WETHERSFIELD
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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APPLICATION GUIDANCE*

For

WIRELESS COMMUNICATION, TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES, TOWERS, AND ANTENNAE

The Town of Wethersfield permits the construction of towers and antennae in compliance with the requirements of Section 9.1 and Section 10.1.H of the zoning regulations. The Town of Wethersfield has created this guide in an effort to summarize the requirements of these regulations for individuals interested in building a tower or antenna on their property.

*This guide is intended for general guidance only, and does not replace the full zoning regulation and code requirements. Any questions should be directed to the Community Development Office at (860)-721-2838.

What is an Antenna? An antenna is any device used to collect or transmit telecommunications or radio signals. Examples include but are not limited to: panel, whip, and dish antennae.

What is a Telecommunication Facility? Towers, antenna, associated equipment, and other structures used in conjunction with the provision of wireless communication services such as cellular communications and personal communications services.

> **CO-LOCATED** - A telecommunication facility that shares land, towers, buildings or other structures for the placement of antennae with one or more telecommunication provider.
> **HEIGHT** - The height of a telecommunication facility measured from the ground level to the top of the tallest feature.

Installations Not Requiring a Zoning Permit

In any zoning district, a total of up to two (2) satellite signal installations may be permitted when accessory to a permitted use provided they are attached to a building, are no greater than three (3) feet in diameter, and are mounted no higher than five (5) feet above the roof.

When Are Telecommunications Facilities and Residential Radio or Television Antennae Allowed in Residential and Agricultural Zones?

- Telecommunications facilities are permitted in all Residential and Agricultural zones as principal uses after the issuance of a Special Use Permit by the Planning and Zoning Commission in accordance with Section 9.1 of the Zoning Regulations.
- Residential radio or television antennae and other accessory installations in accordance with Section 9.1 of the Zoning Regulations are permitted as accessory structures in all residential zones following zoning permit approval by the Zoning Enforcement Officer.
- Solar energy collection panels or photovoltaic panels when accessory to a permitted use in a Residential or Conservation district. If to be erected on a roof which is visible from a public street, such panels shall be mounted flush to the roof, with allowance for mounting brackets and piping.

- A common tubular television antenna, am-fm radio antenna, or short-wave installation is permitted when accessory to a permitted use provided it projects no higher than 50 feet above the ground and is located in the rear yard at least five (5) feet from any side or rear lot line and 40 feet from any street line. Rooftop installations may be permitted if the antenna does not project higher than ten (10) feet above the roofline.
- A common ham radio installation is permitted when accessory to a permitted use provided it projects no higher than 70 feet above the ground and is located in the rear yard at least five (5) feet from any side or rear lot line and 40 feet from any street line.

When Are Antennae, Towers, and Telecommunications Facilities Allowed in Business Zones?

- Telecommunications facilities are permitted in the TC, O, GB, RC and BP zones as a principal use in accordance with Section 9.1 of the zoning regulations upon issuance of a Special Permit from the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- Telecommunications Facilities are NOT allowed in the Village Business District.
- The following are permitted as accessory buildings/structures in Business zones:
  - Satellite antennae two (2) feet or less in diameter and mounted no higher than five (5) feet above the roof (in accordance with Section 9.1) are permitted based on the following approvals:
    - In the Village Business, Town Center, and Office districts, conditional use is permitted following Special Permit approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
    - In the General Business, Regional Commercial, and Business Park districts, following a Site Plan approval by the Commission.
  - Satellite antennae more than two (2) feet in diameter and/or mounted more than five (5) feet above the roof (in accordance with Section 9.1) are NOT permitted in the Village Business, Town Center, and Office districts. These types of antennae are only allowed following Special Permit approval by the Commission in the General Business, Regional Commercial, and Business Park zones.
  - Radio antennae that extend less than 50 feet in height above the ground (in accordance with Section 9.1) are permitted based on the following process:
    - In the Village Business, Town Center, and Office districts following Special Permit approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
    - In the General Business, Regional Commercial, and Business Park districts, antennae meeting the above requirements are permitted following a Site Plan approval by the Commission.
  - Radio antennae extending more than 50 feet in height above the ground (in accordance with Section 9.1) are NOT permitted in the Village Business, Town Center, and Office districts. These types of antennae are permitted following Special Permit approval by the Commission in the General Business, Regional Commercial, and Business Park zones.

Antennae, Towers, and Telecommunications Facilities Allowed in All Zones

The following types of installations require approval of a Special Permit by the Commission based upon plans, drawings, and specifications furnished by the applicant as may be required to adequately show the proposed location, elevations, dimensions, construction, mounting, and screening.

- Any installation that does not conform to the requirements of Section 9.1.B. (oversized satellite signal installations).
- Any installation not conforming to the requirements of Section 9.1.C.

- Wind power generators accessory to a permitted use provided it projects no higher than 50 feet above the ground.

Information Required

Plans, drawings, and specifications provided by the applicant may be required to adequately show the proposed location, elevations, dimensions, construction, mounting, and screening of all installations. Site Plans shall comply with the requirements of Section 10.1.D. and Appendix A of the zoning regulations.

Telecommunication facility applications shall comply with the requirements of 9.1.E. and unless waived by the Commission, the applicant shall submit the information required by Section 10.1.H (Telecommunications Facility Application) of the zoning regulations.

Zoning Enforcement Official's Authority

Any installation shall, in the judgment of the Zoning Enforcement Official, be placed as to not become a dominant visual element when viewed from the primary focus of public activity, or shall be referred to the Planning and Zoning Commission for approval by Special Permit.

Telecommunication Facilities Special Requirements

- Any application to establish a telecommunication facility shall be in accordance with the requirements of Sections 9.1 and 10.1 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations with regard to the following.
    - Any new facility co-located on an existing facility shall require a Site Plan application to the Commission.
    - Any other telecommunication facility shall require a Special Permit application and a Site Plan application to the Commission.
- The following table provides a guideline of the priority given to installations of facilities in different locations, with different characteristics and designs:

Priority	Location
Highest	Business Districts
	Town-owned property
	Public utility facilities
	Open space land
	Residential Districts
Lowest	Historic Districts

Priority	Characteristics
Highest	Where existing topography, vegetation, or structures provide appropriate screening
	Towers using "stealth" technology
Lowest	Other sites

Priority	Design
Highest	On or in existing structures
	Co-location on existing telecommunications towers
	New towers projecting no more than 25 feet above the existing tree-line
Lowest	New towers projecting more than 25 feet above the existing tree-line.

- Unless modified by the Commission, a telecommunications tower structure shall be set back from property lines at least as far as the height of the structure.
- The Commission may require the applicant to simulate the tower height during daylight hours by balloon or other method that will evaluate scenic impact and may require the applicant to publish a legal notice informing the public of the date of such simulation.
- A telecommunication tower shall be a monopole design unless otherwise approved by the Commission.
- Telecommunication tower structures, associated support features, accessory buildings, and antenna arrays shall be painted or otherwise camouflaged in a manner approved by the Commission, to blend as much as possible with the surrounding environment.
- No illumination of any telecommunications tower structure shall be permitted unless specifically requested by the applicant and specifically approved by the Commission.
- All utilities shall be located underground unless otherwise approved by the Commission.
- Unless modified by the Commission, all associated structures shall be screened from public view by ornamental shrubs, evergreen trees, fences, walls, or other landscaping to maintain a natural-looking environment.