

**ITEM NO. 9:** DR-3-20-09 Massachusetts Street; Communication Antennas/Freenet Downtown; Certified Local Government Review and Certificate of Appropriateness Review. The area is listed in the Lawrence Downtown Historic District, National Register of Historic Places. The property is in the environs of Miller's Hall (723-725 Massachusetts), the Hanna Building (933 Massachusetts), South Park (1140-1141 Massachusetts), Lawrence Register of Historic Places, the House Building (729 Massachusetts), Shalor Eldridge Residence (945 Rhode Island), Register of Historic Kansas Places, the United States Post Office (645 New Hampshire), the Eldridge Hotel (701 Massachusetts), the Carnegie Library (200 W. 9<sup>th</sup>), the Lucy Hobbs Taylor House (809 Vermont), Plymouth Congregational Church (925 Vermont), Watkins Bank (1047 Massachusetts), the Douglas County Courthouse (1100 Massachusetts), the English Lutheran Church (1040 New Hampshire), the Oread Historic District, and the North Rhode Island Historic District, National Register of Historic Places. Submitted by Lawrence Freenet for the City of Lawrence, the property owner of record.

### **STAFF PRESENTATION**

Ms. Braddock Zollner presented the item.

### **APPLICANT PRESENTATION**

Kris Adair stated she was treasurer of Lawrence Freenet. She said the antennas would be painted to match the color of the light poles they were attached to and the cable would be cut to fit. She stated the cable would not be seen by the public.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one from the public spoke to this item.

### **COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Marvin asked the applicant why the antennas were not on top of the posts rather than on the arm of the posts.

Ms. Adair stated the boxes did not have to be located in a particular spot for them to work properly. She said the antennas were not noticeable. Ms. Adair said Lawrence Freenet was working to make the boxes smaller.

Ms. Braddock Zollner stated Staff had asked for the applicant to provide information on each arm showing where the location of the antennas would be.

Commissioner Marvin stated if the antennas were in line with the posts they would be less intrusive.

Commissioner Wiechert stated the antennas would not be seen as easily by the public if they were located next to the posts.

Commissioner Antle stated the Commission did not want to set precedence of approving communications equipment on the lights downtown. He said the City Commission was being properly proactive.

Ms. Adair stated Lawrence Freenet did not want to set precedence and they would work with other companies that wanted to place antennas on the posts. She said Lawrence Freenets radio would broadcast as many signals as necessary.

Commissioner Veatch asked the applicant if the antennas were in newspaper stands.

Ms. Adair said the antennas were currently installed in the Lawrencian Newspaper stands. She stated once the antennas were installed on light poles they would be removed from the Lawrencian Newspaper stands.

The Commission discussed the difference between one application of equipment and multiple applications of equipment in the Downtown Historic District. The discussion included the recommendation from the National Park Service that this type of equipment should be concealed in existing or new features that are compatible with the listed property.

Ms. Adair stated Lawrence Freenet would continue to work on making the units more stealthy so that they would not be as easily visible to the public.

Commissioner Meyer asked if staff could send a letter to the City Commission to explain the Commission's concerns about the installation of multiple applications in the downtown area.

Ms. Braddock Zollner stated staff could prepare a letter for the Chair to sign if the Commission so desired.

Commissioner Meyer asked staff to prepare the letter for her signature.

The Commission discussed the location of the new equipment.

#### **ACTION TAKEN**

Motioned by Commissioner Meyer, seconded by Commissioner Antle, to approve the proposed project, with the following conditions, and make the determination the proposed project does not encroach upon, damage or destroy listed historic properties and their environs in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, Chapter 22 the Historic Resources Code of the City of Lawrence, and the *Downtown Design Guidelines*, the standards of evaluation.

1. This recommendation is given with the understanding that the City Commission must approve any associated permits, licenses or agreements. Approval of this request by staff or the HRC does not guarantee the City Commission will approve the associated permits, licenses or agreements.
2. This approval is only for the ten units and the precise location identified in the map supplied by the applicant.
3. The units should be painted the color of the pole onto which they are attached to make them less noticeable.
4. The units should be located as close as possible to the main vertical pole.
5. The applicant will continue to evaluate new equipment that may be less intrusive into the Downtown Historic District.
6. Any changes to the approved project will be submitted to the Historic Resources Commission prior to the commencement of any related work.

Motion carried unanimously, 5-0