



GLPC AGENDA ITEM # 6

NOVEMBER 30, 2015

Conditional Use Request by Snake Nation Press. File #: CU-2015-06

Snake Nation Press, Inc. is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the following 3 uses in an R-P zoning district: (1) radio broadcasting studio, (2) telecommunications tower/antenna, and (3) meeting facility and offices for a Professional Organization. The subject property consists of 0.35 acres located at 110 West Force Street, which is at the NE corner of West Force Street and North Toombs Street. The subject property contains an existing single-family residence. The applicant is proposing to renovate the building to include a small radio broadcasting studio in the rear portion of the building, install a 59' antenna in the rear yard for a low-wattage FM radio station with 3 mile broadcast range, and utilize the front rooms of the existing building as meeting and office space for Snake Nation Press which is a local literary organization. The applicant is proposing to retain several rooms of the house for continued use as a private residence. As part of this redevelopment, the applicant is also proposing to install a small parking lot in the rear yard as well as a handicap ramp.

The subject property is located within a **Transitional Neighborhood (TN)** Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The property is also located within the local **Historic District**. The Historic Preservation Commission has already approved the proposed 59' tower, however, the other site improvements (handicap ramp and parking lot) have not yet received HPC approval. The applicant is also seeking a Variance from LDR Section 218-23(J) as it pertains to telecommunications tower setback distances (file # APP-2015-09) and this is scheduled to be heard by ZBOA on December 1st.

Overall, given the specific circumstances of the property and each of these proposed uses requiring CUP approval, staff is supportive and recommends approval with appropriate conditions. More detailed thoughts and considerations for each of these requests are articulated below. This area is generally part of mixed land use pattern consisting primarily of single-family and multi-family residential uses, but also professional offices and even some commercial uses nearby. All of these uses are in the context of being within an older historic neighborhood setting. The applicant is proposing to preserve the existing residential building and only use part of its interior for these non-residential uses. Other than installation of a very small parking area that is mostly hidden in the rear portion of the yard, a partially visible small tower in the rear yard, and some much-needed renovation work on the entire outside, there will be very little change to the subject property.

(A) Radio Broadcasting Studio. This will only take up less than 300-sf of the existing building and will be staffed only part of the time. It is estimated that staffing will consist of 1-3 persons, plus maybe the resident curator. Approval of this CUP item should be limited to the studio "as proposed" by the applicant, so that it cannot transfer to a larger and potentially more commercial studio in the future – without being re-reviewed by the City.

(B) Telecommunications Tower. Unlike most telecommunications towers requiring CUP approval, this is a low-wattage FM station with a very limited broadcast range. The tower will only be 59' tall and it will be narrow in size. It will be largely obscured by the existing 35' tall building and the existing mature tree canopy of the subject property and the surrounding area. It will only be barely noticeable from a few blocks away "if" there is a clear path of sight over other buildings and trees. A much taller or large tower would be more noticeable. In many ways in terms of height and size, this will be much like an Amateur Radio tower that is often found on residential properties (up to 50' tall) and does not require a CUP approval. Approval of this CUP item should be limited to a maximum total height of 60' (rounded #) so that any greater height proposed in the future for this location would be re-reviewed by the City --- and after the visual impacts of a 59' tower can be more accurately assessed as a point of reference.

(C) Professional Organization. Approximately half (1,200-sf) of the existing building would be used as media library and meeting spaces etc... for "Snake Nation Press". Unlike some professional organizations, this one is relatively small with only a handful of attendees typically coming to this facility on some days. With the addition of a small parking area in the rear of the site, this use of the subject property will also be barely noticeable. Approval of this CUP item should stipulate the number of minimum required parking for the site, and be placed in the name of the applicant only -- so that any future (and probably much larger) professional organizations wanting to use this facility would need to be re-reviewed by the City.

Staff Recommendation: Find all 3 CUP requests consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommend approval to the City Council subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Conditional Use approval shall be granted for a Radio Broadcasting Studio in R-P zoning for a low-wattage (100 watt) radio station as approved by the FCC.
- (2) Conditional Use approval shall be granted for a Telecommunications Tower and Antenna in R-P zoning, that does not exceed 60' in height above ground, that is freestanding without guy wires, and is located immediately behind the existing building.
- (3) Conditional Use approval shall be granted for a Professional Organization office space and meeting facility in R-P zoning, and in the name of the applicant only. Approval shall be based on the submitted site plan which includes at least 5 paved parking spaces in the rear of the site, plus maintaining an approved residential driveway from West Force Street for resident curator parking.
- (4) These Conditional Use approvals shall expire after 5 years from the date of City Council approval if no building permit (for the tower) and no business license for Snake Nation Press and its radio station is requested by that date.

