Staff Report

File #: REPORT 21-0362, **Version:** 1

Honorable Chair and Members of the Hermosa Beach Planning Commission

Regular Meeting of June 15, 2021

CUP 20-2 -Conditional Use Permit request to construct and operate an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility (Verizon Wireless) at 2629 Manhattan Avenue, and to determine the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Applicant: Los Angeles SMSA LP DBA Verizon Wireless (represented by Lisa Desmond, Delta Groups Engineering)
15505 Sand Canyon Avenue Building D
Irvine, CA 92618

Property Owner: Mansour and Faty Nafissi Trust
2676 Shadow Wood Drive
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt the attached resolution approving the Conditional Use Permit 20-2 to construct and operate an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility (Verizon Wireless) at 2629 Manhattan Avenue, and determine the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Background:

ZONING:	C-1 (Limited Business and Residential)
GENERAL PLAN:	NC (Neighborhood Commercial)
LOT SIZE:	3,090 square feet
BUILDING SIZE:	1,693 square feet
BUILDING HEIGHT EXISTING:	16’
BUILDING HEIGHT PROPOSED:	26’9”
OFF-STREET PARKING EXISTING:	4 spaces (no change)
ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:	Categorically Exempt, Section 15311 Class 3 Exemption, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, as the proposal pertains to a wireless facility.

Subject Site

Located at the southwest corner of Manhattan Avenue and the Greenwich Village, the subject site is currently developed with an existing multi-tenant commercial building addressed as 2629 Manhattan Avenue. The subject site is in the C-1 (Limited Business and Residential) Zone and in the NC (Neighborhood Commercial) Land Use Designation in the General Plan. The subject site is surrounded by R-2 (Two-Family Residential) Zoned lots to the northeast, west, and south and C-1 (Limited Business and Residential) Zoned lots and commercial uses to the northwest and southwest.

Proposed Project

The proposed wireless facility installation consists of nine (9) Panel Antennas and related equipment concealed in a screened structure located in a 197 square foot lease area on the roof of the existing building. Also proposed are two (2) new equipment cabinets located in a 152 square foot lease area at the garage level of the existing building.

Following is a summary of the proposed facility:

	Proposed Facility:
Location/Height:	The proposed screened wireless facility would be constructed on the roof of the existing building. The structure would be finished stucco and painted and textured to match the existing building. The applicant has proposed recessed accent panels to mimic the design of the existing building. The screening structure measures 10’9” in height and will cover approximately 12% of the roof surface.
Sector/Antenna:	- 3 sectors attached with 3 panel antennas, 3 radios and 2 raycaps
1st Floor Leased Equipment Area:	- 152 square feet - 2 equipment cabinets - 1 antenna cable - 2 service lights - Area will be separated from the parking by 3 bollards
Additional Support Equipment:	- Conduits contain within a cable tray attach to the garage level ceiling - Conduits install underground along Greenwich Village (subject to agreement with Public Works Dept.)

Analysis:

The applicant is requesting a Conditional Use permit to allow the installation of a new wireless telecommunications facility on the roof of an existing one-story building at 2629 Manhattan Avenue. The proposed wireless facility consists of three sets of panel antennas and remote radio units concealed within a screened structure. The screening structure would be 10’-9’ in height and would be install at approximately 26’-9” feet above ground. The proposed screening would be finished with stucco material and painted and textured to match the existing building. The wireless communication

facility would also include a station support equipment in 152 square feet leased equipment area at the northeast corner of the garage level. To protect the support equipment from vehicles, three (3) bollards would be installed. Additional conduits would be housed within a cable tray attached to the ceiling of the garage level and installed underground along the length of the existing building on Greenwich Village.

The existing building is approximately 16 feet in height and the proposed screening walls will be installed at 2'6" below the top of the structure and not exceed the allowed 30'-0" height limit in the C-1 zone.

Hermosa Beach Municipal Code Sections 17.40.020 and 17.40.170 regulate conditions and standards which apply to the siting of a wireless telecommunications facility and further require the Planning Commission to make a finding that the proposed site results in fewer or less severe environmental impacts than any feasible alternative site.

