

STAFF REPORT
March 26, 2009

No. 09PD007 - Major Amendment to a Planned Commercial Development **ITEM 11**

GENERAL INFORMATION:

APPLICANT	West River Electric Association
AGENT	Lee Geiger for Geiger Architecture
PROPERTY OWNER	West River Electric
REQUEST	No. 09PD007 - Major Amendment to a Planned Industrial Development
EXISTING LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Lot 1 of WREA Subdivision of Section 9, T1N, R8E, BHM, Rapid City, Pennington County, South Dakota
PARCEL ACREAGE	Approximately 11.0 acres
LOCATION	3250 East Highway 44
EXISTING ZONING	Light Industrial District (Planned Industrial Development)
SURROUNDING ZONING	
North:	General Commercial District
South:	General Agriculture District
East:	Suburban Residential District (Pennington County)
West:	Suburban Residential District (Pennington County)
PUBLIC UTILITIES	Rapid Valley Sanitary District
DATE OF APPLICATION	2/27/2009
REVIEWED BY	Vicki L. Fisher / Ted Johnson

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Major Amendment to a Planned Industrial Development be continued to the April 9, 2009 Planning Commission meeting to allow the applicant to submit additional information.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

The applicant has submitted a Major Amendment to a Planned Industrial Development to allow the construction of a communication tower on the property. The applicant has indicated that the communication tower will replace a previous tower located on the site and will be used by West River Electric Association and the Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative.

On January 22, 2009, the Planning Commission approved a Planned Industrial

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Development (File #08PD012) to allow an office administration building with meeting rooms, warehouse units and an outdoor storage area on the property. A stipulation of approval required that "the construction of a communication tower on the property shall require a Major Amendment to the Planned Industrial Development". As such, the applicant has submitted this application to allow the construction of a 95 foot high communication tower to be constructed on the western portion of the property.

The property is located in the northwest corner of the intersection of S.D. Highway 44 and Twilight Drive. Currently, an office building and several accessory buildings are located on the property.

STAFF REVIEW:

Staff has reviewed the Major Amendment to a Planned Industrial Development and has noted the following considerations:

Parking/Landscaping/Signage: The previously approved Initial and Final Planned Industrial Development to redevelop the site as noted above included the location for the communication tower and the design and location of the generator building that will be used to house the equipment for the communication tower. In addition, the approved parking plan included the two minimum parking spaces required for the communication tower. The approved landscaping plan will not be affected by this application since the location of the tower and equipment shed were previously shown and accounted for with the previous application. The applicant has also indicated that no additional signage will be proposed for the communication tower. As such, staff recommends that the parking, landscaping and signage comply with the previously approved parking plan, landscaping plan and sign package.

Tower Design: The applicant is proposing to construct a 95 foot high pole tower with exterior omni antennas and an exterior microwave antenna within the western portion of the property. However, the proposed tower is located adjacent to Elk Vale Road and will be highly visible from the street. Elk Vale Road is classified as an arterial street and serves as a gateway into our community. The property is also adjacent to S.D. Highway 44 which is also an arterial street that serves as a gateway into our community. As such, a flagpole tower with internal antennas would be a more appropriate design for this site. It is also a design that has been used by others in high visibility areas. In particular, other communication companies located adjacent to arterial streets or other high visibility areas have constructed flagpole towers with internal antennas to minimize the aesthetic impact of the communication tower.

It is unclear if the proposed tower design is needed to meet the applicant's service needs or if a flagpole tower with internal antennas could be utilized to meet those same service needs. As such, an engineered statement must be submitted for review and approval demonstrating the detail of service provided by the proposed tower with external antennas compared to a flagpole tower with internal antennas. In addition, maps demonstrating the service area for both types of towers must be submitted for review and approval.

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Staff recommends that the Major Amendment to the Planned Industrial Development be continued to allow the applicant to submit the engineered statement and the service maps as identified.

Time Extension: The previously approved Initial and Final Planned Industrial Development request was approved with the stipulation that the project be completed within two years of the date of approval, or January 22, 2011. The applicant has indicated that full build-out of the second floor of the office building may take ten years. As such, the applicant has requested that a time extension be granted to allow the applicant ten years to complete the entire project.

In order to allow the applicant additional time to complete the entire project, staff recommends that a time extension be granted as requested.

Notification Requirement: As of this writing, the receipts from the certified mailings have not been returned nor has the sign been posted on the property. Staff will notify the Planning Commission at the March 26, 2009 Planning Commission meeting if these requirements have not been met.