Planning Analysis & Property Information

Applicant/Owner:	Snake Nation Press, Inc. (Paul & Jean Arambula)		
Request:	Conditional Use Permits for: (1) radio broadcasting studio, (2) telecommunications tower/antenna, and (3) professional organization offices/meeting facility		
Property General Information			
Size & Location:	0.35 acres at the NE corner of West Force Street and North Toombs Street		
Street Address:	110 West Force Street		
Tax Parcel ID:	Map # 118A Parcel 013	City Council District:	2 Councilwoman Sandra Tooley
Zoning & Land Use Patterns			
		Zoning	Land Use
Subject Property:	Existing:	R-P	Single-family residence
	Proposed:	R-P	Single-family residence, along with the 3 CUP uses listed above....
Adjacent Property:	North:	R-6	Single-family residential, vacant lots
	South:	R-6	Single-family residential
	East:	C-C	Professional office
	West:	R-6, R-M	Single-family residential, Apartments
Neighborhood Characteristics			
Historic Resources:	The subject property is a contributing historic resource in the local Historic District, and is immediately outside the North Patterson National Register Historic District. A few of the other buildings nearby are also considered contributing historic resources.		
Natural Resources:	Vegetation:	Urban forest	
	Wetlands:	No delineated wetlands on or near the subject property	
	Flood Hazards	Property is located well-outside the current FEMA designated 100-year floodplain	
	Groundwater Recharge:	No significant recharge areas in the vicinity	
	Endangered Species:	No known endangered species on the property	
Public Facilities			
Water & Sewer:	Existing Valdosta water services along West Force Street (6" water, 8" sewer) and North Toombs Street (8" water). There is an existing fire hydrant at the SW corner of West Force Street and North Toombs Street – which is directly across from the subject property.		
Transportation:	West Force Street & North Toombs Street (both are Local streets)		
Fire Protection:	Fire Station # 1 (S Oak Street) = approximately 0.90 miles to the south		

Comprehensive Plan Issues

Character Area: Transitional Neighborhood

Description: An area that has most of its original housing stock in place but housing conditions may be worsening due to low rates of homeownership and/or decline of property maintenance. There may be a lack of neighborhood identity and gradual invasion of different type and intensity of uses that may be incompatible with the neighborhood residential use. These areas may be transitioning into a mix of single-family residential, multi-family, light office professional and light commercial uses. These areas are typically located in the older, core areas of the community.

Development Strategy: Focus should be on strategic public investments to improve conditions, allow appropriate infill development on scattered vacant sites, and encourage more homeownership and maintenance or upgrade of existing properties. Public assistance and investment should be focused where needed to ensure that the neighborhood becomes a more stable, mixed-income community with a larger percentage of owner-occupied housing. Vacant properties offer an opportunity for infill development of new, architecturally compatible housing. Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should be provided to enable residents to walk/bike to work, shopping, or other destinations in the area.

Goals and Policies:

POLICY 3.2 – The existing housing stock shall be proactively protected and maintained, utilizing public-private partnerships when necessary.

Objective 3.2.3 – Protect well established neighborhoods from incompatible uses.

POLICY 4.4 –The continued protection and utilization of historic resources shall be encouraged and actively supported.

GOAL 7: LAND USE – To ensure the community's anticipated growth occurs in a well-integrated yet organized fashion, which protects our community resources, promotes efficient use of infrastructure and transportation facilities, and supports quality economic development.