General Criteria for All Uses

The proposed project complies with general criteria stated in Section 17.40.020 as follows:

A. *Distance from existing residential uses;*

   The facility is located on the southwest corner of Manhattan Avenue and Greenwich Village. The proposed wireless communication facility would be approximately 50 feet from the nearest residentially zoned property on Manhattan Avenue.

B. *The amount of existing or proposed off-street parking facilities, and its distance from the proposed use;*

   The property has four (4) existing parking spaces accessed from an 18'-10" driveway off of Greenwich Village. Two of the parking spaces would be reduced by 2'-6" to accommodate the proposed bollards that would separate the parking from the garage level lease area and equipment cabinets. All proposed parking spaces meet the minimum parking design standards.

C. *Location of and distance to churches, schools, hospitals and public playgrounds;*

   There are no churches, schools, or hospitals within 500 feet from the proposed project.

D. *The combination of uses proposed;*

   The facility, consisting of panel antennas concealed within screening walls and an equipment area, would not impact the current use of the parking structure.

E. *Precautions taken by the owner or operator of the proposed establishment to assure the compatibility of the use with surrounding uses;*

   The applicant selected this design out of several design alternatives (See Attachment 4) to

minimize impacts to the neighborhood and to assure the compatibility with the architectural style of the existing commercial building and the surrounding uses and neighborhood.

F. *The relationship of the proposed business-generated traffic volume and the size of streets serving the area;*

The facility is unmanned and would not generate traffic other than temporary construction traffic during the installation of the facility and periodic maintenance.

G. *The proposed exterior signs and decor, and the compatibility thereof with existing establishments in the area;*

The facility consists of a screened structure. The screened structure would be finished with stucco material and painted and textured to match the existing building. The applicant proposes recessed accent panels to mimic the architectural design of the existing building.

H. *The number of similar establishments or uses within close proximity to the proposed establishment;*

The facility would be the only wireless telecommunications facilities in the North End character area providing additional service to the area (see Attachment 7).

I. *Noise, odor, dust and/or vibration that may be generated by the proposed use;*

The unmanned facility would not generate noise, odor, dust and/or vibration once fully constructed. Anticipated noise, odor, dust, and vibrations would be temporary during construction. Further the project would be required to comply with Best Management Practices during the construction in order to reduce impacts associated with construction.

J. *Impact of the proposed use to the city's infrastructure, and/or services;*
The unmanned facility has an emergency generator as a backup power source and would not impact city's infrastructure and/or services.

K. *Will the establishment contribute to a concentration of similar outlets in the area;*

The facility would be the only wireless telecommunications facilities in the North End character area providing additional service to the area (See Attachment 7)

L. *Other considerations that, in the judgment of the planning commission, are necessary to assure compatibility with the surrounding uses, and the city as a whole.*

The facility, consisting of panel antennas, remote radio units and an equipment area, would be screened from public view by an enclosed structure located on the roof. The enclosure is designed to match the design of the existing building and the equipment area would be

separated by bollards and would not disrupt current use of the parking structure.

Design and Development Standards

The proposed wireless telecommunications facility comprises of three (3) sectors each with three (3) sets of panel antennas and three (3) remote radio units mounted on the roof of the existing building. All panel antennas and remote radio units would be concealed by enclosed screening walls. The screened structure would be finished stucco material and painted and textured to match the existing building. The applicant proposes recessed accent panels to mimic the design of the existing building.

Proposed equipment area on the garage level would be visible from the street view and will be separated from the parking by bollards. New conduits housed within a cable tray are proposed on the ceiling of the garage level. The proposed facility would increase the building height and alter the exterior façade of the existing structure; however the proposed design meets the zoning requirements of the C-1 Zone and the Radio Frequency (RF) exposure needed to properly cover the surrounding areas.

Staff reviewed the proposed wireless facility for compliance with Subsections 17.40.170(B) finding the proposal is generally compliant as follows:

1. *The facility shall not bear any signs or advertising devices other than certification, public safety, warning, or other required seals or required signage.*

   The facility would not bear signs or private advertising devices other than for public safety purposes.

