

CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE

MEMORANDUM

April 28, 2015 Meeting

To: Planning Commission

From: Roger Cantrell, AIA, AICP

Subject: 5500 Godbey Drive (Case No. TP 14-01): Continued Hearing
T-Mobile Wireless Antennae and Facilities

A. Background & Update

At the March 24, 2015 hearing, the Commission identified outsider access to the antennae as an issue warranting amended design followed by continued review. Two options were discussed: installing fencing around the antennae or installing them down the slope. The applicant expressed willingness for such redesign, although expressing reservations about the aesthetics of downslope antenna installation.

The amended design now includes fencing around the antennae. The fencing is shown with landscape screening, satisfying a conceptual concern at the Conditional Use Permit level. Further refinement of the fencing and landscaping as needed will be accommodated at the requisite Design Commission review following the CUP entitlement.

Staff regards the amended design as addressing the stated concerns of the Commission.

B. Required Finding

The Telecommunications Ordinance requires that a project shall be approved unless at least one of the following determinations is made:

1. *The project fails to comply with the criteria of Section 11.26.050 or 11.26.060 of this chapter; or*
2. *The proposed height of PWSF is not necessary; or*
3. *Co-location at another site is feasible (if applicable); or*
4. *Location in the R-1 or OS zones is not necessary and placement in the CPD, PS, R-3, RPD, MUI, MIJ2 or park zones is feasible (if applicable).*

These negative statements are converted into affirmative statements for the purpose of the following finding:

The project complies with the criteria of Section 11.26.050 and 11.26.060 of this chapter;

The applicant has provided all the information required of Section 11.26.050 [Application Content].

The proposed height of PWSF is necessary;

The height of the PWSF (antennas) is necessary, as demonstrated by the applicant, and fits well into the site, added landscaping, and leaf sock treatment providing significant stealthing of the antennas and equipment.

Colocation at another site is infeasible;

The applicant has demonstrated that other facilities situated to provide the desired service improvement are not available.

Location in the R-1 or OS zones is necessary and placement in the CPD, PS, R-3, RPD, MU-1, MU-2 or park zones is infeasible.

The project is sited within the PS zone, so this statement does not apply.

C. Recommendation

Based on the above analysis and Telecommunications Permit finding, staff recommends that the installation **BE APPROVED**, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to the draft resolution.

*Attachments: Planning Commission staff report and minutes, 3/24/15
Draft Approval resolution*

*cc: Jennifer Navarro / T-Mobile USA Inc. / 3257 E. Guasti Avenue / Ontario, CA 91761
Len Jensen / Cortel, LLC / 29039 Oak Creek Road / Menifee, CA 92584/ len.jensen@cortel-llc.com
Gil Dreyfus / La Canada Flintridge Country Club / 5500 Godbey Drive / LCF*

CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE

RESOLUTION NO. 15-

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE APPROVING TELECOMMUNICATIONS PERMIT 14-01 PERMITTING ANTENNAS AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT AT 5500 GODBEY DRIVE AS REQUESTED BY T-MOBILE USA

WHEREAS, a request by T-Mobile USA has been received for a Telecommunications Permit to allow the installation and maintenance of telecommunications antennas and associated equipment; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, on March 24, 2015, after publication and posting of notice in the prescribed manner, held a public hearing and continued review of the Telecommunications Permit for the antennas and equipment to the date certain of April 28, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, on April 28, 2015, held a continued public hearing and approved the Telecommunications Permit for the antennas and equipment; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed the facts contained in the staff report dated March 24, 2015 and the staff memorandum dated April 28, 2015, regarding the application for a Telecommunications Permit at 5500 Godbey Drive, and heard and considered the testimony of the applicant and the public; and

WHEREAS, upon consideration of the environmental questionnaire, related information and public testimony, the Planning Commission hereby determines that the project would have no potential for adverse effect on wildlife resources, and is therefore exempt from Section 711.4 of the California Fish and Game Code; and

WHEREAS, the site is Categorically Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act under Class 2.2 of the City Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA, and the Planning Commission has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Planning Commission hereby finds and determines as follows:

The project complies with the criteria of Section 11.26.050 and 11.26.060 of this chapter, because the applicant has provided all the information required of Section 11.26.050 [Application Content], and

The proposed height of PWSF is necessary, because the height of the PWSF (antennas) is necessary, as demonstrated by the applicant, and fits well into the site, added

landscaping, and leaf sock treatment providing significant stealthing of the antennas and equipment; and

Colocation at another site is infeasible, because the applicant has demonstrated that other facilities situated to provide the desired service improvement are not available.

BASED ON THE ABOVE FINDINGS, the Planning Commission of the City of La Cañada Flintridge hereby approves the Telecommunications Permit for a T-Mobile antenna installation, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit “A”, attached to this resolution.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 28th day of April, 2015.