Conditional Use Review Criteria

The following criteria shall be applied in evaluating and deciding any application for a Conditional Use Permit. No application for a Conditional Use Permit shall be granted by the City Council unless satisfactory provisions and arrangements have been made concerning each of the following criteria, all of which are applicable to each application:

(1) Whether or not the proposed use is consistent with all the requirements of the zoning district in which it is located, including required parking, loading areas, setbacks and transitional buffers.	
Applicant:	Yes. The proposed uses are consistent with the zoning district. The property to the east is zones commercial and the zoning across the street (south) and on the rear of the property (north) are both zoned R-P. Within a block is commercial businesses, a bookstore, real estate and law offices, and event rental services. The parking lot will be located in the rear of the building, including handicap parking and access points. The entrance to the back parking lot will be one driveway between the out building and the property line.
Staff:	Yes. Pending final approval from the ZBOA for the requested setback variance, and the HPC for the additional site improvements, the proposed uses will be in compliance.
(2) Compatibility of the proposed use with land uses on adjacent properties, including the size, scale and massing of buildings and lots.	
Applicant:	Yes. The 59' tower is not exceedingly tall compared to the two story building of approximately 35' in height to the east, and the existing building on the property which is approximately 30' tall. The tower will be equivalent in height to old growth pine on the northern property line and mature pecan trees lining Toombs Street. Therefore, the visual impact of the radio tower will be negligible. The broadcasting studio and meeting/activity facility will be within the existing building.
Staff:	Yes. The proposed uses are compatible with the surrounding development patterns.
(3) Adequacy of the ingress and egress to the subject property, and to all proposed buildings, structures, and uses thereon, including the traffic impact of the proposed use on the capacity and safety of public streets providing access to the subject site.	

Applicant:	Yes. We propose a single ingress and egress point to the rear parking lot via a driveway at the back of the property on the Toombs Street side. This will still provide for a natural barrier between the adjacent properties. The daily usage of the center will be less than 10 persons in total, spread throughout the work day. The curator will park in the existing parking with Force Street access.
Staff:	Yes. The proposed ingress and egress to the site is sufficient and traffic impacts will be negligible.
(4) Adequacy of other public facilities and services, including stormwater management, schools, parks, sidewalks, and utilities to serve the proposed use.	
Applicant:	The proposed facilities will have negligible impact on public facilities. The organization uses the Turner Center for the Arts for public performances and concerts. The parking areas will not add substantially to the stormwater in the area. There is a possibility for a rain catchment system being installed for irrigation of the community gardens planned for the grounds, further mitigating the runoff. Sidewalks will be added on the grounds to aid handicap access from the parking lot along with an ADA-compliant ramp on the rear of the structure. Utilities expansion will be necessary for the proposed transmitter house in the existing out building.
Staff:	No adverse impacts.
(5) Whether or not the proposed use will create adverse impacts upon any adjacent or nearby properties by reason of noise, smoke, odor, dust, or vibration, or by the character and volume of traffic generated by the proposed use.	
Applicant:	No. There will only be a negligible increase of traffic in and out of the property, no greater than that of the apartment building at 108 West Force Street. The use will not create any noise, or nuisances described in the question.
Staff:	No adverse impacts.
(6) Whether or not the proposed use will create adverse impacts upon any adjoining land use by reason of the manner of operation or the hours of operation of the proposed use.	
Applicant:	The radio station will eventually operate 24-hours, 7-days each week. The staffing will be 2-4 persons during the night, including the resident curator. These activities are within the building so the impact will be minimal. The proposed media center and meeting space will provide workspace for fewer than 10 individuals on average during normal business hours, 9am to 7pm Monday – Friday. This is less than the existing offices and apartments in the area.
Staff:	No adverse impacts.
(7) Whether or not the proposed use will create adverse impacts on any environmentally sensitive areas or natural resources (wetlands, floodplains, etc..).	
Applicant:	No environmental impact.
Staff:	No impact.

Supplemental Standards of the LDR Applicable to the Proposed Use

LDR Standard	Compliance / Comments
# Parking: Minimum required for a “radio studio” = 3 spaces per 1,000-sf of GFA. Minimum required for a “professional organization” = 1 space per 200-sf of GFA.	OK. Approximately half of the existing building will still be used as a private residence, while the remainder will be shared among the studio and the organization library & meeting space. When analyzing these parts individually, staff has determined the minimum required parking for this proposed facility is 5 spaces + a small driveway for the residence. This is what’s depicted on the proposed site plan.
Tower Setbacks: Minimum tower setback distance from a property line is equal to the total height of the tower.	** Pending consideration & approval by ZBOA on 12-1-2015. Proposed setback distance from N Toombs Street is 37.5 feet.

Development Review Comments

The following comments are provided by the reviewing departments and are only intended to provide the developer with useful information for planning purposes. This list should not be considered all inclusive as additional items may appear during the plan review process.

Building Plan Review: Plan review is required on building and antennae (Georgia Structural Engineer) stamp required for tower. Before any construction begins on site.