2. *Any and all accessory equipment, or other equipment associated with the operation of the facility, including but not limited to transmission cables, shall be located within a building, enclosure, or underground vault in a manner that complies with the development standards of the zoning district in which such equipment is located. In addition, if equipment is located above ground, it shall be visually compatible with the surrounding buildings and either (1) shrouded by sufficient landscaping to screen the equipment from view, or (2) designed to match the architecture of adjacent buildings. If no recent and/or reasonable architectural theme is present, the Planning Commission may require a particular design that is deemed by the Commission to be suitable to the subject location.*

   The wireless facility would be serviced by the 152 square foot equipment room located at the garage level. All additional support equipment would be located below the existing parapet wall.

3. *The facility exterior shall be comprised of non-reflective material(s) and painted or camouflaged to blend with surrounding materials and colors.*

   The screening enclosure for the proposed wireless communication facility would be finished with stucco material and painted and textured to match the existing building.

4. *Any screening used in connection with a wall mounted and/or roof mounted facility shall be compatible with the architecture, color, texture and materials of the building or other structure*

to which it is mounted.

The applicant proposes recessed accent panels to mimic the design of the existing building in addition to matching the exterior building materials (stucco and paint color).

5. *The facility shall be placed to the centermost location of the roof top to screen it from view from the street and adjacent properties.*

   The facility would be placed to the northeast corner of the roof top for the signal to propagate and the proposed antennas would be screened. The applicant's design team considered placing the antennas closer to the northeast building edge, however this option did not meet the City's zoning standards for the C-1 Zone. The facility is not located in the center of the roof because this location would not produce optimal service and signal propagation requirements.

6. *The facility shall not be permitted on residentially zoned property.*

   The facility is not located on a residentially zoned property.

7. *The facility shall not include the use or installation of a monopole.*

   The facility does not involve the installation of a monopole.

Staff reviewed the proposed wireless facility for compliance with Subsections 17.40.170(C) finding the proposal is generally compliant as follows:

1. *The facility shall be considered an accessory structure. If the facility is located within two hundred (200) feet of a residential use, then the facility shall comply with the setback requirements for such zone. In all other instances, the extent of compliance with the setback requirements for the zone in which the facility is located shall be considered, in accordance with the following guidelines, by the City in connection with its processing of any facility permit.*

   The facility is located within 200 feet of a residential use and therefore is subject to residential setback requirements. The nearest residential zoning district abutting the project to the south is R-2, and the required residential front yard setback is 5 feet. The screened structure is located 5 feet away from the east property line.

Screening and Site Selection Guidelines:
Section 17.40.170(D) requires that the City consider the extent to which the proposed facility is screened or camouflaged by existing or proposed new topography, vegetation, buildings, or other structures. As proposed, 9 antennas would be screened with support equipment contained within an existing and proposed equipment racks bellow the building parapet wall and within an equipment room in the garage.

Staff reviewed the proposed wireless facility for compliance with Subsections 17.40.170(D) finding the proposal is generally compliant as follows:

1. *The extent to which the proposed facility blends into the surrounding environment or is*

architecturally integrated into a concealing structure, taking into consideration alternate sites that are available.

The applicant proposes to screen the facility to match the existing architectural features of the building. Thus, the proposed facility would be architecturally integrated into a concealed structure. The proposed screening structure is further detailed below.

2. *The extent to which the proposed facility is screened or camouflaged by existing or proposed new topography, vegetation, buildings, or other structures.*

   The proposed antennas would be screened by a non-reflective structure on the top off the roof. The proposed screening enclosure would match the existing building materials of the existing building. All existing and proposed support equipment would be located below the existing building parapet wall. Additional equipment would be located within the existing 152 square foot equipment room located on the garage level.

3. *The total size of the proposed facility, particularly in relation to surrounding and supporting structures.*

   The overall footprint on the building of the antennas and associated equipment encompasses approximately 197 square feet on a 1,693 square foot rooftop and on a 16-foot-high building in the North End character area. The height of the structure would sit under the 30-foot height requirement of the C-1 Zone. Based on these factors, the facility is not out of scale for the surrounding areas.

4. *The availability of suitable alternative locations for the facility.*

   As part of the application, the applicant submitted an alternative design analysis, in which they reviewed other potential sites in the area to reduce the gap in services. The project site was the most feasible site that can meet RF requirements, comply with zoning, and has a willing property owner.

