The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Prince George's County Planning Department
Development Review Division
301-952-3530

Note: *Staff reports can be accessed at www.mncppc.org/pgco/planning/plan.htm.*

Specific Design Plan SDP-0306-04

Application	**General Data**	
Project Name: Oak Creek Club Golf Course— Telecommunications Facility	Planning Board Hearing Date:	07/26/12
	Staff Report Date:	07/16/12
	Date Accepted:	01/31/12
Location: On the west side of Church Road, approximately 3,000 feet south of its intersection with Central Avenue (MD 214).	Planning Board Action Limit:	N/A
	Plan Acreage:	256.22
	Zone:	R-L
	Dwelling Units:	N/A
Applicant/Address: Capitol Telecom 1500 Mt. Kemble Avenue, Suite 203 Morristown, NJ 07960	Gross Floor Area:	12,340 sq. ft.
	Planning Area:	74A
	Tier:	Developing
	Council District:	06
	Election District	07
	Municipality:	N/A
	200-Scale Base Map:	201SE12

Purpose of Application	**Notice Dates**	
Addition of a 99-foot-high monopole and a 3,060-square-foot compound.	Informational Mailing:	12/02/11
	Acceptance Mailing:	01/20/12
	Sign Posting Deadline:	06/26/12

Staff Recommendation			**Staff Reviewer:** Jill Kosack **Phone Number:** 301-952-4689 **E-mail:** Jill.Kosack@ppd.mncppc.org
APPROVAL	**APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**	**DISAPPROVAL**	**DISCUSSION**
	X		

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Specific Design Plan SDP-0306-04
Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII-097-95/05
Oak Creek Club Golf Course—Telecommunications Facility

Urban Design staff has reviewed the specific design plan for the subject property and presents the following evaluation and findings leading to a recommendation of APPROVAL with conditions, as described in the Recommendation section of this report.

EVALUATION

The specific design plan (SDP) revision was reviewed and evaluated for conformance with the following criteria:

a. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for the Residential Low Development (R-L) Zone.

b. Conformance to Zoning Map Amendments A-8427, A-8578, and A-8579, The Greens of Dumbarton, as amended.

c. The requirements of Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-9902 and its revisions.

d. The requirements of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-01032.

e. The requirements of Specific Design Plan SDP-0306 and its revisions.

f. The requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance.

g. The requirements of the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance.

h. The requirements of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual.*

i. Referral comments.

FINDINGS

Based upon the evaluation and analysis of the subject application, the Urban Design staff recommends the following findings:

1. **Request:** This application proposes the addition of a 99-foot-high wireless telecommunications monopole and a 3,060-square-foot compound near the proposed golf maintenance building within Parcel 27, adjacent to Church Road.

2. **Development Data Summary**

	EXISTING	**PROPOSED**
Zone(s)	R-L	R-L
Use(s)	Golf Course	Golf Course/Monopole
Acreage	256.22	256.22
Square Footage/GFA	0	12,340 (approved but unbuilt maintenance building)

3. **Location:** The Oak Creek Club Golf Course is located in Planning Area 74A, east and west of Church Road, and north of Oak Grove Road. This specific revision applies only to existing Parcel 27 of the golf course, which is located along the northern edge of the property, immediately west of Church Road.

4. **Surrounding Uses:** The specific subject site for this revision, Parcel 27, is bounded to the east by the public right-of-way for Church Road and across it by vacant parcels in the R-L and O-S (Open Space) Zones owned by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) ; to the south by another golf course parcel and single-family detached residential lots in the R-L Zone; to the west and northwest by single-family detached residential lots in the R-L Zone; and to the north by a homeowners association (HOA) open space parcel that is part of the Palisades residential development in the R-L Zone.

5. **Previous Approvals:** On November 26, 1991, the Prince George's County District Council adopted Council Resolution CR-120-1991 approving the 1991 Approved Master Plan and Adopted Sectional Map Amendment for Bowie-Collington-Mitchellville and Vicinity, Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A, and 74B. The sectional map amendment, in conjunction with Zoning Map Amendments (Basic Plans) A-8427, A-8578, and A-8579, rezoned approximately 889 acres in the Residential-Agricultural (R-A) and Rural Residential (R-R) Zones to the R-L Zone and approximately 33 acres to the Local Activity Center (L-A-C) Zone. Subsequently, on July 24, 2000, the District Council approved an amendment to Basic Plans A-8427, A-8578, and A-8579 (Zoning Ordinance No. 11-2000) subject to 49 conditions and 10 considerations.

   Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-9902, Oak Creek Club—RL, was approved by the Planning Board on December 20, 2001, PGCPB Resolution No. 01-180. It was subsequently reviewed and approved by the District Council on May 13, 2002 subject to 55 conditions. On June 22, 2006, the Planning Board approved CDP-9902/01, a revision to reduce the side yard setback for townhouses. On September 13, 2007, the Planning Board approved CDP-9902/02, a revision to merge the community building and golf course clubhouse and to amend the recreational facility locations and schedule. Finally, on May 5, 2011, the Planning Board approved CDP-9902-03, a revision to amend the timing of construction of the golf/community building, a decision that was subsequently affirmed by the District Council on January 30, 2012.

On December 20, 2001, the Planning Board approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-01032, PGCPB Resolution No. 01-178(C), for the entire 923-acre Oak Creek Club property, which includes the area that is the subject of this application.

The detailed golf course development was originally shown on Specific Design Plan SDP-0306, which was approved by the Planning Board on September 25, 2003, a decision which was subsequently affirmed by the District Council on November 10, 2003. The Planning Director approved SDP-0306/01 on August 7, 2006, to modify the golf cart path alignments per environmental staff comments and field conditions, and to eliminate the A-44 master planned highway. The Planning Board approved SDP-0306/02 on September 13, 2007 to add the clubhouse to the golf course. Finally, the Planning Director approved SDP-0306/01 on December 17, 2008 to approve architectural elevations for the golf course maintenance building.

6. **Design Features:** The proposed revisions included with the subject application involve an area in the northeast corner of existing Parcel 27, which is part of the overall golf course development. This parcel was previously approved showing a golf course fairway and cart path in the western portion and a golf course maintenance building and associated service area compound and parking lot in the northeastern corner with an access drive from Church Road. This maintenance building area has not been developed to date, so the area remains wooded.

   The subject application proposes to develop a 99-foot-high, brown, painted metal "monopine" for wireless telecommunication services within a 3,060-square-foot compound located immediately adjacent to the south of the proposed maintenance building compound. A monopine is a typical monopole with branch-like structures added to approximately the top 45 feet, in a design so as to make the pole appear to be a large pine tree. The compound itself will be surrounded by an eight-foot-high, board-on-board, wooden fence and will include areas for electrical cabinets and back-boards for the proposed service carriers. As part of this development, the applicant will also construct a temporary 22-foot-wide gravel access drive from Church Road and a 43-foot radius gravel cul-de-sac and single parking space, to the north of the fenced compound, in the approximate area of the future maintenance building improvements. The whole facility will be unmanned, does not include any outdoor storage, buildings, lights, or signs, and will be surrounded by existing woods, until construction of the maintenance building compound.

7. **Zoning Ordinance:** The subject application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements in the R-L Zone and the site plan design guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance.

   a. The subject application is in conformance with the requirements of Section 27-514.08, Purposes; Section 27-514.09, Uses; Section 27-514.10, Regulations; and Section 27-514.11, Minimum Size Exceptions governing development in the R-L Zone. The proposed monopole for wireless telecommunications is a permitted use in the R-L Zone in accordance with Section 27-445.04(a), which sets forth additional requirements as follows:

      (2) The related telecommunications equipment building or enclosure shall comply with the following standards:

      (A) It shall not exceed five hundred sixty (560) square feet of gross floor area or twelve (12) feet in height;

Comment: No equipment buildings are proposed with the subject application. One telecommunications cabinet, that is less than four feet high and six square feet in area, is proposed with the application.

(B) The building or enclosure shall be screened by means of landscaping or berming to one hundred percent (100%) opacity from any adjoining land in a Residential Zone (or land proposed to be used for residential purposes on an approved Basic Plan for a Comprehensive Design Zone, or any approved Conceptual or Detailed Site Plan);

Comment: The submitted SDP included cross-sections showing that the proposed fenced enclosure for the monopole will be completely screened by existing wooded areas from adjoining land in residential zones.

(C) When attached to an existing building, it shall match the construction material and color(s) of that building;

Comment: The proposed enclosure will not be attached to an existing building.

(D) When constructed as a freestanding building, it shall be constructed of brick and its design shall coordinate with the design of any existing main building on the same lot or on an adjoining lot; and

Comment: No equipment buildings are proposed with the subject application.

