



CITY OF CARSON

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING: July 25, 2006

SUBJECT: Design Overlay Review No. 917-05, Conditional Use Permit No. 600-05, and Variance No. 482-06

APPLICANT: Omnipoint Communications, Inc. for T-Mobile, USA
3 Imperial Promenade Ste. 1100
Santa Ana CA 92707

REPRESENTATIVE: Tim Miller
5912 Bolsa Avenue Ste. 202
Huntington Beach, CA 92649

REQUEST: To construct a 50-foot high unmanned wireless 'monopine' facility for T-Mobile USA in the ML-D (Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay) zone and within the Merged and Amended Redevelopment Area

PROPERTY INVOLVED: 21350 South Alameda Street

COMMISSION ACTION

Concurred with staff
 Did not concur with staff
 Other

COMMISSIONERS' VOTE

AYE	NO		AYE	NO	
		Cottrell –Chairperson			Saenz
		Pulido –Vice-Chairman			Tyus
		Faletogo			Verrett
		Graber			Wilson
		Hudson			

I. Introduction

Applicant

- Omnipoint Communications, Inc. for T-Mobile, USA; 3 Imperial Promenade, Ste. 1100; Santa Ana CA 92707

Representative

- Tim Miller; 5912 Bolsa Avenue Ste. 202; Huntington Beach, CA 92649

Property Owner

- Glenn Barton; 400 Galleon Way; Seal Beach, CA 90740

Project Address

- 21350 South Alameda Street, Carson, CA 90810

Project Description

- Installation of a 50-foot high unmanned wireless 'monopine' facility for T-Mobile, USA on a 0.06-acre property.
- The proposed project has been revised per the Planning Commission's direction at the May 23, 2006, meeting. At this time, the applicant requests approval of the monopine. All other site improvements will be built by the property owner at a later time. The applicant requests a variance for reduced front yard setback for the proposed monopine.

II. Background

The item was heard at the March 14, April 25, 2006, and May 23, 2006, Planning Commission meetings. At the latter meeting, the Planning Commission directed staff and the applicant to: 1) consider a variance for reduced front yard setback for the proposed monopine; 2) consider a long-term lease for T-Mobile to allow T-Mobile to locate to another site if the site layout is modified in the future; 3) require a five-year development term for construction of a building; and 4) report on the status of the Madison Street vacation.

Current Use of Property

- Currently construction equipment is being stored on the property.

Previous Proposals/ Approved Discretionary Permits

- There are no previously approved discretionary permits associated with this property. However, a 1,500 square foot warehouse building was considered for the site in 2003-2004 but no application was submitted by the owner.

Public Safety Issues

- The Public Safety Department has not reported any current code enforcement cases associated with this property.

III. Analysis

Required Findings: Conditional Use Permit

Pursuant to Section 9141.1 of the Carson Zoning Ordinance, a Conditional Use Permit is required for a wireless telecommunications system. Per Section 9172.21, Conditional Use Permit, the Planning Commission may approve the proposal only if the following findings can be made in the affirmative:

1. The proposed use and development will be consistent with the General Plan.
2. The site is adequate in size, shape, topography, location, utilities, and other factors to accommodate the proposed use and development.
3. There will be adequate street access and traffic capacity.
4. There will be adequate water supply for fire protection.
5. The proposed use and development will be compatible with the intended character of the area.
6. Such other criteria as are specified for the particular use in other Sections of this chapter (Zoning Ordinance).

Required Findings: Site Plan and Design Review

As the proposed use is located within the Merged and Amended Redevelopment Project Area, site plan and design review approval is required by the Redevelopment Agency. After Planning Commission recommendation, the project will be forwarded to the Redevelopment Agency for final decision if recommended for approval. Pursuant to Section 9172.23, Site Plan and Design Review, the Planning Commission may approve the proposal only if the following findings can be made in the affirmative:

1. Compatibility with the General Plan, any specific plans for the area, and surrounding uses.
2. Compatibility of architecture and design with existing and anticipated development in the vicinity, including the aspects of site planning, land coverage, landscaping, appearance and scale of structures and open spaces and other features relative to a harmonious and attractive development of the area.
3. Convenience and safety of circulation for pedestrians and vehicles.
4. Attractiveness, effectiveness and restraint in signing, graphics and color.
5. Conformance to any applicable design standards and guidelines that have been adopted pursuant to Section 9172.15.

