



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Case #: ZBA1998-37-R-0208
Site: 15 Weston Ave
Date: 28 February 2008
Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Applicant Name: Sprint Wireless Broadband Company LLC, affiliate of Sprint Spectrum
Applicant Address: 9 Crosby Drive, Bedford MA 01730
Property Owner Name: Somerville Housing Authority
Property Owner Address: 30 Memorial Road, Somerville, MA 02145
Agent: Ricardo M. Sousa, Esq.

Legal Notice: Applicant Sprint Wireless Broadband Company, LLC, and Owner Somerville Housing Authority are requesting a revision to the Special Permit # ZBA 1998-37 to modify existing wireless facility.

Zoning District/Ward: NB zone. Ward 7.

Zoning Approval Sought: Revision to Special Permit # ZBA 1998-37

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Applicant Sprint Wireless Broadband Company, LLC, and Owner Somerville Housing Authority are requesting a revision to the Special Permit # ZBA 1998-37 to modify existing wireless facility. RB zone. Ward 7.

The original special permit allowed the application to install nine façade-mounted panel antennas, a 5' x 3' x 6' equipment cabinet and connecting cables.

The Applicant received an approval to revise the Special Permit (1998-37a) to install a second, approximately 5' x 3' x 6', equipment cabinet.

The present application seeks to:

1. Add three WiMAX antennas to the Facility
2. Add six lines of coaxial cable to be routed and concealed inside the existing cable tray
3. Add one GPS antenna
4. Add two cabinets (30"d x 36"w x 75'h and 30"d x 32"w x 71'h) located on the existing equipment platform

5. Add two backhaul dishes to an existing penthouse

The revisions are shown on the plans stamped in to the OSPCD on February 22, 2008. Notices have been mailed to abutters and the case advertised in the newspaper.

The Applicant stated that the "...WiMAX technology will allow Sprint-Nextel subscribers wireless data delivery and reception capabilities at speeds currently seen with DSL and T-1 connectivity. This installation will benefit the City of Somerville residents by offering a wireless option and increased competition to high speed data consumers."

The additions are consistent with the original special permit. The three WiMAX antennas would be visible from the street; however, they would not increase the visual obtrusiveness of the existing equipment. The new antennas would be of similar size and appearance as the current antennas. The new lines of coaxial cable would be concealed in the existing cable tray. The equipment cabinets and GPS antenna would be located approximately 26 feet from the sides of the roof in order not to be visible from the surrounding area. The backhaul dishes would be mounted on the existing penthouse in the center of the roof, where they would be minimally visible from the street. The building is 8 stories and the surrounding buildings the antennas are unlikely to affect the surrounding neighborhood of shorter buildings.



View from the South East



View from the North

II. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the preceding and following a site visit, Planning Staff finds that the changes are consistent with the original special permit and recommends approval. The original conditions attached to the Special Permit would still apply and are repeated here, modified to reflect the current plans.

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes
1.	Approval is for a wireless communication facility and based on plans 02-18-08 stamped into O.S.P.C.D. on February 22, 2008. Any alterations to these plans must be submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals for review and approval;	BP/CO	ISD/PLNG	
2.	All stealth vent pipes and equipment cabinets must be painted to match, as closely as possible, the surrounding colors and materials of the building;	BP/CO	ISD/PLNG	
3.	Prior to a request for final sign-off on a building permit, the Applicant must obtain an updated Certificate of Compliance from the Fire Prevention Bureau;	CO	FP	
4.	Any antenna that is not operated continuously for a period of twelve (12) months shall be considered abandoned, and the owner of such antenna shall remove the same within ninety (90) days of notice from the City of Somerville informing the owner of such abandonment.	CONT.	ISD	
5.	The Applicant is responsible for notifying the Planning Staff at least five (5) working days in advance of a request for a final sign-off on a building permit from the Division of Inspectional Services. Issuance of a building permit shall be contingent upon a satisfactory inspection of site work by the Planning Staff to ensure consistency with the submitted proposal and compliance with all the conditions of this special permit.	CO	PLNG	