Chair of the Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Secretary to the Planning Commission

EXHIBIT "A"
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
TELECOMMUNICATIONS PERMIT 14-01
5500 Godbey Drive

1. Compliance with and execution of all conditions listed herein shall be necessary prior to obtaining final building inspection clearance and/or prior to obtaining any occupancy clearance. Deviation from this requirement shall be only by written consent of the Director of Community Development.
2. This approval is granted for the land or land use as described in the application and any attachments thereto, and as shown on the site plan submitted, labeled Telecommunications Permit 14-01.
3. Prior to obtaining a building permit or when applicable initiation of use, the applicant and property owner shall file with the Secretary of the Planning Commission written acknowledgment of the conditions stated herein on forms provided by the Planning Department.
4. All structures, site work and other features including but not limited to antennae, equipment enclosure structure, landscaping and other facilities shall be located and maintained as shown on the project plan labeled Telecommunications Permit 14-01, except as otherwise stated in these conditions.
5. This approval will expire unless the use is commenced within 12 months after approval is granted and diligently pursued thereafter. The Director of Community Development may extend the original expiration date by as much as 12 months upon receipt of a written request from the applicant prior to expiration of the original approval if the approved project and applicable zoning standards are unchanged.
6. All applicable requirements of any law, ordinance, or regulation of the City of La Cañada Flintridge shall be complied with.
7. This approval is subject to the applicant paying all fees and assessments to the City of La Cañada Flintridge, as established by ordinance, resolution or policy of the City Council.
8. In the event the City determines that it is necessary to take legal action to enforce any of the provisions of these conditions, and such legal action is taken, the applicant agrees to pay any and all costs of such legal action, including reasonable attorney's fees, incurred by the City, even if the matter is not prosecuted to a final judgment or is amicably resolved, unless the City should otherwise agree with the applicant to waive said fees or any part thereof. The foregoing shall not apply if the permittee prevails in the enforcement proceeding.
9. The applicant shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City and its officers, agents, and employees from any claim, action or proceeding against the City or its officers, agents, or employees to attack, set aside, void, or annul approval of this request. The City shall promptly notify the applicant of any such claim, action, or proceeding and shall cooperate fully in the defense.
10. An approval granted by the Planning Commission does not constitute a building permit or authorization to begin any construction. An appropriate permit issued by the Division

of Building and Safety must be obtained prior to construction, enlargement, relocation, conversion, or demolition of any building or structure within the City.

11. Per Section 11.26.100, this Telecommunications Permit is issued for a term of twenty (20) years subject to review by the city every five years. The permit shall expire at the end of the permit term unless the applicant submits a written request to extend the term to the Director of Community Development prior to expiration. Revocation of this Telecommunications Permit for any reason, or termination or revocation of the permits issued by the FCC or the PUC, shall cause the facilities to be removed and the site restored to its former condition in accordance with the Municipal Code (Chapter 11.26 or its successor).
12. The applicant shall adhere at all times to the requirements of Chapter 11.26 of the Municipal Code.
13. Per Section 11.26.130 of the Municipal Code, the applicant shall submit, within ninety (90) days of beginning operations, and at annual intervals from that date, a report prepared by a qualified engineer, certifying facility compliance with all applicable city and federal regulations.
14. If requested by the City of La Canada Flintridge, T-Mobile, or any subsequent operator/leaseholder of the facilities, shall permit colocation of other wireless providers on its facility, subject to City approval, if it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse effects on the existing facilities/operations.
15. Approval by the Los Angeles County Fire Department, including whatever emergency access to the equipment building required by the Department, shall be obtained prior to building permit issuance.
16. The equipment enclosure shall be painted or integrally colored with a muted green for minimizing long-range views. Said color shall have a light reflectance value of not more than 50, and shall be subject to Director of Community Development approval prior to permit issuance.
17. Approval by the Design Commission shall be required prior to permit issuance. Said approval shall address landscaping, building wall and roof materials, fence and fence screening, and either stealthing or paint of the antennas.

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CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