Required Findings: Wireless Telecommunications Facilities

Pursuant to Section 9141.1 of the Carson Zoning Ordinance, wireless telecommunications systems are subject to the requirements of Section 9138.16, Wireless Telecommunications Facilities. Per Section 9138.16, the Planning Division or Planning Commission may approve the development plan and conditional use permit for the proposal only if the following findings can be made in the affirmative:

1. The proposed site is the best alternative after considering co-location with another facility and location at another site.
2. The proposed wireless telecommunication facility will be located and designed to minimize the visual impact on surrounding properties and from public streets, including adequate screening through the use of landscaping that harmonize with the elements and characteristics of the property and/or stealthing which incorporates the facility with the structure in which it will be mounted through use of material, color, and architectural design.
3. The proposed wireless telecommunication facility is not located on any residential dwelling or on any property which contains a residential dwelling, except as may be associated with a church, temple, or place of religious worship.

Required Findings: Variance

The applicant requests a variance from Section 9146.23 of the Carson Municipal Code to encroach into the required 20 foot front yard setback. The branches of the monopine will be setback 6 feet 9 inches from the front property line along Alameda Street. Pursuant to Section 9172.22 – Variance, the Planning Commission may approve the proposal only if the following finding can be made in the affirmative:

- a. A Variance shall be granted only when, because of special circumstances applicable to the property, including size, shape, topography, location or surroundings, the strict application of this Chapter deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification.

It is staff's opinion that a variance request for the front yard setback may be supported since the property is rather small (approximately 4,800 square feet) and is shaped as a parallelogram making development on the property difficult as compared with other industrially-zoned properties. The addition of live trees planted along Alameda Street will stealth the proposed monopine by creating a continuous line of trees that will improve the overall appearance of the site.

Findings pursuant to, "Conditional Use Permit – Approval Authority and Findings and Decision", Section 9172.23, "Site Plan and Design Review - Approval Authority and Findings and Decision", Section 9138.16 – "Wireless Telecommunication Facilities"

and Section 9172.22, "Variance - Commission Findings and Decision" can be made in the affirmative. Details can be found in the attached Resolution.

Issues of Concern

- **Issue – Development Potential:** The applicant has attempted to show that it is possible to construct the proposed monopine alongside a future warehouse/office building. Staff has reviewed the revised plan and has determined that the following issues must be addressed:
 - The Municipal Code requires a 10-foot landscaping setback between the streets and the parking lot; the revised plan only shows a five-foot setback. Thus, future development of the warehouse/office building would warrant a second variance request for further reduction of the front yard setback and a third variance request for the side yard setback;
 - A van-accessible handicap space is required which must be nine feet wide with an eight-foot loading area. The current plan only shows a five-foot loading area;
 - Multiple roll-up doors for the warehouse would not be possible since the driveway is not wide enough; and
 - In order to accommodate the issues discussed above, the building may have to be reduced in size.
 - Prior to activation of the telecommunications facility, the applicant shall:
 - Demolish the existing building on-site; and
 - Install five (5) pine trees along the proposed on-site landscaping strip along Alameda Street to disguise the monopine and improve the aesthetics of the property.
- **Issue – Future Development:** The applicant requests development of the monopine and related equipment only. Future development of the warehouse/office building may or may not occur. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider a condition requiring development of the warehouse/office building within five (5) years of the installation of the monopine. Since the City is currently considering ways in which to buffer the residential neighborhood to the east from the Alameda Corridor and associated uses, staff recommends a condition to evaluate the telecommunication facility in five (5) years or at the same time the building is being considered. The evaluation would allow the City to develop and implement a solution for buffering the residential neighborhood from the Alameda Corridor.

IV. Environmental Review

Pursuant to Section 15332 the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed installation of a wireless telecommunications facility on a developed light industrial property does not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment and is found to be categorically exempt.

V. Conclusion

It is staff's opinion that the proposed project and any future development will help the City provide an adequate buffer from the Alameda Corridor and associated uses. However, in the event that a more effective solution to buffer noise impacts arises in the future, staff recommends that the Planning Commission evaluate the proposed project in five (5) years.

VI. Recommendation

That the Planning Commission:

- WAIVE further reading and ADOPT Resolution No._____, entitled "A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Carson Approving Conditional Use Permit No. 600-05 and Variance No. 482-06 and Recommending Approval of Design Overlay Review No. 917-05 to the Carson Redevelopment Agency"

VII. Exhibits

1. Resolution
2. Site plan, elevations, floor plans (under separate cover)
3. Land use map

Prepared by: _____
Max Castillo, Assistant Planner

Reviewed by: _____
John F. Signo, AICP, Acting Senior Planner

Approved by: _____
Sheri Repp, Planning Manager

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