



DATE: November 2, 2010

TO: East Bellevue Community Council

FROM: Sally Nichols, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: Verizon SEA Phantom Lake – Wireless Communications Facility (WCF)
15555 SE 16th Street
Courtesy Hearing

Applicant Name/Project Contact: Verizon Wireless
Bill Powell, Cascadia PM, LLC 253-225-5870
Land Use Planner: Sally Nichols, 425-452-2727

Proposal:

Verizon Wireless has applied for a Conditional Use Permit to install a new, 90-foot tall wood pole on the northwest corner of the existing PSE Phantom Lake Substation property. Six panel antennas will be flush mounted at the top of the pole and ground mounted equipment will be located in a 13' x 28' equipment shelter at the base of the pole. The pole and associated shelter will both be located in the northwest corner of the site, outside of the substation fencing. This location is adjacent to a dense stand of existing trees, which will provide some existing screening of the facility.

Permit Process:

Because the proposed WCF is an entirely new facility, a full Conditional Use Approval is required, along with a SEPA review and determination. A Conditional Use is a Process I decision, whereby the Director of the Development Services Department will make a recommendation to the Hearing Examiner at a public hearing. The Hearing Examiner will then render the final decision; which then may be appealed to the City Council

Project Background:

Verizon has identified a significant coverage gap in the existing communications networks in the area surrounding Phantom Lake. This coverage area consists primarily of single family land use districts. Lake Hills Greenbelt Park and Phantom Lake also cover a large part of the search area. In addition, there is a school site occupied by Phantom Lake Elementary School. In trying to find a site to meet their coverage objectives, Verizon looked for sites that responded to the location hierarchy found Land Use Code (LUC) Section 20.20.195.D. However, within the coverage gap, only park and residential sites existed. Locating on park land was rejected because it would have required an entirely new structure with significant impacts to the existing uses be built. The school site was rejected because the Bellevue School District will not lease area on elementary school sites for WCF installations. Therefore, the substation site was chosen because, although it is within a residential district, it is a parcel which has already been developed with non-residential utility uses, including an existing WCF facility.

Within the substation site, Verizon explored attaching the six antennas on an existing support structure (pole) on the substation parcel. This would have necessitated replacement of the

existing support structure with a much taller structure to meet the coverage objective. However, it was determined that such a replacement was not technically feasible due to the enormous loading already on the existing structure. There are already three wireless carriers utilizing all four elevations on this tower. Verizon needs to add six antennas in a stacking configuration, which would add another 10 to 15-feet to the pole. Verizon also explored using a utility pole in the right-of-way just outside of the substation. However, PSE would not allow Verizon to replace this pole with a taller structure. Therefore, Verizon chose to build a new structure within the substation property. Because of interference caused by the slope to the west of the site, Verizon will need a 90-foot tall pole to meet their coverage objectives.

City staff is in the early stages of their review, and will take comment from the public up until the recommendation is written. The November 2, 2010 Courtesy Hearing before the EBCC will serve as the mandatory public meeting for this conditional use permit.

Aerial Photo – Approximate Site Location



