



Memorandum

To: Board of Architectural Review

From: Kelly O'Brien, Deputy Director

Meeting Date: July 24, 2026

Re: **Item No. 02 -Docket No. PF-2118130-SP
527 Maple Ave E - SmartLink - AT&T Telecommunications
Recommendation on Modification of Requirements**

Request recommendation of approval to Town Council on modification of requirement for height of architectural features for building located at 527 Maple Ave E, Docket No. PF-2118130-SP, in the AE, Avenue East Gateway zoning district, filed by Doug Sampson, Saul Ewing LLP, project contact, on behalf of SmartLink Group, applicant.

The subject property is developed with a multi-tenant commercial office building that currently contains rooftop telecommunications facilities operated by Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile. Those facilities were previously approved by the Town and include rooftop screening structures that extend above the maximum height otherwise permitted for architectural features.

The applicant proposes to install equipment for a third wireless carrier on the existing rooftop as a co-location facility. The proposed telecommunications equipment would be screened by new architectural screening walls designed to match the existing building façade and the screening for the existing telecommunications facilities.

During staff review, it was determined that different portions of the proposed screening walls would extend above the existing roof by approximately 9 feet 8 inches in some areas and 10 feet 10 inches in other areas. These heights would exceed the nine-foot limitation established by Section 18-212.1.C of the Town Code. As a result, the applicant has submitted a Modification of Requirements application requesting approval of the additional height.

***Applicants must attend the meeting and represent their application.
Failure to appear may result in the deferral of the item or amendments to the design.
Failure to appear will not relieve any pending violations.***

Section 18-212.1.C of the Town Code permits architectural features to extend beyond nine feet above the roof level upon approval by the Town Council, after receiving recommendations from Planning Commission and Board of Architectural Review.

The proposed screening walls are designed to function as architectural extensions of the existing parapets and are finished with materials and colors intended to match the existing brick façade. The additional height is necessary to screen the proposed antennas while maintaining a consistent appearance with the existing rooftop telecommunications facilities.

The applicant evaluated alternatives to reduce the height and visual prominence of the proposed screening walls but concluded that the requested extensions represent the minimum height necessary to fully screen the proposed antennas while attaining the wireless coverage sought and maintaining compatibility with the existing building and rooftop telecommunications facilities.

As illustrated in the submitted elevations and photo simulations, the proposed screening walls generally align with the height of the existing Verizon and T-Mobile rooftop screening structures and do not create a rooftop element substantially taller than what currently exists.

At its June 24, 2026, meeting, the Planning Commission reviewed the applicant's request for a Modification of Requirements, pursuant to Sections 18-212 and 18-830 of the Town Code. After the staff presentation, applicant testimony, and discussion, the Planning Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to recommend that the Town Council approve the requested modification to permit portions of the rooftop architectural screening to extend beyond the maximum nine (9) feet above the roof level permitted by the Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Commission's recommendation addressed the requested Modification of Requirements from a land use and zoning perspective. In accordance with the role of the Board of Architectural Review as described in Chapter 4 of the Town Code, the Board's recommendation should focus on whether the proposed architectural screening and associated increase in height are appropriate from an architectural and design standpoint.

Concurrently with this request, the Board of Architectural Review will consider a separate application for approval of the exterior modifications associated with the proposed telecommunications facility during the same July 16, 2026, meeting. This report addresses only the Board's recommendation to the Town Council regarding the requested Modification of Requirements to permit portions of the architectural screening walls to extend beyond the maximum height permitted by Section 18-212.1.C of the Town Code.

Attachments:

- 01 – Staff Report
- 02 – Application and Authorization
- 03 – Statement of Justification
- 04 – AT&T Project Narrative for BAR
- 05 – AT&T Coverage Plots
- 06 – Telecommunications Plans
- 07 – Photo Simulations
- 08 – Previous Variance & CUP Orders
- 09 – Relevant Code Sections
- 10 – Planning Commission Chair Memo to Town Council

Recommended motion:

I move to recommend (approval/denial) to the Town Council of the Modification of Requirements request for 527 Maple Ave E to permit portions of the proposed architectural screening walls associated with a rooftop telecommunications facility to extend beyond the maximum nine (9) feet above the roof permitted by Section 18-212.1.C of the Town Code, as submitted. (as submitted / with the following conditions....)

Process

Per Town Code Chapter 4, all land areas zoned other than single-family detached residential are architectural control districts. Any lot, parcel or area of land within any area zoned for single-family detached residences, which is used for other than single-family detached residences, or which is the subject of an application for a use permit or building permit involving any such other use, is also designated an architectural control district.

No structure, building, sign or other improvements or other major landscape features surrounding such building, structure, sign or improvement located on any land within any architectural control district shall be erected, reconstructed, altered or restored until the plans for such shall have been approved by the Board of Architectural Review.