Public Works: No comments **Police:** No comments **Health:** < No comments received >.

Engineering: Engineering's concern would be Parking is met in an acceptable manner. Currently there are no improved driveways for this lot.

Fire: No issues in the building being used as office space.

Utilities: An above ground backflow preventer will required to be installed. If the existing water meter is located in the existing or new parking lot, the meter will be required to be relocated in a grassy area existing.

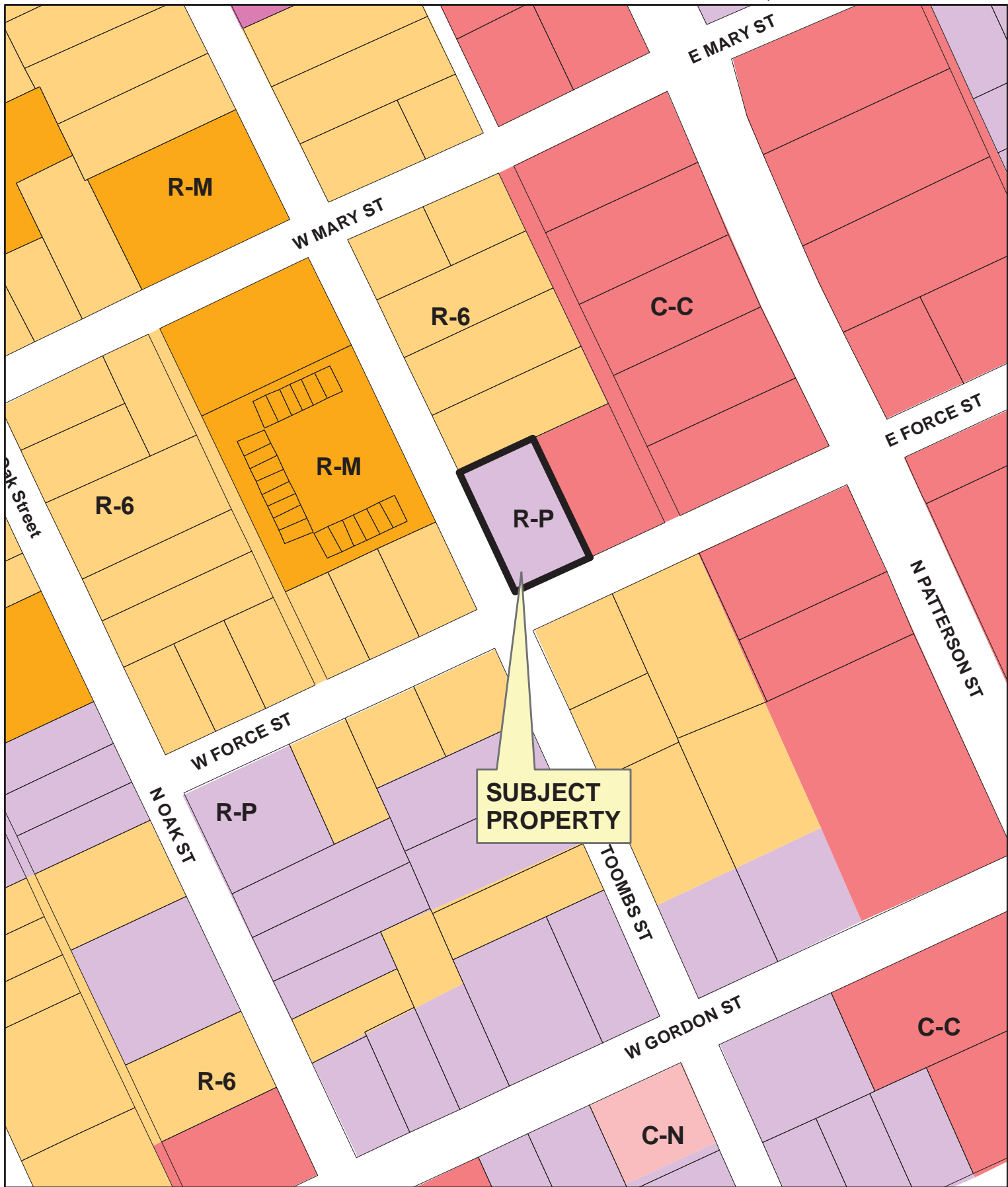
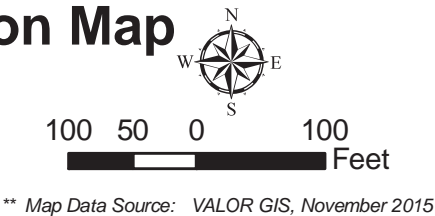
Attachments:

Zoning Location Map
Aerial Map
Use description & Sample antenna schematics
FCC approval (2 pages)
Conceptual site plan
Floorplan

CU-2015-06 & APP-2015-09 Zoning Location Map

Snake Nation Press
Conditional Use Permit Request

110 W Force Street
Tax Map: 0118A Parcel: 013



CU-2015-06 & APP-2015-09 Tax Parcels Aerial



50 25 0 50
Feet

Snake Nation Press Conditional Use Permit Request

** Aerial Imagery Date: 2007

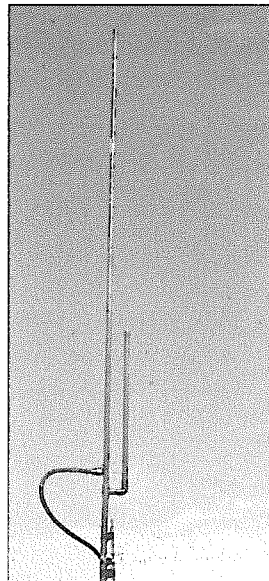
110 W Force Street
Tax Map: 0118A Parcel: 013

** Map Data Source: VALOR GIS, November 2015

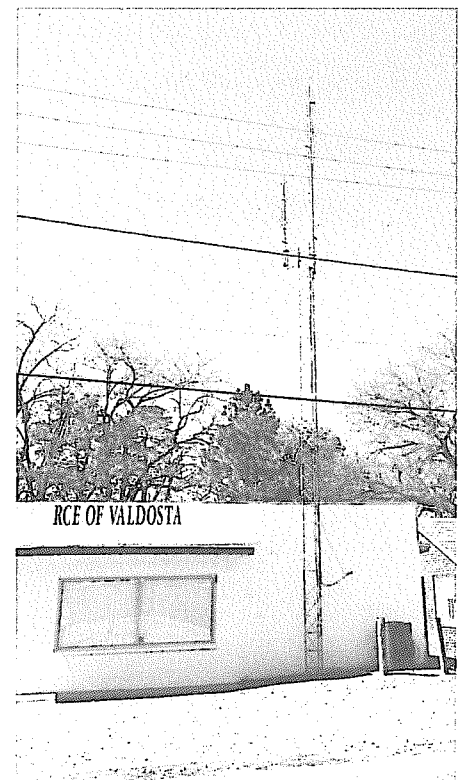


The Snake Nation Press Media House will be a creative space where the community can engage in the dialogues that will enact positive change in Valdosta. Currently, Valdosta is lacking in places outside of the University appropriate for creative work and study. The center will provide a comfortable environment with useful tools for creative people. Resources at the House will include: a book arts and letterpress studio, digital media tools (scanners, Adobe Design Suite, printers), recording and broadcast studio, library, meeting room, WIFI, garden and kitchen. Coworking spaces are shared work environments where individuals can work in the presence of others and engage in spontaneous collaboration. The Media House will provide a space that is especially conducive to writers, graphic designers and those engaged in the media arts. Much of the interior has already been restored. The heart of pine flooring has been refinished. The kitchen has been relocated to its original location with stainless steel appliances installed. The exterior needs repair and painting and a new roof.