March 24, 2015 Hearing

Applicant:
T-Mobile USA
3257 E. Guasti Avenue
Ontario, CA 91761

Case No.:
TP 14-01

Property Owner:
La Canada Flintridge Country Club

Project Planner:
Roger Cantrell
Consulting Architect/Planner

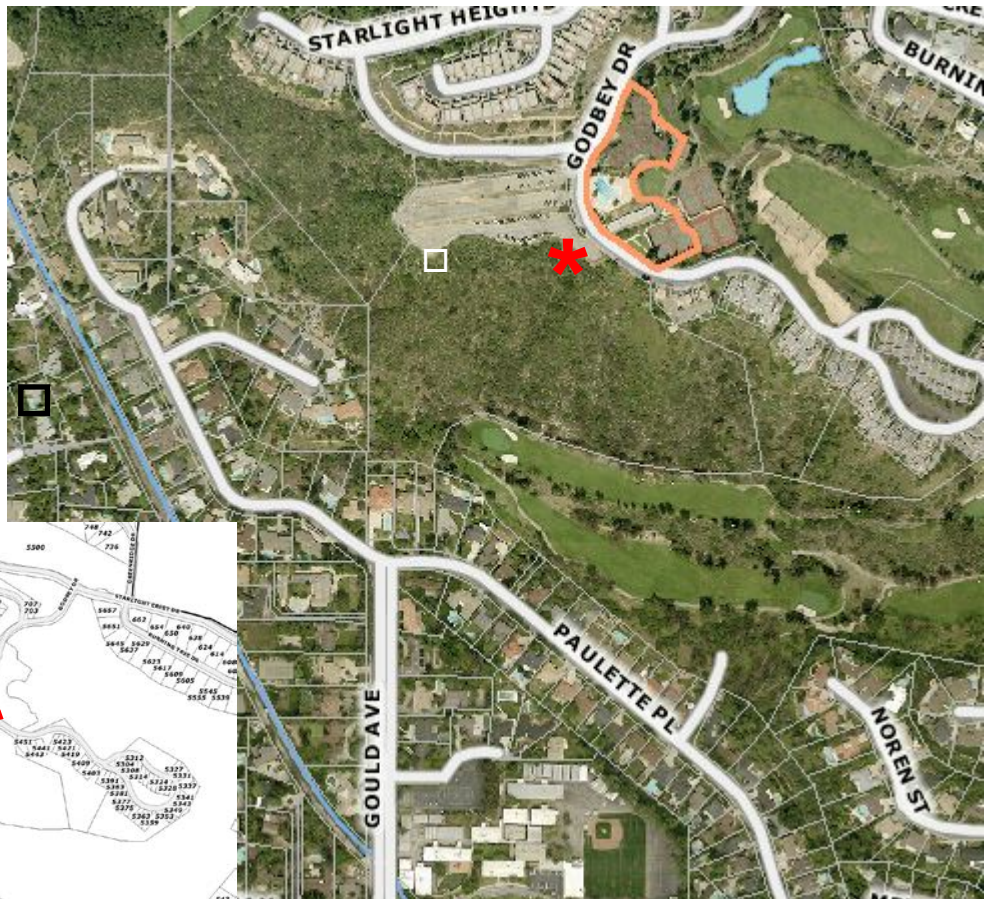
Project Address:
5500 Godbey Drive

1. Request


The requested Telecommunications Permit would allow the installation of 9 wireless antennas, associated equipment within an enclosure, and landscape screening.

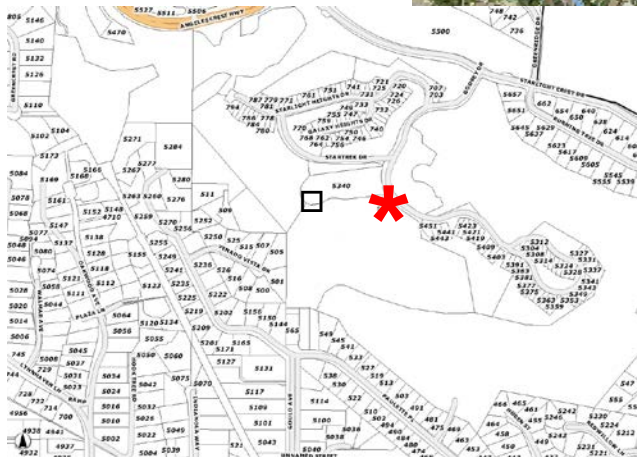
2. Location

The site is adjacent to the east end of the Country Club's clubhouse parking lot, approximately 70 feet south of Godbey Drive.



 Project location

 2010 project location



3. Staff Recommendation

It is recommended that the request **BE APPROVED**, subject to the attached conditions.

4. General Plan/Zoning/Existing Land Use

The General Plan Land Use Map designates the site as Open Space, Private. The site is zoned PS (Public/Semi-Public). The site is vacant open space, part of the naturally vegetated property surrounding the golf course.

5. Environmental Impact Review

Based on the review of the Initial Study Questionnaire and related materials, staff has determined that the site is Categorically Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act under Class 2.2 of the City Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA.

6. Previous Actions

The Planning Commission approved TP10-01 on October 26, 2010. As compared with the current project, the 2010 case involved a larger installation. It was also at the south end of the main parking lot, a more visible location from offsite. (Please see attached staff report, resolution, and minutes from the 2010 approval.) The project was subsequently approved by the Design Commission with a condition for subcommittee review. The applicant did not obtain subcommittee approval and both approvals expired.

