



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: May 24, 2007 **REPORT NO. PC-07-083**

ATTENTION: Planning Commission, Agenda of May 31, 2007

SUBJECT: CINGULAR- CARMEL MOUNTAIN RANCH COUNTRY CLUB -
101102. PROCESS NUMBER 4

OWNER: Carmel Mountain Golf Partners, LLC

APPLICANT: Cingular Wireless

SUMMARY

Issue(s): Should the Planning Commission grant approvals for a wireless communication facility consisting of a new cupola addition to house antennas and associated equipment on the Carmel Mountain Ranch Country Club, located at 14050 Carmel Ridge Road within the Carmel Mountain Ranch Community Planning area?

Staff Recommendation:

1. **Certify** Negative Declaration No. 101102; and
2. **Approve** Neighborhood Use Permit No. 410764; and
3. **Approve** Planned Development Permit No. 331982.

Community Planning Group Recommendation: On September 8, 2006, the Carmel Mountain Ranch Community Council voted 8-0 to recommend approval of this project (Attachment 10).

Environmental Review: Negative Declaration No. 101102 has been prepared for the project in accordance with state of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines.

Fiscal Impact Statement: All costs associated with the processing of this permit are paid by the applicant.

Code Enforcement Impact: None

Housing Impact Statement: The proposed project is subject to the 1984 Carmel Mountain Ranch Community Plan. The Community Plan designates the subject property as Golf Course. The request for a Neighborhood Use Permit and Planned Development Permit to construct a wireless communications facility will not result in the creation of additional housing units, nor result in the loss of any existing housing in the Carmel Mountain Ranch community.

BACKGROUND

The 4.8 acre project site is located at 14050 Carmel Ridge Road. It is zoned RS-1-14 and is designated for golf course in the Carmel Mountain Ranch Community Plan area (Attachments 1, 2 and 3). The project includes a new cupola addition to the Carmel Mountain Ranch Country Club. The addition will be built at 41-feet, 6-inches in overall height and will house Cingular equipment in the ground floor and the associated twelve panel antennas in the upper portion (Attachment 5). The panel antennas will not be visible from the exterior; however, one GPS antenna (13 inches in height) will be externally mounted (Attachment 6).

The original country club was approved through Conditional Use Permit No. 84-0114 in 1985 (Attachment 9). There are currently two other wireless providers on site. Cricket recently constructed a new 30-foot high flagpole housing three antennas and T-Mobile previously added antennas internally to the existing cupola on the main portion of the country club. All existing antennas and equipment are screened from view.

The Communication Antenna regulations identify the Cingular proposal as a minor telecommunication facility as the facility is proposed on a non-residential use within a residential zone and it is completely integrated into the design of the existing country club. However, due to the height of the cupola, 6-feet, 6-inches over the 35-foot height limit, a Planned Development Permit is required.

Surrounding uses include open-space (golf course) and residential beyond the clubhouse (Attachment 1).

DISCUSSION

Project Description:

Cingular Wireless proposes to add a cupola addition on the northwest side of the existing Carmel Mountain Ranch Country Club. The cupola will have an overall height of 41-feet, 6-inches and will not exceed the height of the existing main cupola, which serves as an architectural focal point. The cupola will be detailed, textured and painted to match the existing cupola and there will be no outward visible appearance of the panel antennas. The associated equipment will be located within the base of the new tower with the exception of two condenser units, which will be located immediately adjacent to the tower base within a landscaped area (Attachment 5).

Cingular has indicated that this site is essential to their network coverage needs in the area. The proposed facility is intended to interface with neighboring Cingular sites to provide high quality, consistent network operations to Cingular existing and future customers.

