

CASE # 2011-COA-276 (FP) 2011-VHP-015	INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT	Hearing Date OCTOBER 5, 2011
460 VIRGINIA AVENUE FLETCHER PLACE		<i>NEW CASE</i>
Applicant SHARILYN BODI/MICHAEL GASSER FOR mailing address: AT&T MOBILITY 6402 Corporate Drive Indianapolis, IN 46278 <hr/> Owner: DONALD MARGASON 335 Southcreek Dr Indianapolis, IN 46217		Center Township Council District: 19 Dane Mahern
COMBINED CASE		
IHPC COA:	2011-COA-276 (FP)	Increase height of existing cellular stealth pole
VARIANCES:	2011-VHP-015	Variance of Development Standards to allow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95 ft height where 60 ft is permitted
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval		

STAFF COMMENTS

Background of the Property

460 Virginia is one of the remaining 19th century commercial buildings on Virginia Avenue, and was built in 1876. It was originally used by Henry Lee to house his tea, coffee, sugar and spice business before it was sold and operated as a laundry. The building has three stories, and features elaborate pressed metal work at the roof. Located behind the building is an existing 75 ft stealth pole that was installed in 1998 with a COA granted by the IHPC Hearing Officer.

The Applicant's Proposal

In order to provide service for upgraded technology (specifically high speed 3G and 4G), additional equipment is required. The existing stealth pole does not have enough room to house the necessary antenna upgrades. The applicant proposes the addition of two 10' tall canisters to the existing pole, increasing the height to 95 ft. Each canister will enclose new equipment to support a higher level of cellular service. The existing pole is painted a brick red color, and will be repainted so that the older pole and the new canisters will have a uniform appearance. There will also be two existing ground cabinets replaced with new, smaller cabinets and a small H-frame will be installed at the base of the tower.

Variance of Development Standards

Height restriction

460 Virginia Avenue is zoned I-4-U (Heavy Industrial Urban District). The Wireless Communications Facilities Zoning Ordinance has a height restriction for a wireless communications facility (WCF) in I-4-U that is within 300 ft of a dwelling district. A freestanding WCF is limited to a maximum of 25 ft higher than the building height permitted by the district. The height limit in I-4-U is 25 ft. Therefore, the maximum height of a freestanding WCF is 60 ft.

The existing stealth pole should have received a variance when it was installed in 1998. The need for a variance was probably missed because the Wireless Communications Facilities Zoning Ordinance was passed only eleven days before the stealth pole application was received August 14, 1998. The COA was

granted by the Hearing Officer on September 1, 1998. The applicant is now applying for a variance for the newly proposed height of 95 ft. As the existing pole already exceeds the height limit, and it has proven to be an innocuous addition for the neighborhood, staff recommends approval of the variance.

Design of the Stealth Pole

The pole is designed to look like an oversized flagpole. It is used in areas where a traditional tower would not be welcomed, and there is not a good location on which to place rooftop equipment or hide it inside existing architecture. Rather than housing the equipment on an external antenna platform, the equipment is housed tightly within the pole structure.

Fletcher Place Historic Area Preservation Plan

The Fletcher Place Plan does not specifically discuss wireless communications facilities, but certain criteria for new construction are pertinent:

New construction must respect certain standards of scale in order to maintain the district's special qualities. Overall building height and massing, relationships of primary buildings to secondary buildings, landscape elements – all must be consistent with the surrounding architecture and spaces.

Normally, a structure of this height might be considered out of scale. However, the existing stealth pole is relatively innocuous and already exceeds the standard height limits. This application does increase the height by 20 ft, but staff feels that due to the success of the existing pole and the lack of less obtrusive alternatives, the height increase is warranted in this instance.

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION

COA #2011-COA-276 (FP):

To approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to install two new canisters to the top of the existing stealth pole, increasing the height to 95 ft, and replacing two ground cabinets and adding new ground equipment within the existing compound:

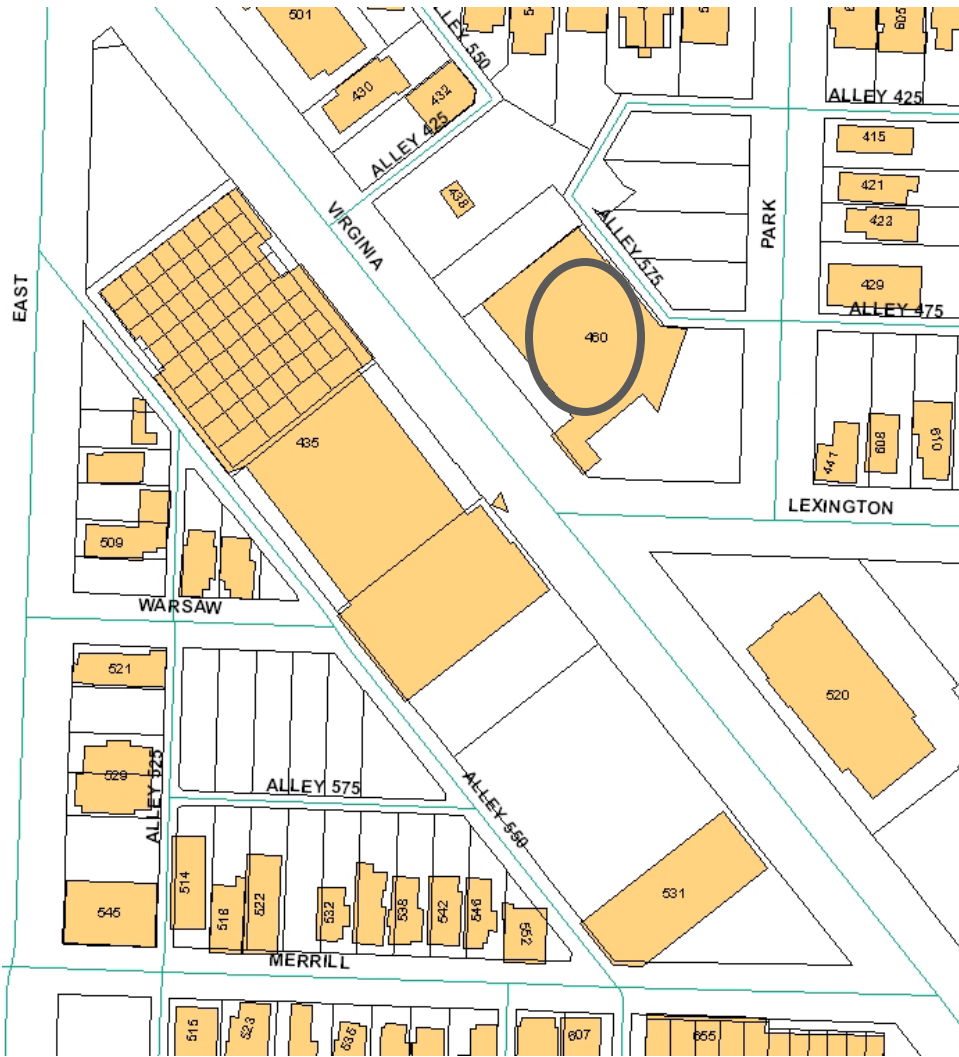
- 1) The total height of the stealth pole shall not exceed 95 ft.**
- 2) The entire pole shall be painted the same brick red color as the existing pole.**

VHP # 2011-VHP-015:

To approve a Variance of Development Standards of the Wireless Communications Facilities zoning ordinance to allow:

- 1) 95 ft. height where 60 ft. is permitted.**

Staff Reviewer: Emily Jarzen



Map of subject property with location of pole indicated by arrow



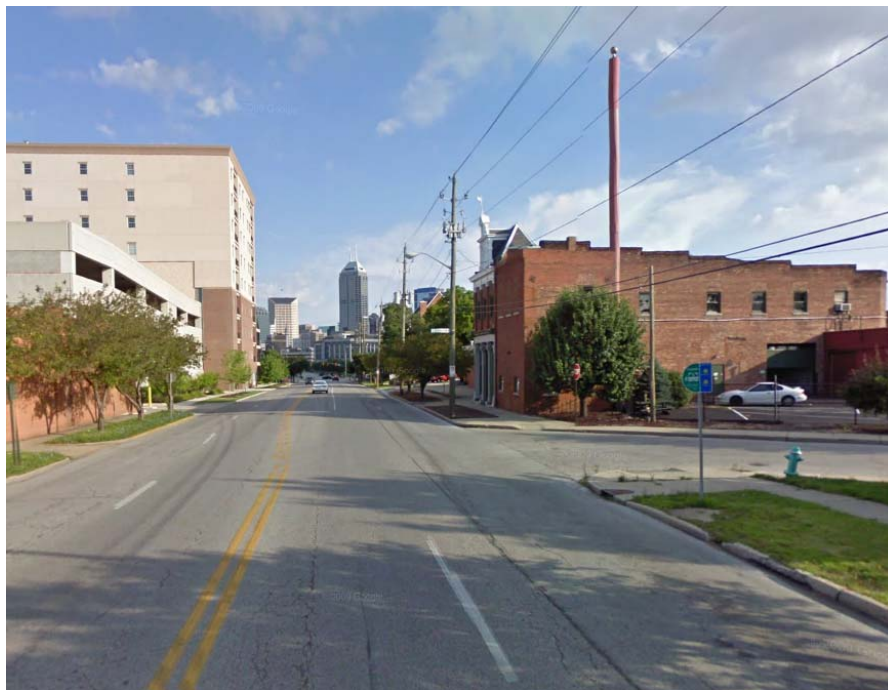
Aerial view from the west



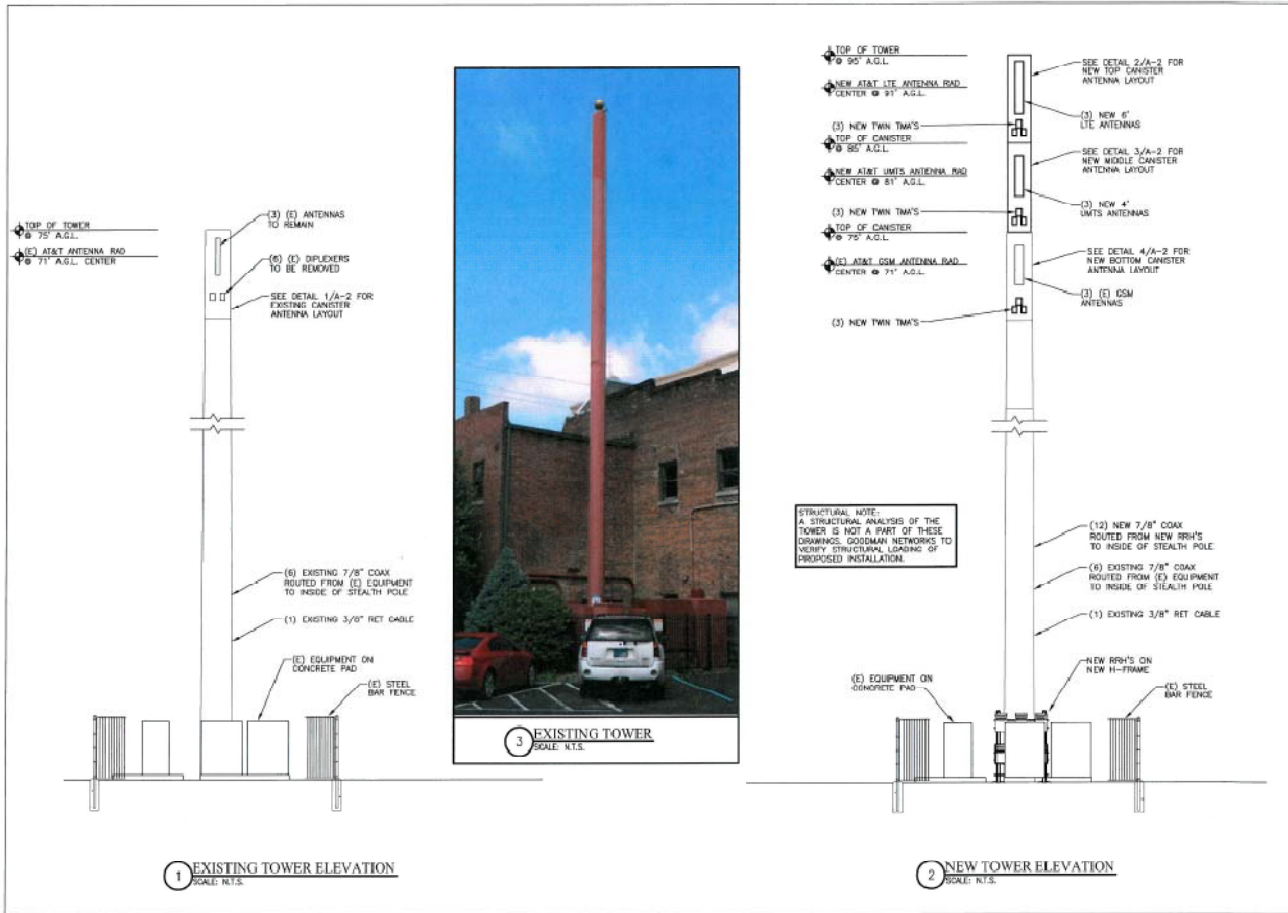
Aerial view from the south



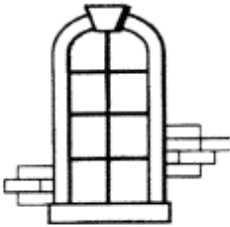
View looking south on Virginia Ave.



View looking north on Virginia Ave.



Existing & proposed tower elevations



**Fletcher Place
Neighborhood
Association, Inc.**

September 27, 2011

Ms. Emily Jarzen
Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission
200 E. Washington St., Suite 1801
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Ms. Jarzen,

I'm writing in regard to a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (2011-COA-276 (FP)) for an extension in height of twenty feet to the wireless communications tower located on the property at 460 Virginia Avenue. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this request.

A presentation was made to the Fletcher Place Neighborhood Association at its September meeting. As part of the discussion the petitioner mentioned that the existing tower would be freshly painted and that the extension would be painted to match.

After discussion the association voted to recommend approval of this request.

If you have any questions, or if new information concerning this request arises, please contact me.

Respectfully,

Keith Holdsworth,
Chairperson, Fletcher Place Neighborhood Association Land Use Committee

526 S. Pine St. • Indianapolis, IN • 46203