7. Pending and Potential Actions

- a. Design Review approval by the Design Commission
- b. Building Permits for the antennas and equipment

8. Staff Analysis

A. Context:

The parking lot serving the golf course clubhouse is at the south side of Godbey Drive. To the southeast, south, and southwest is a panoramic view of the San Rafael Hills and surrounding land, with houses viewed only at great distance. These views are above the tall native vegetation growing on the very steep downslopes. To the northwest are condominium buildings elevated steeply above the project site. North and northeast are secondary areas of country club facilities.

B. Project Description:

The Basics

The proposal involves nine antennas. Each would consist of a pole topped with a deep panel, one foot wide and either 4'-6" or 6' feet tall. Total height of each antenna assembly would be 12 feet above grade. As noted on the elevation drawings (Sheet A-3), the antennas' location downslope from the parking lot would result in a net height of 9'-6" or

less above parking lot grade. The panels would have a tapered depth of approximately 10 inches, as seen in plan view on Drawing 3 of Sheet A-2.

Additionally, electronic equipment associated with the antennas would be enclosed in a 9x17-foot block structure, eight feet in height, set 1'-6" below parking lot grade. The structure would be sited with the long wall parallel to, and 7 feet away from, the parking lot curb. One of the existing parking stalls would be reserved exclusively for maintenance of the installation; it would align with a path to the door of the enclosure at its east end. The concrete-block structure would be sited as to avoid removal of existing plants. It would be in an area of gentle slope amounting to 2 feet of fall along the 9-foot length of the end elevations.

The antennas would be clustered into three arrays of three antennas each. (The layout is best seen in Drawing 1 on Sheet A-2.) The western cluster would be set behind the equipment structure, while the other 6 antennas would be clustered in two rows forming a V-shape. The closest of those antennas would be 10'-6" to the parking lot.

Mockup poles have been installed, as seen here from the edge of the parking lot. Staff was unable to photograph them from below (the Knight Way / Gould area) due to difficulty discriminating their green forms from the surrounding vegetation.



Mockup antennas, 12-foot height, view to southwest from edge of parking lot

Stealthing

Landscape screening is indicated between the equipment structure and the parking lot, and between the eastern 6 antennas and the parking lot. Staff views the need for screening from the north as minimal. The antennas would be downslope, reducing their profile somewhat, and would be narrow regardless of the viewer's orientation. From one vantage point, all six of the antennas in V-formation would form a virtually continuous mass approximately 7 feet in width, but elsewhere that would be broken up by separation and angled foreshortening. Those views would be screened by the proposed landscaping.

There is no specification for those plantings, but Design Review would require more

specificity. Staff regards the plantings as deficient in that they are applied only to the exact areas of the antennas and equipment structure. Unless more transition is provided in a broader planting along the edge of the parking lot, the screening plants as proposed could actually call attention to the installation. A draft condition requires that refinement, to be achieved through the use of native plants subject to Director of Community Development approval.

No planting is shown between the vast downslope areas and the installation, for good reason. The slope itself and the dense native growth on it would screen anything of such minimal height from any long-range views. The tops of the antennas would be visible from the San Rafael hills above the chaparral, and they would be silhouetted against the sky from lower vantage points. However, at that distance the viewer would not likely notice them without seeking them out.

Existing vegetation below the equipment enclosure structure is sufficient to block most views, and no landscaping is proposed below the structure. For further assurance, staff has included a condition that the structure comply with a light reflectance value of no more than 50 and Director's approval for hue.

In addition to the landscape screening, the applicant is proposing "leaf socks" over the antennas. Aside from the particulars of such treatment, staff is convinced that the installation would meet City stealthing objectives. Staff recommends that the detailed treatment - whether paint or leaf socks - be determined by the Design Commission.

Technical Parameters

The technical parameters of a T-Mobile installation at the golf course were presented four years ago, describing the need to locate the antennas in this particular place and manner. Although the current project is less intense than the 2010 project, updated information has been submitted in order to definitively address the Telecommunications Permit's single finding.

Finding

The Telecommunications Ordinance requires that a project shall be approved unless at least one of the following determinations is made:

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2. *The proposed height of PWSF is not necessary; or*
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The project is sited within the PS zone, so this statement does not apply.

9. Recommendation

Based on the above analysis, staff recommends that the request **BE APPROVED**, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to the draft resolution.

*Attachments: TP 10-01 Staff Report & Resolution
Planning Commission minutes, TP 10-01 review, 10/26/10
Draft Approval resolution*

*cc: Jennifer Carney / T-Mobile USA Inc. / 3257 E. Guasti Avenue / Ontario, CA 91761
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Gil Dreyfus / La Canada Flintridge Country Club / 5500 Godbey Drive / LCF*