5. *Preference shall be given to facilities located on publicly owned structures, co-location and shared sites.*

   The building is privately owned. The applicant is not proposing to co-locate or share the site.

6. *Preference shall be given to sites which are not located along primary street frontage, front yard areas or adjacent to residential uses.*

   The site is located adjacent to both arterial and residential streets, as are many sites in the city.

7. *Whenever possible, wireless communication facilities should be located on existing buildings, existing poles, or other existing support structures.*

   The facility would be located on an existing building, thereby avoiding the need to install a new support structure.

Facility Height, Location and Other Issues:

Section 17.46.210(C) addresses facility height, location, and other issues. Staff reviewed the proposed wireless facility for compliance with Subsections 17.46.210(C) finding the proposal is generally compliant with the following, all of which have been incorporated as conditions if the project is approved:

- Such devices shall be located and designed to reduce visual impact from surrounding properties and from public streets and shall be screened in a manner compatible with existing architecture and/or landscaping.
- All devices regulated under this section and the construction and installation thereof shall conform to applicable city building code, zoning code, and electrical code regulations and requirements.
- Such devices shall meet all manufacturer's specifications, and all antennas and screens shall be fire-resistive and of corrosive resistant material, and shall be erected in a secure, wind resistant manner. They shall also be maintained in good condition.
- Every such device shall be adequately grounded for protection against a direct strike of lightning. Staff notes that the applicant has submitted a Radio Frequency Report. Staff recommends the applicant implement all safety recommendations stated in the report (Attachment 5).

General Plan Consistency:

This report and associated recommendation have been evaluated for their consistency with the City's General Plan. The proposed project is consistent with the following Goals and Policies of the General Plan:

Infrastructure Element

Goal 1. Infrastructure systems are functional, safe, and well maintained.

Policies:

- **1.1 Infrastructure systems plan.** Establish and adopt an integrated, holistic systems approach to guide infrastructure development, improvement, maintenance, and resilience.
- **1.5 New technologies.** When feasible, utilize emerging technologies and funding strategies that improve infrastructure efficiency, sustainability, and resiliency.
- **1.6 Utility Infrastructure Siting**. Ensure new infrastructure is sited in a manner to minimize negative impacts to the community and prioritize projects to address the greatest deficiencies.
- **1.7 Aesthetic and urban form.** Require infrastructure and infrastructure improvements that are aesthetically pleasing and consistent with the scenic character of the surrounding area.

Goal 7. A reliable and efficient telecommunications network available to every resident, business, and institution.

Policies:

- **7.1 Accommodate future technologies**. Encourage telecommunications providers and building developments to size infrastructure and facilities to accommodate future expansion and changes in the need for technology.
- **7.2 Appropriate siting of telecommunications infrastructure.** Design and site all facilities to minimize their visibility, prevent visual clutter, and reduce conflicts with surrounding land uses while recognizing that the entire community can have access to communication infrastructure.
- **7.5 Access for all.** Encourage the installation and availability of facilities that provide free telecommunication access at key activity and business centers throughout the community.

Environmental Determination:

The proposed project is Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act as defined in Section 15303, Class 3 Exemption, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures because the proposal pertains to an existing structure and involves only minor alterations to the existing wireless facility. Class 3 exemptions include the installation of small new equipment and facilities, such as the proposed wireless antennas. While this may include a variety of potential impacts, it is noted that Federal regulations preempt the City from considering impacts from radio frequency.

Summary:

The proposed wireless telecommunications facility complies with all requirements regarding site selection, screening, compatibility, and safety standards set forth in Sections 17.40.170 and 17.46.210, while meeting the applicant's objective to provide better service in the North End character Area. Based on the analysis above, the proposed wireless telecommunications facility at 2629 Manhattan Avenue, as conditioned, is consistent with the Hermosa Beach Municipal Code and Plan Hermosa. Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt the attached resolution approving CUP 20-2 and determine that the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution
2. Location/Radius Map
3. Project Plans and Photo Simulations
4. Alternative Design Analysis
5. Radio Frequency Exposure Report
6. Propagation Map
7. Existing Wireless Facility Map
8. Poster Verification

Respectfully Submitted by: Melanie Emas, Assistant Planner
Concur: Carlos Luis, Associate Planner
Approved: Ken Robertson, Community Development Director