
P96-103 SPRINT SPECTRUM
NORTHFIELD DRIVE CELL SITE

- REQUEST:
- A. **Negative Declaration(Re-Issue)**
 - B. **Special Permit Modification** to allow co-location on an existing 60 foot monopole antenna resulting in the extension of height of the antenna to 80 feet which exceeds the 45-foot height limit, and addition 4 equipment cabinets on 0.41 developed acres located at 615 Northfield Drive in the General Commercial (C-2) zone.

LOCATION: 615 Northfield Drive, Sacto., CA/APN: 274-0245-006
South Natomas Community Plan Area
Grant Joint Union High School District
North Sacramento School District
Council District 1

APPLICANT: Sprint Spectrum
c/o Gearon & Co. (Steve Jenkins)
3065 Gold Camp Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
(916) 636-8299

OWNER: Alberto and Loretta Aldrete
3015 Catalina Drive
Davis, CA 95616
(916) 756-7161

APPLICATION FILED: October 17, 1996

STAFF CONTACT: Hilary Perry, 264-5698

SUMMARY: Sprint Spectrum is requesting to add 20 feet to an existing monopole and add 4 equipment cabinets in order to co-locate on a monopole that was approved by the Planning Commission on July 11, 1996. The result will be an 80 foot high monopole antenna, and 10 equipment cabinets on the subject site. The equipment cabinets will be located on the ground adjacent to the monopole, enclosed within a 21' X 15' fenced area. Each cabinet is approximately 30 inches deep by 80 inches tall.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the project, subject to conditions, based upon the fact that the site is zoned for commercial uses; the project area is developed with a veterinary clinic; the proposed monopole project area will not impact the existing use of the site nor the adjacent commercially oriented land uses; the site has no other opportunities for co-location on existing poles or structures in the vicinity; and co-location on the subject site was a condition of the approval for the existing monopole.

PROJECT INFORMATION:

General Plan Designation: Community/Neighborhood Commercial & Office
 Community Plan Designation: Community Commercial
 Existing Land Use of Site: Veterinary Clinic
 Existing/Proposed Zoning of Site: General Commercial

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:

North: Super Saver Shopping Center; C-2
 South: Vacant & Chiropractor Office; C-2\OB
 East: Commercial; C-2
 West: Vacant; C-2; and Natomas Court Apartments (R-3-R)

<u>Setbacks:</u>	<u>Required</u>	<u>Monopole</u>	<u>Existing Vet. Clinic</u>
Front/N:	5'	104'	30'
Back/S:	0'	2'	58'
Side/E:	5'	6'	44'
Side/W:	5'	196'	15'

Property Dimensions: 118' by 150'
 Property Area/Acreage: 17,700± sq. ft./0.40± gross acres
 Project Area: 20' by 20'/400 sq. ft.
 Height of Structure: 80 feet
 Monopole Diameter: 60" concrete
 Number of Panel Antennas: 10
 Cabinet Dimensions: 30" deep/80" in height
 Topography: Flat
 Colors
 -(Equip Cabinet): Blue-Grey
 -(Monopole): Grey

OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED: In addition to the entitlements requested, the applicant is required to obtain a building permit from the City's Building Division. Operation of the proposed Sprint Spectrum cell site is regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On July 9, 1991, the ordinance requiring Special Permit for the location of communication antennas and antennas was heard and approved by the City Council (Ordinance No 91-048). The ordinance went into effect on August 9, 1991.

The wireless telephone service is similar to ordinary telephone service except that it utilizes radio waves instead of wires to transmit and receive telephone calls. Cellular radio waves transmit in the ultra-high frequency (UHF) band of the electromagnetic spectrum. The UHF band is used for television broadcast, taxicabs, emergency dispatch, and cellular carriers.

Since cellular radio waves require a relatively direct, uninterrupted signal path, cellular antennas are often placed on the roof of a building or otherwise attached to an existing structure. When existing structures are not available, a freestanding mast, monopole, or guyed or latticed tower may be installed. Each service area (cell) is served by a "cell site" which consists of radio transmitters, receivers, and antennae. The receivers and transmitters are typically housed in small ground-based equipment shelters.

There are several factors affecting the design and site selection for cellular facilities: coverage, capacity, and interference. Coverage implies that a location can receive, at sufficient signal strength, a transmitted signal. Capacity equates to the amount of usage an individual cell site can provide. To prevent signal interference between cell sites, the transmitters operate at very low power levels and at different wave frequencies.

Each Sprint Spectrum site provides coverage in a specific service area that is roughly circular. The proposed site would provide coverage to the area roughly bounded by Interstate 80 to the north, Richard Boulevard to the south, Interstate 5 to the west and Norwood Avenue to the east (see Attachment 4). According to the applicant, the service areas need to slightly overlap in order to provide adequate service.

The Sprint Spectrum proposed digital wireless telecommunication system varies from the traditional analog cellular system. These differences include digital vs. analog technology, and a different radio frequency band (1870-1960 MHz for Personal Communication Services, compared to 800-900 MHz for other cellular carriers).