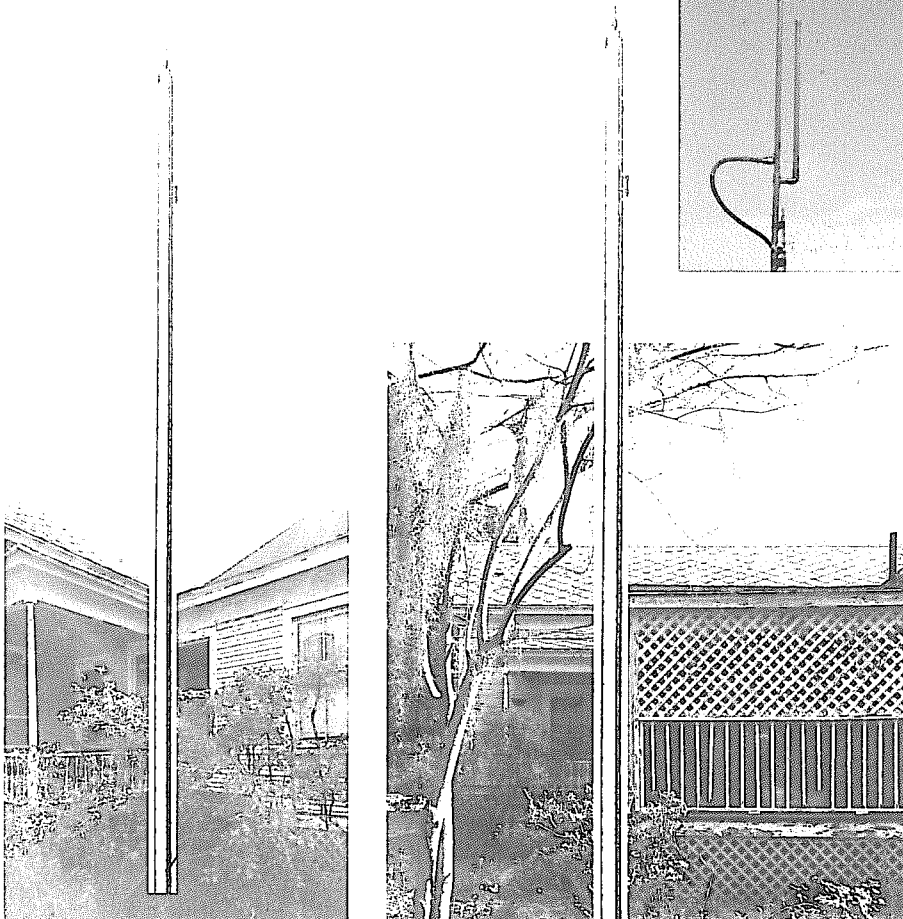
Height assigned by FCC: 18 meters (59.5 ft)



Examples of
Other Antennas



Example is located at 600 N.
Lee Street, Valdosta, GA.
The pole will be anchored in a
concrete base.



View from Toombs Street



United States of America
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
LOW POWER FM BROADCAST STATION
CONSTRUCTION PERMIT

Authorizing Official:

Official Mailing Address:

SNAKE NATION PRESS, INC
110 WEST FORCE STREET
VALDOSTA GA 31601

James D. Bradshaw
Deputy Chief
Audio Division
Media Bureau

Facility ID: 193328

Call Sign: NEW

Permit File Number: BNPL-20131106APH

Grant Date: January 26, 2015

This permit expires 3:00 a.m.
local time, 18 months after the
grant date specified above.

Subject to the provisions of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, subsequent acts and treaties, and all regulations heretofore or hereafter made by this Commission, and further subject to the conditions set forth in this permit, the permittee is hereby authorized to construct the radio transmitting apparatus herein described. Installation and adjustment of equipment not specifically set forth herein shall be made only in accordance with representations contained in the permittee's application for construction permit except for such modifications as are presently permitted, without application, by the Commission's Rules. See Section 73.875.

Equipment and program tests shall be conducted only pursuant to Sections 73.1610 and 73.1620 of the Commission's Rules.

Name of Permittee: SNAKE NATION PRESS, INC

Station Location: GA-VALDOSTA

Frequency (MHz): 103.5

Channel: 278

Class: LP100

Hours of Operation: Unlimited

Callsign: NEW

Permit No.: BNPL-20131106APH

Transmitter: Type Certified. See Sections 73.1660, 73.1665 and 73.1670 of the Commission's Rules.

Transmitter output power: As required to operate within authorized range of effective radiated power.

Antenna type: Non-Directional

Antenna Coordinates: North Latitude: 30 deg 50 min 25 sec

West Longitude: 83 deg 17 min 07 sec

Maximum Effective radiated power in the Horizontal Plane (watts): 100

Minimum Effective radiated power in the Horizontal Plane (watts): 50

Height of radiation center above ground (Meters): 17

Height of radiation center above mean sea level (Meters): 83

Height of radiation center above average terrain (Meters): 29

Antenna structure registration number: Not Required

Overall height of antenna structure above ground: 18 Meters

Obstruction marking and lighting specifications for antenna structure:

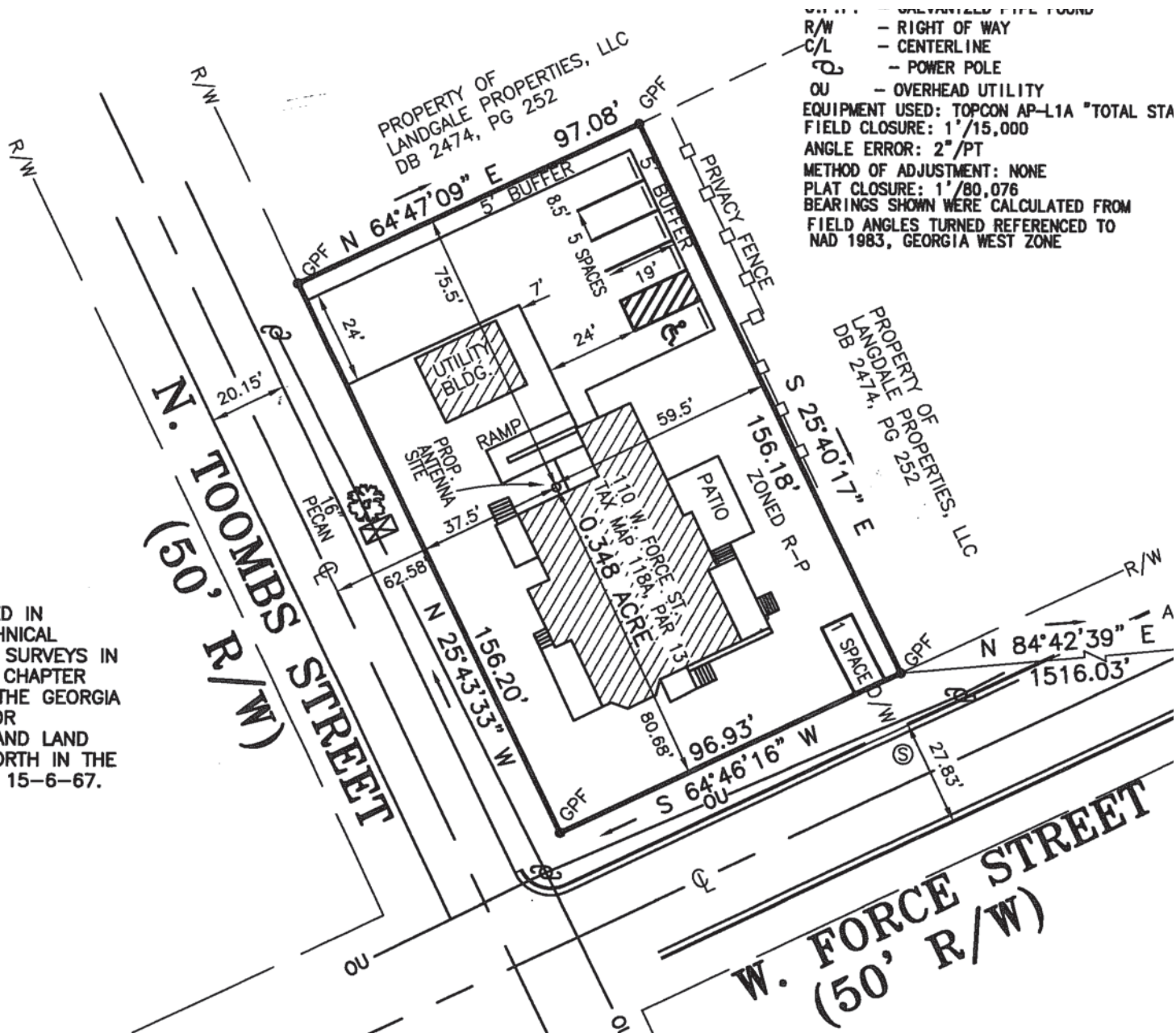
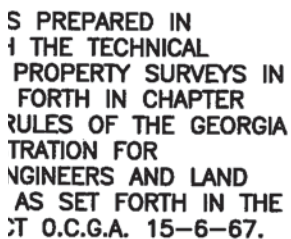
It is to be expressly understood that the issuance of these specifications is in no way to be considered as precluding additional or modified marking or lighting as may hereafter be required under the provisions of Section 303(q) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

None Required

Special operating conditions or restrictions:

- 1 The permittee/licensee in coordination with other users of the site must reduce power or cease operation as necessary to protect persons having access to the site, tower or antenna from radiofrequency electromagnetic fields in excess of FCC guidelines.