The Communication Antenna regulations strongly encourage architectural integration and by doing so, applicants can benefit with more favorable processing and decision levels. This project would have been a Process 2, Neighborhood Use Permit; however, Cingular's network demands required a higher elevation to interface with existing sites. This required a Planned Development Permit in order to exceed the maximum height of 35-feet for the RS-1-14 zone. The existing clubhouse cupola also exceeds the current 35-foot height limit, however it was approved when the property was zoned A1-10 in 1985. The new tower will maintain the character of the existing architecture and will compliment the existing tower (Attachment 6).

Community Plan Analysis:

The proposed wireless communications facility is located in an area identified as 'Golf Course' in the Carmel Mountain Ranch Community Plan (CMRCP). The Community Plan does not contain specific policies on wireless communications facility development; therefore there are no Community Plan land use issues associated with the location of the proposed project. The CMRCP contains design policies for new development to address the implementation of the community theme, such as design compatibility and integration within the existing character of the community. The proposed wireless communications facility integrates within the existing clubhouse with the use of compatible materials and colors, and therefore does not conflict with any design policies in the CMRCP.

Environmental Analysis:

A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project as it was determined that the project condensers could have a significant on impact on noise levels. A noise study was prepared for the project and it was concluded that the project will not increase existing cumulative noise levels.

Project-Related Issues:

The project proposes a deviation to the 35-foot height limit for the new 41-foot, 6-inch high cupola. The deviation for the new cupola would allow Cingular to meet their current coverage and capacity demands in Carmel Mountain Ranch and surrounding areas. The existing building where the addition is proposed is currently 13-feet high. The proposed project would include an addition of 28-feet 6-inches for an overall height of 41-feet, 6-inches.

The nearest residence is approximately 280-feet away. Given the size of the lot, the proximity of the existing homes in the area, and the fact that the country club currently incorporates a 41-foot, 6-inch cupola, the proposed cupola addition will not impact the community, nor the architectural character of the existing country club.

A Planned Development Permit allows flexibility in the application of development regulations where strict application of the development regulations would result in a less desirable project. Additionally, the Communication Antenna regulations encourage project applicants to integrate their wireless projects into the architecture of existing buildings or environments. Wireless communication technology is dependent on clear lines of site and in this case, due to topographical differences in the area, the additional height is necessary to fulfill the project objective of connecting to other nearby Cingular sites. Staff supports the proposed deviation to height as it has been determined to be consistent with the existing country club scale and architecture.

Critical Project Features to Consider During Substantial Conformance Review

Cingular has requested approval of the conceptual design of this 41-foot, 6-inch cupola, which integrates well with the existing country club architecture. Any significant deviations to the design of this structure would not be considered in the future without an amendment to this permit and a decision by the Planning Commission. The new cupola addition must match the existing cupola in architectural detail including trim, texture and paint.

Conclusion:

Staff has reviewed the proposed project and has determined the project is consistent with the purpose and intent of the applicable development regulations of the San Diego Municipal Code, which includes the development regulations of the RS-1-14 zone and the Communication Antenna Regulations. A Planned Development Permit is required for the height deviation, but it has been determined that the design of the new cupola is well integrated into the existing scale and architecture of the existing country club. The required findings have been made (Attachment 8) to support staff's recommendation. Therefore, staff recommends the Planning Commission approve Neighborhood Use Permit No. 410764 and Planned Development Permit No. 331982 (Attachment 7).


ALTERNATIVES

1. **Approve** Neighborhood Use permit No. 410764 and Planned Development Permit No. 331982, **with modifications.**
2. **Deny** Neighborhood Use Permit No. 410764 and Planned Development Permit No. 331982, **if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.**

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Westlake
Program Manager
Development Services Department



Natalie de Freitas
Project Manager
Development Services Department

ESCOBAR-ECK/NDF

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Project Location Map
4. Project Data Sheet
5. Project Plans
6. Photosimulation
7. Draft Permit with Conditions
8. Draft Resolution with Findings
9. Copy of Recorded Permits
10. Community Planning Group Recommendation
11. Ownership Disclosure Statement
12. Project Chronology