

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Building and Planning Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: AT&T Right of Way Antenna Waiver Request

Prepared By: Robert Duncan, Assistant Township Manager

Date: June 1, 2018

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

Approve a request from AT&T to waive Chapter 140, Section 2, Wireless Communication Facilities to allow the installation of numerous antennas in the Township Right of Way at various locations in the Township. This includes a waiver of the definition of Micro Facility to allow a tubular antenna with a diameter in excess of four inches.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

The standard Right of Way Use Agreement does not require approval from the Board but if the antenna or antenna equipment box exceeds the limits in Chapter 140, a waiver from the Board of Commissioners must be granted to allow the antenna to be installed. The proposed antenna will have a 10-inch diameter and in excess of the 4-inch diameter limit in Chapter 140.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable): N/A

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

The Township has encouraged the use of the ROW for the smaller antennas to extend mobile service throughout the Township. These smaller antennas create a communication system that connects to the larger tower antennas and reduce the need for additional larger antenna towers in the Township.

AT&T proposes to install new antennas and equipment boxes on Township utility and light poles at a number of locations in the Township, primarily in the eastern end of the Township. If approval is obtained, a structural analysis will have to be performed to document the Township's steel utility poles can structurally accommodate these antennas.

The Board of Commissioners has granted waivers from Chapter 140 in the past as long as the requests were determined to be reasonable. AT&T will have to demonstrate why they can't accommodate all of the necessary equipment in a smaller diameter antenna before any waiver is considered by the Board.

V. Impact On Township Finances:

These antennas will result in an increase in revenue to the Township in accordance with the Township's antenna permit fee provisions. The actual permit revenue will depend on the total number of antennas to be installed.

VI. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Board of Commissioners grant the waiver if AT&T can demonstrate that this the smallest diameter antenna required to result in improved mobile phone service in the vicinity of these installations.