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January 14, 2003

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D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
2003 JAN 14 PM 12: 49

VIA COURIER

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis, Chairman
DC Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Special Exception Application for 1700 Rhode Island Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20018 and Request for Expedited and Consolidated Hearing

Dear Mr. Griffis:

Attached please find an application for a Special Exception filed by the undersigned on behalf of the District of Columbia Office of the Chief Technology Officer ("Applicant"). In addition, as discussed fully herein, please accept this request for an expedited and consolidated hearing with BZA application number 16988.

Overview of Proposals

The Applicant is responsible for deployment of the District's enhanced public safety radio network for the use by the Metropolitan Police Department, Fire Department/Emergency Medical Service and Emergency Management Agency (EMA).

Applicant files a special exception for the proposed replacement and construction of a telecommunications facility at 1700 Rhode Island Avenue, NE ("Rhode Island Avenue"), which is zoned C-2-A (community business center). The property is located in Square 4134 at Lot 800, is approximately 12,332 square feet in size, and currently contains a 100-foot monopole. The new facility will consist of a 150-foot monopole, and the equipment will be placed in the police station building on the property. A detailed description of the monopole and location of the antennas appear on the plans attached hereto. The Rhode Island Avenue facility provides critical coverage to portions of the District for use by Public Safety radio.

BZA
Case No. 16991
Exhibit No. 1

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 16991
EXHIBIT NO. 1

The Applicant, through undersigned counsel, has confirmed with the Zoning Administrator that no additional relief beyond the special exception is required.

The Rhode Island Avenue facility is required immediately in connection with the necessary upgrades of the emergency radio system for police, fire, and emergency preparedness personnel. The new facilities will be part of an eleven-site network system which will provide in-building coverage, which is critical for the Fire Department, as well as the ability to encrypt signals (to avoid monitoring and detection). The latter feature is highly desirable for the Police Department.

Pursuant to the DC Zoning Regulations, each application package contains the following: (1) form 120 (application); (2) form 135 (zoning self-certification); (3) Surveyor's Plat; (4) adjacent property owners list; (5) Statement of Existing and Intended Uses; (6) Statement of Satisfaction of Burden of Proof; and (7) photographs of the property and photo-simulations of the proposed facility.

Request for Expedited and Consolidated Hearing

Applicant requests an expedited and consolidated hearing with BZA application 16988, filed with the BZA on January 8, 2003 and scheduled to be heard on March 11, 2003. The applications are substantially the same, and are so closely related in terms of need and urgency as to warrant a consolidated hearing, or to be heard sequentially.

The District's current emergency communications network is antiquated and does not provide sufficient capacity to support communications among the growing numbers of District and federal safety and emergency preparedness personnel. Emergency personnel are unable to communicate effectively with the current system, and the District fears that a terrorist attack or natural disaster could overwhelm the system and hinder vital communications. OCTO needs to complete construction of a new network quickly, as the current network is reaching the end of its useful life. With the threat of terrorism in the Nation's Capital, the District and federal emergency workers, as well as residents, need a state-of-the-art system to facilitate communications and coordination among the District, Maryland, and Virginia, as well as federal, emergency and safety personnel.

Because these facilities are part of overall system enhancements, the intended use of the properties and the benefits of the proposed uses are virtually identical with BZA application number 16988. A consolidated hearing would allow the BZA to consider these two facilities as part of this overall scheme for the District's emergency communications network. In the alternative, we request that the hearings be held on the same day and sequential.

Requests for Waivers of Filing Fees

Applicant is entitled to a waiver of the filing fee for this application pursuant to Section 3180.3. This section provides that a D.C. government office "shall not be required to pay a filing fee where the property is owned by the agency and the property is to be occupied for a government building or use." Because these properties are owned by the District of Columbia, and will be utilized by the District's Office of the Chief Technology Officer to construct a communications system for its emergency personnel, these applications meet the waiver requirements.

On behalf of the Applicant, we respectfully request that the Board of Zoning Adjustment accept these applications and schedule a hearing. We reserve the right to update and supplement these applications as necessary.

Sincerely,

Edward L. Donohue

Edward L. Donohue

Attachments