(E) The building or enclosure shall be unmanned, with infrequent (four (4) or fewer per year) visits by maintenance personnel, and with access and parking for no more than one (1) vehicle.

Comment: The submitted SDP notes that the fenced enclosure will be unmanned and only one parking space is proposed adjacent to the compound.

(3) The monopole shall comply with the following standards:

(A) The maximum height shall be one hundred ninety-nine (199) feet when located on public property or one hundred (100) feet when located on all other properties;

Comment: The proposed monopole is not located on public property; therefore, it is proposed to be a maximum of 99-feet-high in conformance with this requirement.

(B) For privately owned land, the minimum setback from all adjoining land and dwelling units shall be equal to the height of the structure measured from its base; for publicly owned land, the minimum setback shall be one-half (1/2) of the height of the structure measured from the base to the adjoining property lines;

Comment: The submitted SDP shows the proposed 99-foot-high monopole being set back more than 100 feet from all property lines of the privately-owned Parcel 27. The closest existing dwelling unit is over 250 feet away, across Church Road.

(C) For privately owned land, the minimum area required shall be two and one-half acres (2 1/2);

Comment: The proposed monopole is located on Parcel 27, which is privately owned and has a total of 14.65 acres, thereby meeting this requirement.

(D) On privately owned land, the structure shall not support lights or signs unless required for aircraft warning or other safety reasons;

Comment: The submitted SDP notes that the proposed monopole will not support any lights or signs, as none are required for aircraft warning or other safety reasons.

(E) The structure shall be designed, galvanized, and/or painted in a manner which is harmonious with surrounding properties;

Comment: The monopole is proposed to be a monopine design and to be painted brown to blend with the surrounding woods. Further discussion of this issue is in Finding 15c below.

(F) The applicant shall provide certification from a registered engineer that the structure will meet the applicable design standards for wind loads of the Electronic Industries Association (EIA) for Prince George's County; and

Comment: In a letter dated February 24, 2012, William Heiden, a registered engineer from Valmont Structures, indicated that the proposed monopole will meet all applicable design standards for wind loads.

(G) Any monopole which is no longer used for telecommunications purposes for a continuous period of one (1) year shall be removed by the monopole owner at owner's expense.

Comment: This requirement would become applicable if, in the future, use of the monopole is discontinued.

b. Section 27-528 of the Zoning Ordinance sets forth the following criteria for approval of a specific design plan:

(a) Prior to approving a Specific Design Plan, the Planning Board shall find that:

(1) The plan conforms to the approved Comprehensive Design Plan, the applicable standards of the Landscape Manual, and except as provided in Section 27-528(a)(1.1), for Specific Design Plans for which an application is filed after December 30, 1996, with the

exception of the V-L and V-M Zones, the applicable design guidelines for townhouses set forth in Section 27-274(a)(1)(B) and (a)(11), and the applicable regulations for townhouses set forth in Section 27-433(d) and, as it applies to property in the L-A-C Zone, if any portion lies within one-half (1/2) mile of an existing or Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Metrorail station, the regulations set forth in Section 27-480(d) and (e);

Comment: Conformance with the approved comprehensive design plan (CDP) is discussed below in Finding 9. The site is in conformance with the requirements of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* (Landscape Manual), as discussed in Finding 14 below. The design guidelines and regulations for townhouses do not apply to this SDP revision for a telecommunications monopole.

(1.1) For a Regional Urban Community, the plan conforms to the requirements stated in the definition of the use and satisfies all requirements for the use in Section 27-508 of the Zoning Ordinance;

Comment: The subject project is not a regional urban community. Therefore, the requirements of this subpart are not applicable.

(2) The development will be adequately served within a reasonable period of time with existing or programmed public facilities either shown in the appropriate Capital Improvement Program or provided as part of the private development;

Comment: The proposed development will be adequately served within a reasonable period of time by public facilities, as was established in the approval of Specific Design Plan SDP-0306. Approval of a new monopole will have no effect on the Planning Board's previous finding in this regard.

(3) Adequate provision has been made for draining surface water so that there are no adverse effects on either the subject property or adjacent properties;

Comment: Adequate provision has been made for draining surface water, as was established in the approval of SDP-0306. Approval of a new monopole will have no effect on the Planning Board's previous finding in this regard.

