TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

DATE: JULY 10, 2006

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

SUBJECT: 4243 MANUELA AVENUE [04PLN-00143]: REQUEST BY CINGULAR WIRELESS ON BEHALF OF ALDERSGATE METHODIST CHURCH FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW THE INSTALLATION OF A TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY. ZONE DISTRICT: R-1 (20,000). ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT: EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT PER SECTION 15303.

RECOMMENDATION
Staff and the Planning and Transportation Commission (Commission) recommend that the City Council uphold the Director of Planning and Community Environment’s decision to approve the Conditional Use Permit based upon the findings and conditions in the Record of Land Use Action (Attachment A) for the installation of a telecommunications facility comprised of a 45-foot “pine” tree-pole with six panel antennas concealed within the upper branches and associated equipment cabinets at the base of the pole.

BACKGROUND
The City’s streamlined development approval process provides for a Council “call up” review of Conditional Use Permit applications that have been reviewed by the Commission. Instead of the project automatically being heard by Council, the recommendation of the Commission is placed on the consent calendar of the City Council within 30 days of the Commission’s review. In the case of Conditional Use Permit applications, three Council Member votes are required to remove the project from the consent calendar and schedule it for a subsequent City Council meeting. Otherwise, the recommendation of the Commission stands and no hearing is held. If the Council votes to hear the item, a hearing shall be scheduled as soon as practicable.

On July 18, 2005, the Director of Planning and Community Environment tentatively approved the request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow the installation of a new telecommunications facility. Within the prescribed timeframe, one request for a public hearing was received for the CUP application. The associated Architectural Review application,
reviewing the aesthetic qualities of the project was approved with conditions on July 18, 2005; no hearing request was received for this entitlement.

On August 31, 2005, the Commission held a public hearing for the project and continued the hearing to have the Architectural Review Board review design alternatives to ensure a design solution appropriate for the context. The August 31, 2005 staff report and meeting minutes are attached for additional background information.

On May 18, 2006, the Architectural Review Board reviewed the design options for the new facility. The two options that were considered were the standard mono-pole (staff’s original recommendation) and a “pine” tree-pole. The Board voted 3-2 in favor of the pine tree-pole design.

**COMMISSION REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

On June 14, 2006, the project was reviewed by the Commission, who recommended that the City Council uphold the Director of Planning and Community Environment’s decision to approve the Conditional Use Permit (6-0-0-1, Commissioner Sandas absent).

The Commissioners added the following items to staff’s conditions of approval:

- The project shall be a pine tree-pole instead of a standard mono-pole.
- For the purposes of preserving the existing tree canopy at the site, the existing trees shall be irrigated to maintain health and assist with disease prevention.

There were two members of the public who spoke, one in support, citing the need for better cell phone reception for the area, and one opposed to the project due to aesthetic concerns.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act per Section 15301.

PREPARED BY:  
CLARE CAMPBELL  
Planner

DEPARTMENT HEAD REVIEW:  
STEVE EMSLIE  
Director of Planning and Community Environment

CITY MANAGER APPROVAL:  
EMILY HARRISON  
Assistant City Manager
ATTACHMENTS:
A. Record of Land Use Action
B. Project Zone Map
C. Applicant Submittal Information
D. Radio Frequency Analysis for Proposed Project (submitted by applicant)
E. Comprehensive Plan Compliance
F. Zoning Table
G. Background/Project Description
H. Planning and Transportation Commission Verbatim Minutes, June 14, 2006
I. Architectural Review Board Verbatim Minutes, May 18, 2006
J. Planning and Transportation Commission Staff Report, August 31, 2005
K. Planning and Transportation Commission Verbatim Minutes, August 31, 2005
L. Conditional Use Permit Approval Letter, dated July 18, 2005
M. Architectural Review Approval Letter, dated July 18, 2005
N. Correspondence
O. Project Plans (Council Members Only)

COURTESY COPIES:
Pamela Nobel, Applicant
Aldersgate Methodist Church, Property Owner
Jackie Berman
Phil Green
Amy Smiley