*** END OF AUTHORIZATION ***

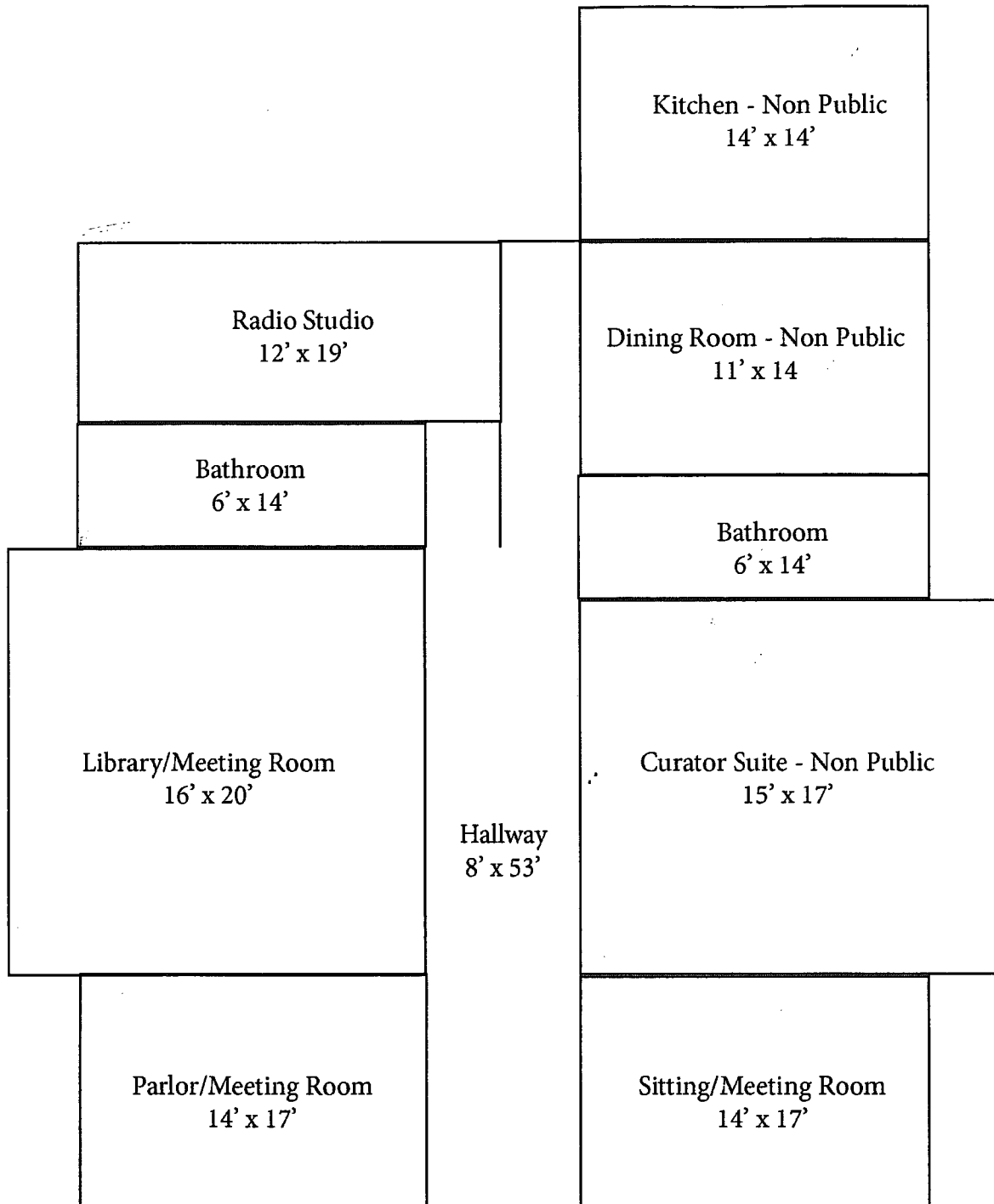


Snake Nation Press

Floor Plan

110 W. Force St.

Toombs Street



Programming space = 1024 sq. ft.

Bathrooms = 168 sq. ft.

Curator/non-public = 605 sq. ft.

Hallway = ~424 sq. ft.

Total = 2,221 sq. ft.

Force Street