(4) The plan is in conformance with an approved Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan;

Comment: Type II Tree Conservation Plan, TCPII/97/95, was previously approved for the subject site. If approved with conditions, the subject application will conform to this requirement. Technical revisions to the submitted Type II Tree Conservation Plan revision, TCPII-097-95/05, are required prior to signature approval.

(5) The plan demonstrates that the regulated environmental features are preserved and/or restored to the fullest extent possible.

Comment: The subject application is grandfathered from this requirement as the applicable TCPII was approved prior to the effective date of this requirement and it has not expired.

8. **Basic Plan Conformance:** The SDP for Oak Creek Club Golf Course—Telecommunications Facility, as modified by the conditions, will be in conformance with the basic plan for Zoning Map Amendments A-8427, A-8578, and A-8579, with the 49 conditions and 10 considerations of Zoning Ordinance No. 11-2000. The following conditions and considerations of this approval warrant discussion:

Approved Land Use Types (R-L Zone): A-8427 and A-8578

Single-family detached and attached dwellings
Recreation center or other recreational facilities
School
Church/Day care or similar quasi-public use
Accessory uses
Golf course and associated uses

Comment: The proposed wireless telecommunications monopole and enclosure are not listed as specific approved land uses in the approved basic plan, as they are not necessarily uses normally associated with a golf course. However, cell phone towers nowadays are a ubiquitous public utility use that was probably not anticipated at the time of the original basic plan approval and are now allowed by-right in all comprehensive design zones. Additionally, wireless telecommunication poles are a public utility use that is regulated by the federal government, with service mandates for providers. The proposed monopole location was also approved by the Prince George's County Telecommunications Transmission Facility Coordinating Committee, subject to approval of a revision to this SDP, on October 19, 2011.

11. The applicant shall dedicate the right-of-way for Church Road as a (90-foot maximum) four-lane collector with an open median of varying width as determined by DPW&T. The location of the road shall be finalized at the time of CDP and shall be based on an Inventory of Significant Visual Features prepared according to the "Design Guidelines for Scenic and Historic Roads". Construction will be in accordance with DPW&T requirements and may utilize the existing roadbed when appropriate.

Comment: An inventory of significant visual features for Church Road was submitted and reviewed with the CDP in accordance with the design guidelines for scenic and historic roads. That inventory was evaluated and was found to meet the minimum standard for a visual assessment for historic roads. The proposed revision to the SDP is for approval of a 99-foot-tall telecommunications tower located approximately 130 feet from the ultimate right-of-way of Church Road. Further discussion of the visual impact of this structure is addressed in Finding 15c below.

12. A woodland conservation requirement of 25 percent shall be established for the portion of the site zoned R-A, unless it can be shown that the existing woodland is less than that amount. If so, the conservation threshold may be reduced to the percentage of existing woodland down to 20 percent of the net tract area of R-A-zoned land. A woodland conservation requirement of 15 percent shall be

established for the portion of the site zoned L-A-C. In addition, the applicant will reforest as required under applicable State and County regulations. All Tree Conservation Plans shall demonstrate how the development will meet these criteria.

Comment: The zoning for the property is actually R-L not R-A. All previous approvals of TCPII-97-95 have applied a 25 percent woodland conservation threshold for the R-L-zoned portion of this property, which is also applied to this revision.

16. Technical approval of the location and sizes of Stormwater Management Facilities is required prior to approval of any SDP.

Comment: The proposed telecommunications compound will have no impact on the location or size of any proposed or existing stormwater management facilities.

9. **Conformance to Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-9902 and revisions:**

a. **Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-9902—**The Planning Board approved CDP-9902 for the approximately 923-acre area of the Oak Creek Club on December 20, 2001, with 52 conditions, a decision which was subsequently affirmed by the District Council on May 13, 2002. The following conditions of this approval warrant discussion:

11. Prior to approval of each Specific Design Plan the applicant shall submit an overall open space plan with calculations for areas of tree preservation, wetlands, and floodplain, to ensure preservation of areas approved as open space per CDP-9902 and CDP-9903.

Comment: The required open space plan was submitted and reviewed with the original SDP-0306 and no issues were identified. Approval of a new monopole will have no effect on the Planning Board's previous finding in this regard.

22. Public utilities should be buried wherever possible on site.

Comment: The very nature of wireless communications prohibits the burial of the proposed monopole; however, efforts have been made to place the pole in an unobtrusive location and to disguise it from view.

