

DOCKET: Shaffner Park Disposition of Park Land Request
STAFF: Kirk Ericson, AICP

REQUEST

Public Hearing to consider a proposal of Vogue Towers, LLC, to enter into a long-term lease agreement with the City of Winston-Salem for land located within Shaffner Park. The property subject to the agreement is located south of Yorkshire Road and east of Silas Creek Parkway.

BACKGROUND

A resolution by the Winston-Salem City Council dated November 19, 2001 requires that public hearings be held by the City-County Planning Board and City Council prior to the sale or transfer of any City-owned park property. Per adopted policy, a long-term lease is analogous to a sale of property.

Shaffner Park is a large recreation facility located on both sides of Silas Creek Parkway in western Winston-Salem. The park is approximately 47 acres in size and contains various amenities including an exercise par course, tennis and pickleball courts, a children's playground, and athletic fields.

Vogue Towers, LLC, has approached the City about leasing a 3,600 square foot (60'x60') area in the southeast corner of the park to construct a 120' tall monopine transmission tower. This tower would be directly adjacent to a large, wooded area at the edge of the park and would be secured with fencing meeting UDO requirements. The tower would be accessed via a 29,308 square foot, 30' wide access and utility easement connecting to the south side of Yorkshire Road.

Vogue Towers has negotiated a ground lease agreement with an initial term of five years, with the option of 7 five-year renewals, for a maximum lease term of forty years.

ANALYSIS

The Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Commission, which is an 11-member advisory board appointed by the Mayor, recommended approval of the lease agreement at its November 4, 2025, meeting.

Planning staff also recommends approval of this request, as the total leased area of the park represents less than two percent of its total size, the proposed tower type and location would not negatively impact the functionality or appearance of the park, and the new transmission tower would improve telecommunications service in the surrounding area. The lease would also provide an additional revenue stream for the City, contributing to the funding available for its operation.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL

CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

PUBLIC HEARING

MINUTES FOR SHAFFNER PARK

DECEMBER 11, 2025

Mr. Murphy explained the history of City Council's process for considering the sale or lease of City park land. The Planning Board's role in considering this item is to determine whether the request is an appropriate use of park land. City Council will make the ultimate decision on this request.

Kirk Ericson presented the staff report

Mr. Lambe asked whether the tower access easement would be fenced. Mr. Ericson stated that the easement itself would not be fenced; however, the 60' by 60' area where the transmission tower will be located would be fenced. Mr. Steelman inquired whether any additional towers could be constructed in the park, to which Mr. Murphy replied that he was not aware of any plans for other towers. Mr. Murphy reminded the Board that their role in this request is limited to determining the appropriateness of what the petitioner is proposing.

PUBLIC HEARING

FOR: None

AGAINST: None

WORK SESSION

MOTION: Clarence Lambe recommended approval of the ordinance amendment.

SECOND: Salvador Patiño

VOTE:

FOR: Walter Farabee, Haley Gingles, Jason Grubbs, Clarence Lambe, Salvador Patiño,
Dixon Pitt, Lindsey Schwab, Brenda Smith, Jack Steelman

AGAINST: None

EXCUSED: None

Chris Murphy, AICP/CZO
Director of Planning and Development Services