TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

DATE: APRIL 8, 2002

SUBJECT: 535 EVERETT AVENUE, XM SATELLITE RADIO (01-PC-05): PLANNED COMMUNITY (PC) ZONING DISTRICT APPLICATION BY XM SATELLITE RADIO TO AMEND ZONING DISTRICT PC-2145 TO ALLOW BUILDING-MOUNTED SATELLITE RADIO RELAY FACILITIES.

RECOMMENDATION
Staff and the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council adopt the attached ordinance (Attachment A), amending Planned Community (PC) Zoning District PC-2145 to allow building-mounted telecommunication facilities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The 30,000-square-foot project site is the Park Tower’s building between Cowper Street and Webster Street. It is a 7-story, 90-unit studio apartment complex with a subterranean garage. The Park Towers Corporation owns the site and buildings. Immediately adjacent parcels include single family and low-density multi-family residential buildings.

The applicant, XM Satellite Radio, is proposing to construct and operate a supplemental signal repeater facility atop the building at the mechanical equipment penthouse. Since the site’s existing PC zoning does not allow the operation of utility facilities, XM Satellite Radio has submitted a PC zoning amendment application which would add building-mounted antenna facilities to the district’s allowable uses.

As proposed, XM Satellite Radio’s facility would consist of one panel-type antenna and one dish-type antenna mounted on the existing mechanical equipment penthouse on the roof of the building. The panel antenna is 40 inches high by 6 inches wide. The dish-type antenna is 26 inches in diameter. Screening is not proposed for the antennas because of their small
size and location on the building. The antennas will not create an adverse visual impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

XM Satellite Radio is a new service that will provide digital radio programming via satellite to subscribers who purchase special antennas. In some areas, tall buildings or topography disrupt the satellite’s signal. In these areas, repeater facilities help to boost the signal and improve the quality of the service. The facility at 535 Everett Avenue will be a repeater facility.

**BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS**
The Planning and Transportation Commission (Commission) reviewed the proposal on January 30, 2002 and unanimously recommended that the City Council approve the PC Zoning District amendment. The Commission also found that installing telecommunication facilities at this site, in the manner allowed by the ordinance, is a public benefit. The height of the existing residential building is ideally suited for placement of telecommunication antennas in order for the equipment to function properly. The provisions of on-site telecommunications facilities will result in a public benefit through improved communication services in this geographical area of Palo Alto. The public benefit findings are included in Attachment D of this report.

The addition of the new equipment to the rooftop penthouse qualifies as a minor architectural review project. Staff completed the architectural review on January 30, 2002 and conditionally approved the design pending the PC zone change review by the City Council.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**
This application is exempt from environmental review under provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15, Class 3 (minor additions, installation of small new equipment and facilities).

**ATTACHMENTS**
Attachment A: Proposed Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 2145
Attachment B: Location Map
Attachment C: Planning Division Staff Report dated January 30, 2002
Attachment D: PC Zoning District Public Benefit Findings
Project plans (Council Members only)

PREPARED BY: ________________________________
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DEPARTMENT HEAD REVIEW:  

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Director of Planning and Community Environment

CITY MANAGER APPROVAL:  

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