26. Every Specific Design Plan for Oak Creek Club shall include on the cover sheet a clearly legible overall plan of the project on which are shown in their correct relation to one another all phase or section numbers, all approved or submitted Specific Design Plan numbers, and all approved or submitted Tree Conservation Plan numbers.

Comment: The submitted SDP revision provided a cover sheet that is in conformance with this condition.

b. **Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-9902/01—**This CDP revision, to reduce the side yard setback for townhouses, was approved by the Planning Board on June 22, 2006 with two conditions of approval, neither of which applies to the review of this SDP revision.

c. **Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-9902/02—**This CDP revision, to merge the community building and golf course clubhouse and to amend the recreational facility locations and schedule, was approved by the Planning Board on September 13, 2007 with three conditions of approval, none of which applies to the review of this SDP revision.

d. **Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-9902-03—**This CDP revision, to amend the timing of construction of the golf/community building, was approved by the Planning Board on May 5, 2011. That decision was subsequently affirmed by the District Council on January 30, 2012 subject to four conditions of approval. None of these conditions apply to the review of this SDP revision.

10. **Preliminary Plan Conformance:** The property is the subject of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-01032, PGCPB Resolution No. 01-178(C), adopted by the Planning Board on December 20, 2001. The preliminary plan was approved with 43 conditions, of which the following apply to the review of this SDP revision:

18. Prior to the approval of the Specific Design Plan (SDP) for any portion of the golf course, a detailed management plan shall be prepared to address integrated pest management, management and maintenance of the shrub/scrub areas, an analysis of the proposed tree cutting practices in the shrub/scrub areas, and a maintenance plan for the cart paths and bridges.

Comment: While the subject SDP does include a portion of the golf course property, it does not propose any golf course use or change to the previously approved golf course use.

26. As part of the Specific Design Plan submittal, a Type II Tree Conservation Plan shall be provided that includes a Woodland Conservation Worksheet which reflects the overall requirements for Oak Creek Club, the requirements for each of the prior phases which may have been approved, the requirements for the current phase of the project, and the cumulative requirements for all approved phases and phases under review.

Comment: The application indicates revision to the Forest Save Areas in the summary table, but the necessary revisions to the Phased Woodland Conservation Worksheet have not been made. The necessary revisions should be addressed prior to signature approval of the TCPII.

11. **Conformance to Specific Design Plan SDP-0306 and Revisions:**

a. **Specific Design Plan SDP-0306—**The Planning Board approved SDP-0306 on September 25, 2003 with 11 conditions, a decision which was subsequently affirmed by the District Council on November 10, 2003. The following conditions of this approval warrant discussion:

1. The area surrounding the golf course clubhouse shall be identified graphically on the SDP, landscape plan and TCPII as specifically excluded from the subject SDP. A separate SDP shall be completed for the proposed golf course clubhouse and any other nonresidential architecture proximate to the Bowieville Mansion. This SDP shall include detailed architectural elevations for the clubhouse and all other required site information. A Phase II and/or Phase III archeological study shall be completed to the

satisfaction of the Historic Preservation Planning Section as designee of the Planning Board.

Comment: No changes are proposed to the golf course clubhouse with this SDP revision.

11. Prior to grading for construction of golf course paths or facilities on property to be dedicated to the Department of Parks and Recreation, construction drawings for such golf course paths or facilities on property to be dedicated to the Department of Parks and Recreation shall be reviewed and approved by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Comment: The specific subject property, Parcel 27, is not proposed to be dedicated to the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR).

b. **Specific Design Plan SDP-0306/01—**The Planning Director approved SDP-0306/01 on August 7, 2006, with no conditions, to modify the golf cart path alignments per environmental staff comments and field conditions, and to eliminate the A-44 master-planned highway.

c. **Specific Design Plan SDP-0306/02—**The Planning Board approved SDP-0306/02 on September 13, 2007 with four conditions, which warrant the following discussion:

4. The swim/tennis facility shall have brick façades.

Comment: No changes are proposed to the swim/tennis facility with this SDP revision.

d. **Specific Design Plan SDP-0306/03—**The Planning Director approved SDP-0306/03 on December 17, 2008, with no conditions, to approve architectural elevations for the golf course maintenance building.

12. **Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance:** This property is subject to the provisions of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance because the gross tract area is in excess of 40,000 square feet, there are more than 10,000 square feet of existing woodland on-site, and there are previously approved Tree Conservation Plans, TCPI-91-92 and TCPII-97-95, encompassing the parcels included in this application.