STAFF EVALUATION:

- A. Land Use and Zoning: The project site consists of 0.4± partially developed acres in the General Commercial (C-2) zone. According to the City Zoning Ordinance (Section 2.G.10) a special permit is required to locate a communication tower/antenna in any nonresidential zone. Additional specifications are required for communication towers/antennas intending to locate in a residential zone. The surrounding land use and zoning does not include residential property. Adjacent parcels are zoned for General Commercial development and developed with commercial structures to the north and east of the subject site.

DISTANCE BETWEEN POLE AND NEAREST RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

Direction	Distance
North	1000'
East	500'
South	500'
West	350'

The nearest residentially zoned developed property is located to the west of the project site approximately 350 feet in distance. Staff finds the proposed monopole appropriate in location and compatible with the surrounding commercially zoned and developed properties.

B. Policy Considerations: The policy framework used to analyze this project is to examine the proposed tower relative to the following considerations:

- Is the cellular tower compatible with adjacent land uses?
- Are adjacent towers (cellular, radio, water, etc.) upon which these antennae can co-locate within the "search ring" area as an alternative to the proposed site?;
- Are adjacent structures/buildings upon which these antennae can co-locate within the search ring as an alternative to the proposed site?
- If this tower is to be a new structure, can the tower be engineered to allow future co-location opportunities, and will the cellular carrier agree to provide for these co-location opportunities?

The applicant's proposal is compatible with the site's General Plan designation of "Community/Neighborhood Commercial & Offices." This designation is intended to accommodate shopping centers and smaller office developments which offer goods and services compatible with the daily needs of nearby and adjacent residential land uses. The proposal will not adversely affect this land use. Staff believes the proposed monopole to be compatible with the General Plan designation.

The proposed 80 ft. high monopole and related equipment cabinets are also considered to be compatible with the goals of the General Plan to "improve and provide communication and utility services to all areas of the City" (Sec 7-11). The project as proposed will enhance the effectiveness and quality of wireless service in the region and is therefore considered to be consistent with the General Plan.

- C. Project Siting/Co-Location Efforts: The City of Sacramento is encouraging co-location efforts of cellular/PCS telecommunication projects to minimize the number of towers, monopoles and similar structures that are built. Therefore, the approval of the existing monopole was conditioned to construct the monopole so as to encourage co-location. The proposed project is a co-location project and serves to meet the intent of the condition that was added to the previous approval.
1. Alternative Site Locations: A number of alternative locations were evaluated for siting of a cell site that would meet the objectives of the applicant. Following is a brief analysis:
 - a. **Niños Park**: The City owns property adjacent to the Niños Parkway (under the Western Area Power Authority overhead lines). This park contains a ballfield and tot lot. Because of interference from the overhead power lines, the antennae would have to be located in the middle of the ballfield or adjacent to the tot lot. This alternative is presently continues to be investigated by the applicant, however, the subject location would allow for Sprint Spectrum to meet Rank 1, first phase activation within the first quarter of 1997.
 - b. **Super Saver Building**: The shopping center immediately to the north of the site was evaluated for the opportunity to mount an antenna on an existing structure. However, the existing structure is only a single story and would have had to be substantially modified to support a pole. This alternative was rejected by staff.
 2. Lower Height Alternative: Staff inquired about the effect of reducing the proposed height of the tower. However, the applicant indicated that a minimum of 10 feet must be provided between the antenna panels for the two different companies in order to eliminate interference. Therefore, the applicant and staff rejected this alternative.
 3. Future Co-location Opportunities on This Site: When the existing monopole was constructed, staff recognized that in the event that another carrier wished to co-locate in this area, PBMS was required to make the site available to a 2nd carrier to erect a taller and stronger pole on the existing foundation, and agreed not to preclude a future lease space for the 2nd carrier's equipment cabinet. As for additional third co-location opportunities, staff questions the appropriateness of adding more height to the existing monopole.
- D. Aesthetics: The project site is located approximately 160' west of Northgate Blvd., and would be visible from the Boulevard. In this stretch of Northgate Blvd., telephone poles & wires are located on the west side of Northgate Boulevard. The presence of the cellular tower would be somewhat masked by the existing clutter of wires & poles, and by the large trees to the west of the project site. Nonetheless, the tower could negatively impact the efforts to revitalize Northgate Boulevard. In contrast, a previous application by Air Touch for a tower on the east side of Northgate Blvd. (which was

ultimately located in Johnston Park to the east across the NEMDC) would have more dramatically impacted the aesthetics and would have been immediately adjacent to residential property. However, the subject monopole has been conditioned so as to minimize the aesthetic impact of the fencing, and to include off-site improvements that will serve to improve the appearance of the properties at this "gateway" to South Natomas.

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS:

- A. Environmental Determination: The Environmental Services Manager determined that the project, as proposed, will not have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, a re-issue of the previous Negative Declaration has been prepared. No mitigation measures have been required. The human health section of the Negative Declaration concludes that the radio frequencies operate at power levels at a fraction of recognized allowable exposure limits.
- B. Neighborhood Comments: The project was routed to the Natomas Community Association, S.C.A.N., and the Gardenland Neighborhood Associations. At the time that this report was prepared, no comments were received.
- C. Summary of Agency Comments: The proposal was routed to several City Departments and other agencies. No comments were received from other City departments.

PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS: The Planning Commission has the authority to approve or deny the requested Special Permit Modification. The Planning Commission action may be appealed to the City Council. The appeal must occur within 10 days of the Planning Commission action.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- A. Ratify the Negative Declaration;
- B. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the Special Permit Modification to allow an eighty (80) foot high cellular tower (monopole) to exceed the 45-foot height limit located at 615 Northfield Drive in the General Commercial (C-2) zone.

Report Prepared By,


Hilary Perry
Associate Planner

Report Reviewed By,


Scot Mende
Senior Planner

Attachments

Attachment 1 Vicinity Map

Attachment 2 Land Use and Zoning Map

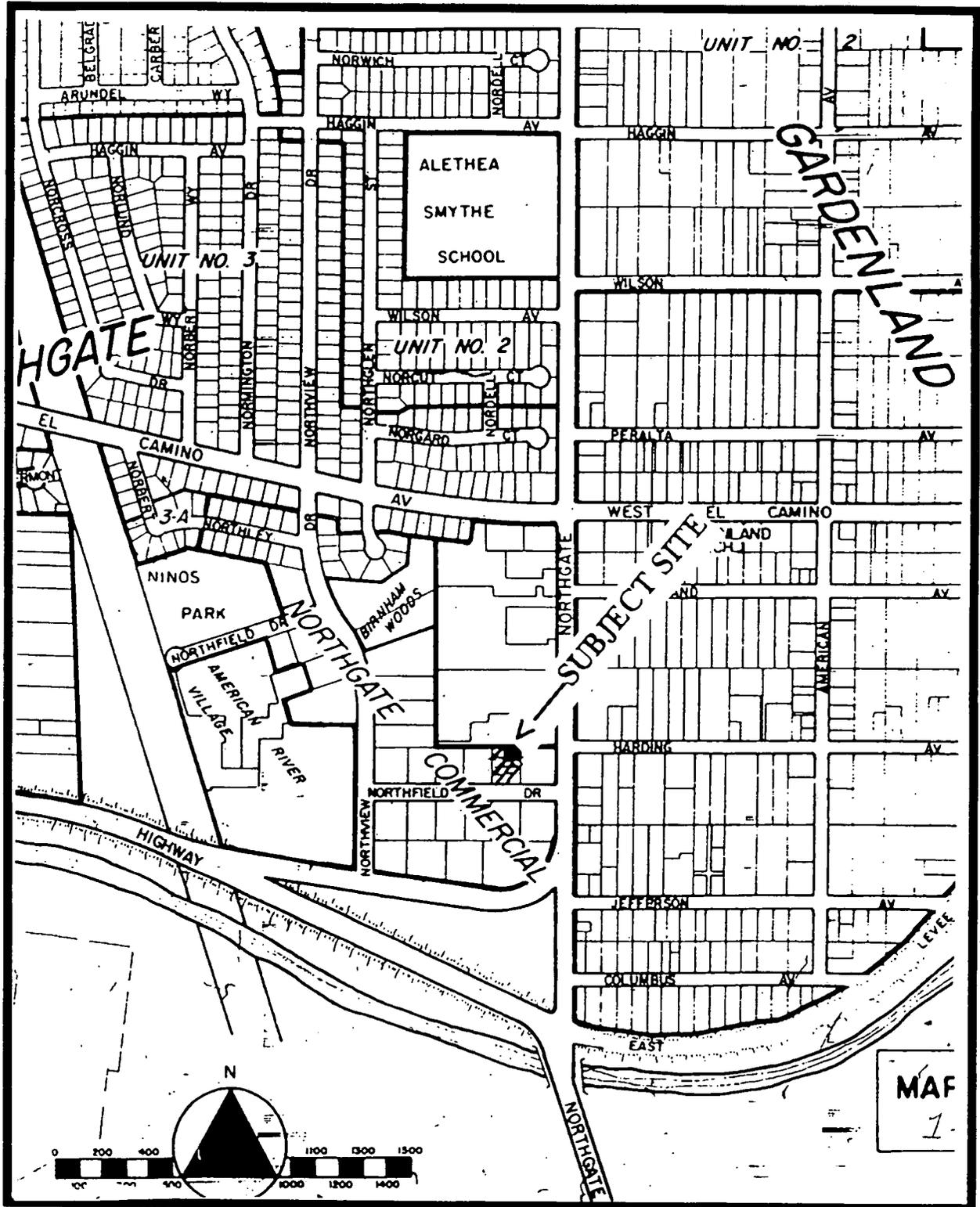
Attachment 3 Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact

Exhibit 3-A Enlarged Site Plan

Exhibit 3-B Overall Site Plan/Antenna Plan/Equipment Plan

Exhibit 3-C Monopole Elevations

ATTACHMENT 1



VICINITY MAP

