



Memorandum

To: Town Council
From: David Miller, Acting Chair of the Planning Commission 
Meeting Date: June 24, 2026
Re: Recommendation for Modifications of Requirements related to height
AT&T Wireless - 527 Maple Ave E

Summary:

The Planning Commission reviewed a request from New Cingular PCS LLC (AT&T Mobility) for a Modification of Requirements related to the height of rooftop architectural features at its June 24, 2026, meeting. The Commission's role was limited to making a recommendation to Town Council regarding the requested height modification. The use of telecommunications facility is permitted by-right under Virginia law, subject to meeting zoning requirements, and was not under review by the Planning Commission.

The applicant proposes installing wireless telecommunications equipment on the roof of the existing commercial building at 527 Maple Avenue East. To accommodate the proposed installation, the applicant requested approval to extend portions of the rooftop screening walls above the maximum height otherwise permitted by the Town Code.

Following staff presentation and discussion, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the requested Modification of Requirements

Background:

The subject property is located at 527 Maple Avenue East, at the corner of Maple Avenue East and East Street SE, within the AE (Avenue East) zoning district. The property is designated Mixed Use on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map. The building currently contains multiple commercial tenants and already supports rooftop wireless telecommunications equipment installed pursuant to approvals granted in 2010.

Under the Town Code, rooftop architectural features extending more than nine feet above the roof require approval of a Modification of Requirements. The proposed telecommunications facility itself is permitted by-right under state law; therefore, the Planning Commission's review was limited to the requested increase in rooftop screening wall height.

Proposal

The applicant proposes to co-locate AT&T wireless telecommunications equipment on the existing rooftop alongside existing wireless carriers.

To accommodate the antennas while maintaining architectural screening, the applicant requested approval for:

- A west platform screen wall with a height of **9 feet 8 inches** above the roof level (8 inches above the maximum permitted height); and
- A north screen wall with a height of **10 feet 10 inches** above the roof level (22 inches above the maximum permitted height).

The applicant explained that the proposed equipment would not exceed the height of existing T-Mobile and Verizon facilities already located on the rooftop. The additional height is necessary to fully screen the antennas while matching the appearance of the existing rooftop screening. The applicant also noted that the installation would improve wireless coverage in the Maple Avenue corridor and provide FirstNet service for first responders.

Key Discussion Points:

Planning Commissioners noted that the building has successfully accommodated rooftop telecommunications equipment for many years with minimal visual impact due to the existing architectural screening. The applicant reiterated that the proposed equipment would remain at or below the height of the existing rooftop installations and that the requested modification was necessary only because of the Town's current measurement standard for rooftop architectural features. Finding that the proposal would have minimal visual impact while supporting improved wireless service, the Planning Commission expressed support for the requested modification.

Planning Commission Recommendation

After staff presentation and discussion, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend that Town Council approve the requested Modification of Requirements.

The Commission considered the following motion:

“I move to recommend that the Town Council approve the requested Modification of Requirements to allow the west platform screen wall to be built to 9’-8” above the roof level and the north screen wall to be built to 10’-10” above the roof level at 527 Maple Ave E, in the AE Avenue East zoning district, described as tax map parcel 0382 09 0100.”

Motion: Commissioner Plowgian
2nd: Commissioner Aimone
Roll Call Vote: 6-0

David Miller, Acting Chair	Aye
Matthew Glassman, Chair	absent
Douglas Noble, Vice Chair	Aye
Keith Aimone	Aye
Deepa Chakrapani	Aye
Evan Fallor	Aye
Jessica Plowgian	Aye

Closing

The Planning Commission respectfully submits this recommendation for Town Council's consideration.