The woodland conservation requirement for this application (Phase 1A) was previously satisfied by 74.96 acres of on-site preservation, 35.49 acres of on-site afforestation/reforestation, and 18.0 acres of off-site mitigation provided on this property for a benefitting property.

The property is in overall compliance with the requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance. But as phases are revised, the Tree Conservation Plan and woodland conservation worksheet must be revised to reflect any additional clearing, and how all requirements are being met. Technical revisions to the submitted Type II Tree Conservation Plan revision, TCPII-097-95/05, are required prior to signature approval.

13. **Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance:** The project is subject to the requirements of Subtitle 25, Division 3: The Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance, as there is no grandfathering, and building and grading permits for areas greater than 1,500 square feet are required for the subject development. The requirement for the subject property, with a gross tract area of 256.22 acres, is 20 percent for the R-L Zone, or 51.24 acres. No worksheet was provided for the tree canopy

coverage (TCC) requirement; however, a quick estimation shows that the requirement will be met by the existing trees to be preserved on-site. Therefore, a condition has been included in the Recommendation section of this report requiring the addition of the standard worksheet showing the TCC requirement being met on-site.

14. **Prince George's County Landscape Manual:** The proposed telecommunications monopole and compound in the R-L Zone is subject to Section 4.6, Buffering Development from Streets; Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses; and Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscaping Requirements of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual.*

    a. Section 4.6, Buffering Developments from Street, requires that, when a property in the Developing Tier has frontage on a special roadway, such as the designated scenic and historic Church Road, a buffer area shall be provided adjacent to the entire right-of-way. On the subject application, Parcel 27 has a 116.65-foot frontage on Church Road, which would normally require a minimum 20-foot-wide buffer planted with a minimum of 80 plant units every 100 linear feet, for a total of 94 plant units. An area of existing trees, in excess of 20 feet wide, is proposed to be preserved along the parcel's entire frontage with Church Road, as was shown with the previously approved golf maintenance building development in this area. However, the appropriate completed schedule for this requirement is not provided on the current SDP. Therefore, a condition has been included in the Recommendation section of this report requiring the addition of the required schedule.

    b. Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, requires a buffer between adjacent incompatible land uses; however, when uses are mixed on a single lot or parcel, the impact category for the use nearest a property line determines the buffering requirements. In this case, the proposed monopole and compound is set back over 100 feet from any property edge and is surrounded by the golf course use and facilities to the north, west, and south. Therefore, Section 4.7 requirements would apply to the previously reviewed and approved golf course use, not the currently proposed monopole use.

    c. Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscaping Requirements, requires that certain percentages of native plants be provided on-site, along with no invasive plants, and no plants being planted on slopes steeper than three-to-one. The subject SDP revision does not propose any new plant material, as all requirements are being met by the existing trees in the area; therefore, these requirements do not apply.

15. **Referral Comments:** The subject application was referred to concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized as follows:

    a. **Subdivision Review Section**—In a memorandum dated March 2, 2012, the Subdivision Review Section offered the following summarized comments:

    The subject property for the telecommunications facility, Parcel 27, was recorded in Plat Book REP 201-59 on May 24, 2004. The property was re-recorded in Plat Book PM 220-98 on June 26, 2007 for the purpose of revising the conservation easement and adjusting common lot lines. The site plan shows the bearings and distances for Parcel 27 that are not in conformance with the record plat and must be revised. The record plat contains ten notes and the following notes **(in bold)** relate to the review of this application:

1. Development of this property must conform to the specific design plan which was approved by the Prince George's County Planning Board on September 25, 2003, SDP-0306, or as amended by any subsequent revisions.

Conformance to Note 1 is discussed in Finding 11 above.

2. Conservation areas described on this plat are areas where the installation of structures and roads and the removal of vegetation is prohibited without the prior written consent of the M-NCPPC Planning Director of designee. The removal of hazardous trees, limbs, branches or trunks is permitted.

The requirement of the above plat note remains in effect.

3. Approval of this plat is predicated upon a reasonable expectation that public water and sewer service will be available when needed and is conditioned on fulfilling all of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission Authorization # DA 3113 Z01.

Based on the information provided on PGAtlas, the property is currently in water and sewer Category 3, Planned or existing community system, and will therefore be served by public systems. However, General Note 5 states that the facility is unmanned and does not require potable water or sanitary service.

