



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

Diane M. Sugimura, Director

CITY OF SEATTLE ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Application Number: 2407641
Applicant Name: Ron Meckler
Address of Proposal: 4545 Sand Point Wy NE

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Master Use Permit to modify the existing minor communication utility (Cingular Wireless) by replacing three existing antenna arrays with three new arrays, consisting of three (3) antennas each; and adding six (6) new equipment cabinets on an expanded platform on the roof of the building¹. The existing minor communication utilities will remain.

The following approval is required:

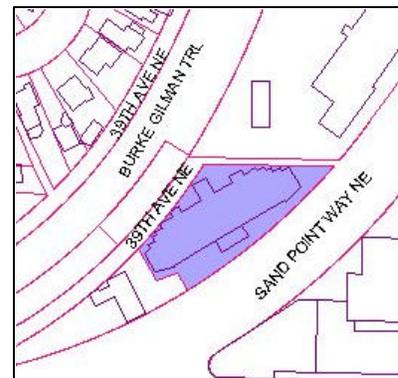
SEPA - Environmental Determination pursuant to SMC 25.05.

SEPA DETERMINATION: [] Exempt [X] DNS [] MDNS [] EIS
[X] DNS with conditions
[] DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Site Description

The proposal site is the Laurelhurst Condominium situated on the 4500 block front of Sand Point Way NE and is zoned Neighborhood Commercial 2 with a 40 foot height limit (NC2-40). Development on the site consists of a seven-story, 54 unit residential building with parking on the ground floor². There are currently four wireless carriers and a paging service operating from the roof of this building. None of the current antennas or associated equipment is screened.



¹ The proposed minor communication utility does not extend more than 15 feet above the rooftop of the building nonconforming as to height.

² The existing building has a finished roof height of 79'6".

Proposal Description

Cingular Wireless is proposing to modify the existing Minor Communication Utility by replacing three existing antenna arrays with three new arrays, consisting of three (3) antennas each; and adding six (6) new equipment cabinets on an expanded platform on the roof of the building. The radio equipment, including power and telephone interfaces, will be installed in a 174 square foot steel addition to the existing platform. The expanded platform and screen partitions have been designed to accommodate the antennas for both Cingular and Nextel.

The proposed method of screening borrows from the existing building architecture by proposing low-profile faux penthouses. There are currently three penthouses above the roofline. This design solution introduces additional penthouse-like structures on the east and west ends of the building to house Cingular's radio equipment and antennas as well as Nextel's proposed antennas. The low-profile penthouses are in scale with the other rooftop structures and follow the varied angles of the roof edge. The structures maintain the spacing of the existing penthouses horizontally along the building and provide a transition to the existing stairway penthouse and higher elevator penthouse. All of the Cingular equipment and antennas will be fully screened and will not be visible from neighboring properties or public rights-of-ways near the building.

Public Comments

The public comment period for this project ended December 14, 2004³. DPD received a phone call regarding this proposal expressing concerns about load, anchoring and screening of the future installation.

SEPA ANALYSIS

Environmental review resulting in a Threshold Determination is required pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), WAC 197-11, and the Seattle SEPA Ordinance (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05).

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665 D) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, certain neighborhood plans, and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority. The Overview Policy states, in part: "Where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation," subject to some limitations. Under such limitations/circumstances (SMC 225.05.665 D1-7) mitigation can be considered.

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist dated January 17, 2006. The information in the checklist, the applicant's "Statement of Federal Communication Commission Compliance for Personal Wireless Service Facility," supplemental information and the experience of the lead agency with the review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

³ The proposal has been placed on hold by the applicant until January 30, 2006.

Many environmental concerns have been addressed in the City's codes and regulations. The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) discusses the relationship between the City's code/policies and environmental review. The Overview Policy states, in part, "*Where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulation are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation*" subject to some limitations. It may be appropriate to deny or mitigate a project based on adverse environmental impacts in certain circumstances as discussed in SMC 25.05.665 D1-7. In consideration of these policies, a more detailed discussion of some of the potential impacts is appropriate.

Short - Term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected; decreased air quality due to suspended particulate from building activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; increased noise; consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources. These impacts are expected to be very minor in scope and of very short duration considering the installation process. No conditioning pursuant to SEPA is warranted.

Construction and Noise Impacts

Codes and development regulations applicable to this proposal will provide sufficient mitigation for most impacts. The initial installation of the antennas and construction of the equipment room may include loud equipment and activities. This construction activity may have an adverse impact on nearby residences. Due to the close proximity of nearby residences, the Department finds that the limitations of the Noise Ordinance are inadequate to appropriately mitigate the adverse noise impacts associated with the proposal. The SEPA Construction Impact policies, (SMC 25.05.675.B) allow the Director to limit the hours of construction to mitigate adverse noise and other construction-related impacts. Therefore, the proposal is conditioned to limit construction activity to non-holiday weekday hours between 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Long - Term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated as a result of approval of this proposal, namely increases in demand for energy and increased generation of electromagnetic radiation emission. These long-term impacts are not considered significant or of sufficient adversity to warrant mitigation. However, due to the widespread public concerns expressed about electromagnetic radiation, this impact is further discussed below.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has pre-empted local and state governments from regulating person wireless service facilities on the basis of environment effect of electromagnetic radiation emissions. The FCC, the City and County have adopted standards addressing maximum permissible exposure (MPE) limits for these facilities to ensure the health and safety of the general public. The Seattle-King County Department of Public Health has reviewed hundreds of these sites and found that the exposures fall well below all the maximum permissible exposure (MPE) limits. The Department of Public Health does not believe these utilities to be a threat to public health.

The City is not aware of interference complaints from the operation of other installations from persons operating electronic equipment, including sensitive medical devices (e.g. - pacemakers). The Land Use

Code (SMC 23.57.012C2) requires that warning signs be posted at every point of access to the antennas noting the presence of electromagnetic radiation. In the event that any interference was to result from this proposal in nearby homes and businesses or in clinical medical applications, the FCC has authority to require the facility to cease operation until the issue is resolved.

The information discussed above, review of literature regarding these facilities, and the experience of the Departments of Planning and Development and Public Health with the review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision. The Department concludes that no mitigation for electromagnetic radiation emission impacts pursuant to SEPA policies is warranted.

Other long term impacts such as height, bulk and scale, traffic, and air quality are minor and adequately mitigated by the City's existing codes and ordinances. Provided that the proposal is constructed according to approved plans, no further mitigation pursuant to SEPA is warranted.

DECISION – SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

[X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

CONDITIONS – SEPA

During Construction

The following condition to be enforced during construction shall be posted at the site in a location on the property line that is visible and accessible to the public and to construction personnel from the street right-of-way. If more than one street abuts the site, conditions shall be posted at each street. The conditions will be affixed to placards prepared by DPD. The placards will be issued along with the building permit set of plans. The placards shall be laminated with clear plastic or other waterproofing material and shall remain posted on-site for the duration of the construction.

1. In order to further mitigate the noise impacts during construction, the hours of construction activity shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. This condition may be modified by DPD to allow work of an emergency nature or allow low noise interior work. This condition may also be modified to permit low noise exterior work after approval from the Land Use Planner.

Signature: (signature on file) Date: May 18, 2006
Colin R. Vasquez, Senior Land Use Planner