is here with TowerCom can better explain the arrangement with T-Mobile.

Planning Director David Sudderth commented:

- If you will look at your recommendations under number 3.
- That will help explain George's explanation.

George Davis responded:

- We work with all the major carriers.
- They have a very ambitious goal in building some sites down east.
- T-Mobile is ready to go.
- It is fully funded and ready to go.
- My contractors have walked the site.
- We will have bids by the end of the week.

- We will be filing for permits soon.
- Once we get our final approval from Environmental Health, we will be ready to start construction in March.
- Connectivity with fiber optic is one reason for towers that remain dormant.
- Sometimes there are significant delays in getting fiber optic to the site.
- Some companies work a year or two ahead of schedule.
- I can ensure that this site is on the front burner and we want to get it built before the end of the quarter.

Vice Chairman Walker:

- I support your project.
- What's the range of a tower like this?

George Davis responded:

- With the terrain, probably 3 miles.
- If you are texting, probably can get a signal further away.
- Using data or making a call will be more within the 3 mile range.
- We believe the County has done a good job in covering the need while keeping the esthetic.

TowerCom Attorney Tom Johnson responded:

- The good thing about this is, once you get hooked up with T-Mobile, George is in the business of renting the space.
- Once it is up, it is a lot easier to attract other towers.

Planning Director David Sudderth commented:

- We have had five phone calls just this week about new tower construction.
- That is normally the amount we receive in a year.

Commissioner Booth commented:

- I am hearing some good news.
- I am glad to hear that the other companies will be renting space on these towers.
- We need to move the county forward with communication.
- We have been very active in getting RiverStreet in to run fiber optic through the county.
- I am excited about it.
- I believe we need it.

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- This is a good thing.
- This area needs this.
- We have other areas in Lawsonville and Francisco that need towers.
- I receive a lot of calls from citizens about the poor cell service.
- This location is a very suitable one and will help with these issues.

George Davis commented:

- The good news is the carriers are coming.
- You are going to begin to see a difference.
- AT&T is beginning to come into areas they would not have before due to servicing first responder's needs.
- They have to have the connectivity.

Chairman Mendenhall commented:

- I am thrilled about this.
- The northern end of the county was my end of the county when I was principal.
- I was principal at Sandy Ridge Elementary School which is about a mile from this site.
- I was also principal at Nancy Reynolds Elementary School and North Stokes High School.
- When I was at North Stokes, West Stokes and South Stokes always complained about cell phone use by their students.
- I never had that problem at North Stokes.
- I know the need.
- I certainly think this will be a valuable addition.

George Davis commented:

- Sandy Ridge Elementary is one of the directed targets of this tower.
- T-Mobile made that clear.

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- If all goes as planned, when can we expect this to be up and running?

George Smith responded:

- That is a tough question.
- We are going to have everything done and installed by April or May.
- As far as when they actually turn it on, it could be later in the summer.
- They want to get this site on air as soon as possible.

Chairman Mendenhall asks for any other comments.

Planning Director David Sudderth commented:

This is consistent with the Stokes County 2035 Comprehensive Plan and is a reasonable request.

The Board had no issues with the rezoning request.

Action

Chairman Mendenhall entertained a motion.

Commissioner Lankford moved to approve the rezoning request #17-939 for a 199 ft.

telecommunication tower. The Board voted 6 to 0 to recommend the property be rezoned from RA (Residential Agricultural) to RA-CZ (Residential Agricultural Conditional Zone and that the request was consistent with Stokes County 2035 Comprehensive plan and was a reasonable request. Commissioner Booth seconded the motion.

Chairman Mendehall opened the floor for any further discussion.

With no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Mendenhall entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Booth moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jones seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Shannon Shaver
Clerk to the Board

Ronnie Mendenhall
Chairman