4. Development of this subdivision shall be in accordance with the approved overall stormwater concept plan, case #6397-2001-00.

General Note 2 states that the proposed facility will cause "de minimus" in stormwater runoff; therefore, no drainage structures are proposed.

9. The development is subject to the restrictions shown on the approved Tree Conservation Plan. (TCP II/97/95-01), or as amended by any subsequent revisions thereto, and precludes any disturbance or installation of any structure within. Failure to comply will mean a violation of an approved tree conservation plan and will make the owner subject to mitigation under the Woodland Conservation/Tree Preservation Policy and Subtitle 25.

Conformance to Note 9 is discussed in Finding 12 above.

The property is the subject of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-01032. The preliminary plan was approved and the resolution was adopted by the Planning Board on December 13, 2001 (PGCPB No. 01-178) and corrected on December 20, 2001 (PGCPB No. 01-178(C)). The resolution for the amended preliminary plan contains 43 conditions. The conditions that are related to the review of this specific design plan have been discussed in the notes of the record plat above.

Specific Design Plan SDP-0306-04 is in substantial conformance with the approved preliminary plan and the recorded final plat. There are no other subdivision issues at this time.

b. **Permit Review Section**—The Permit Review Section offered several comments, which are either not applicable at this time, have been addressed through revisions to the plans, or are addressed through proposed conditions of approval of this specific design plan.

c. **Environmental Planning Section**—In a memorandum dated July 8, 2012, the Environmental Planning Section provided a comprehensive review of the SDP's conformance with the previously approved conditions relating to environmental issues and the requirements of the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance. The referral also provides a site description and recommendations regarding the physical form of the monopole to promote compatibility with the adjacent scenic road and woodlands, as follows:

(1) **Site Description:** The parcels in this application total 252.60 acres and are located in the R-L Zone on both sides of Church Road and north of Oak Grove Road. A review of the available information indicates that streams, wetlands, 100-year floodplain, severe slopes, areas of steep slopes with highly erodible soils, and the associated buffers for these features are found to occur within the limits of this application. No transportation-related noise impacts have been identified. The soils found on this property include Adelphia fine sandy loam, Collington fine sandy loam, Mixed alluvial land, Monmouth fine sandy loam, Shrewsbury fine sandy loam, and Westphalia fine sandy loam. Although some of the soils have limitations with respect to impeded drainage, slow permeability, and seasonally high water tables, most of the soils have no significant limitations with respect to the development of the property. According to available information, Marlboro clays are found to occur on this property. According to information obtained from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Natural Heritage Program, there are no rare, threatened, or endangered species found to occur in the vicinity of this property. Church Road, which bisects the parcels included in this application, is a designated scenic and historic road. This property is located in the Black Branch and Collington Branch watersheds of the Patuxent River basin and in the Developing Tier as reflected in the *Prince George's County Approved General Plan.*

(2) **Design Issues:** The proposed telecommunications facility is located within the viewshed of Church Road, a designated scenic and historic road. The telecommunications facility is proposed to be "camouflaged" as a 100-foot- high pine tree. The visual impact of the proposed telecommunications facility within the viewshed of Church Road has been evaluated.

A landscape plan (Sheet 12 of 12) submitted with the application has provided cross-sections from various existing residences in the area, but has not evaluated the view from Church Road which is much closer to the site of the proposed monopole. While staff is concerned about compatibility of the cell tower with the immediate residents, the average daily traffic (ADT) on Church Road is 7,246 vehicles as measured in 2011, which results in substantially more Prince George's County residents experiencing the presence of the cell tower from the designated historic-scenic road than from a local residence. The cross-sections also use the term "opaque view zone" for all areas where there are existing woodlands. Our experience with viewshed evaluations related to the review of rubble and Class III fills has determined that winter views through existing deciduous woodlands are not effectively screened at ground level with a

minimum of less than 200 feet of trees, but 200 feet of existing woodlands is not considered "opaque." Neither Section BB nor DD accurately reflects the limited width of existing woodlands which will remain between Church Road and the cell tower compound based on the cross-section lines shown.

The applicant has submitted a series of photographs showing photo simulation of the proposed monopole using a balloon elevated to the 100-foot proposed height, which focuses on the views from nearby residences. A review of all of the simulations clearly shows that, instead of providing camouflage for the cell tower, the addition of a false vegetative disguise calls more attention to the monopole. There are no native evergreens in the coastal plain of Maryland that grow to a height of 100 feet. In addition, there is no evergreen canopy present in the composition of the existing stand where this cell tower is proposed to be placed. In evaluating the existing woodlands on the site, staff notes that all of the pictures show a strong vertical element composed of tree trunks which would provide an existing natural screen for the vertical monopole, if the monopole was painted in a natural tone to match the bark of the existing woodlands.

Staff accepts that utility structures such as cell towers are necessary to support the conveniences of modern life and seeks to make them as compatible as possible to the location where they are placed, but staff does not support the pretense of "dressing up" a monopole as a tree. The introduction of a false evergreen only calls attention to the monopole due to its unnatural appearance and increases its visibility. A more effective means of achieving compatibility with the proposed location would be to use a conventional monopole painted in a natural tone, which would blend into the existing hardwood stand and not call attention to itself.

d. **Zoning Review Section**—The Zoning Review Section indicated that the subject application meets the requirements of Section 27-445.04 of the Zoning Ordinance.

e. **Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department**—The Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department, in a memorandum dated February 15, 2012, provided standard comments regarding fire apparatus, hydrants, and lane requirements. Those issues will be enforced by the Fire Department at the time of the issuance of permits.

f. **Prince George's County Police Department—**At the time of the writing of this staff report, comments have not been received from the Police Department.

g. **Prince George's County Health Department—**In a memorandum dated February 17, 2012, the Health Department indicated that they had completed a health impact assessment of the subject application and had no specific recommendations. They also stated that a review of published materials from multiple sources, including the American Cancer Society, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and the World Health Organization, indicates that there is no convincing evidence in published scientific reports that cell phone towers constitute a potential health hazard to nearby residents or school students.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE Specific Design Plan SDP-0306-04 and Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII-097-95/05 for Oak Creek Club Golf Course—Telecommunications Facility, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to signature approval of the specific design plan, the applicant shall revise the plans as follows:

    a. Add a tree canopy coverage worksheet showing the requirement being met on-site.

    b. Add a *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* Section 4.6-2 schedule showing the requirement being met for the entire frontage of Parcel 27 along Church Road through the preservation of existing trees.

2. Prior to signature approval of the specific design plan, the applicant shall revise the Type II tree conservation plan (TCPII) as follows:

    On Sheet 9 of 18:

    a. Show the development activity proposed and use the graphic elements shown in the legend on the previously approved plan, including clearing associated, location of temporary tree protection devices, and the limit of disturbance.

    b. Revise the elements that have been relocated from their prior location, including the cart path and elements now within the proposed telecommunications complex.

    c. Show a 10-foot-wide setback from the 25-foot-wide wetland buffers surrounding the telecommunications complex.

    d. The temporary tree protection fence which is labeled must be expanded to state "Location of Temporary Tree Protection Fence to be installed with the '-04' revision to the TCPII for the installation of a telecommunications complex."

    e. The label "Monopine" shall be revised to "monopole."

    On Sheet 1 of 18:

    f Revise the Forest Save table to reflect the full woodland clearing impacts for proposed development activity, and not the lease area.

    On Sheet 18 of 18:

    g. Revise the woodland conservation worksheet to show the additional clearing proposed under the current activity and not the lease area.

    h. Revise the woodland conservation worksheet to indicate how the woodland conservation requirement incurred by the proposed activity will be mitigated.

i. Revise the Forest Save table to reflect the full woodland clearing impacts for proposed development activity.

j. Revise the tree protection fence detail label to include the term "temporary."

3. Prior to certification of the specific design plan, all revised Type II tree conservation plan (TCPII) sheets shall have accurate revision notes added to the plan sheet, and the revised plan sheets shall be signed by the qualified professional who prepared the sheets.

4. All sheets of the Type II tree conservation plan (TCPII) plan shall be submitted for signature at the time of certification.

5. Prior to certification of the specific design plan, the enlarged site plan shall be revised to correctly delineate the limit of woodland to be counted as cleared required for the 10-foot-wide maintenance and work zone, and labeling shall be consistent with that provided on the Type II tree conservation plan (TCPII).

6. Prior to certification of the specific design plan, the plans shall be revised to indicate the use of a "monopole" painted in a natural tone to match the bark of the existing woodlands, and all references to a "Monopine" shall be removed from the plan set.