



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF SNOQUALMIE

AB23-118
October 9, 2023
Committee Report

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB23-118: WIRE2023-0001: Wireless Communication Facilities Permit and Conditional Use Permit Deliberation and Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
PROPOSED ACTION:	Review and adopt the Hearing Examiner's report and recommendation for approval of a new wireless communication facility in the City of Snoqualmie.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

REVIEW:	Department Director	Emily Arteche	9/26/2023
	Finance	n/a	
	Legal	David Linehan	10/5/2023
	City Administrator	Mike Chambless	9/27/2023

DEPARTMENT:	Community Development		
	STAFF: Emily Arteche, Community Development Director; Andrew Levins, Planning Consultant		
	COMMITTEE: Community Development		COMMITTEE DATE: October 2, 2023
	EXHIBITS: 1. Hearing Examiner Findings and Recommendation of Approval 2. Staff’s Report to the Hearing Examiner 3. WCFP and CUP Application Plan Set		

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUESTED	\$ n/a

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

CoreOne Consulting, on behalf of DISH Wireless, applied for a wireless communications facilities permit and conditional use permit for a proposed wireless facility on property located at 7917 Center Boulevard in the City. As required by the Snoqualmie Municipal Code, the wireless facility is a stealth facility and is designed to appear as the third story of an existing nonresidential building. The application is a Category III decision with a Hearing Examiner recommendation and final decision on the application made by City Council, sitting as a quasi-judicial decision-maker.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND APPLICABLE CODES

Applicant DISH Wireless applied on May 8, 2023 for a site plan permit, Wireless Communications Facility Permit ("WCFP") and Conditional Use Permit ("CUP") for a proposed wireless communications facility ("WCF") located at 7917 Center Boulevard in the City of Snoqualmie, on property subject to the Snoqualmie Ridge I Mixed Use Final Plan, and designated as Neighborhood Retail Center. The design of the stealth WCF includes nine antennas, up to eighteen remote radio units, and three surge protection devices located behind stealth screening that is designed to look like the third story of the existing building. The proposed stealth structure

will be clad with siding material and a cornice element that mimics the architectural features and colors of the existing building and screens the wireless equipment from view as seen from any angle on the ground and adjacent properties. An equipment support cabinet and access ladder will be placed on the main roof level, with most ancillary equipment proposed to be located within the existing void of the false second level of the building. An additional access ladder with anticlimbing security measures is proposed on the west side of the building.

The application is governed by the City's adopted Wireless Communications Facilities ordinance (see Chapter 17.77 SMC), Mixed Use zoning standards (Chapter 17.30 SMC), and other applicable city ordinances. Pursuant to SMC 17.77 Table 1, "macrocell" wireless communication facilities mounted on an existing nonresidential building are allowed in districts designated for neighborhood business in a mixed-use final plan with CUP and WCF permit approval, provided that it is a "stealth" facility. Additional details about the proposal are fully described in the attached report and recommendations of the Hearing Examiner.

The WCFP application studied collocation alternatives and determined that a greater degree of wireless service would be provided from this location than others existing in Snoqualmie. Due to height and aesthetic restrictions, the proposal is not designed for additional collocation, but could be modified in the future if the Municipal Code were amended to allow increased height for stealth wireless facilities. The applicant submitted a radio frequency power density analysis, which found that the power density would not exceed FCC limits for the general population in areas that are accessible to the public.

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

Notice of the application was mailed to property owners within 500 feet of the site, published in the Seattle Times on June 12, 2023, and posted on-site on July 5, 2023. Due to the delay in site posting, the original comment period was extended from June 27, 2023 to July 14, 2023. One public comment was received in favor of the application. City staff found that the design of the proposed facility is consistent with the requirements of the Snoqualmie Municipal Code in its report to the Hearing Examiner.

The Hearing Examiner conducted a virtual open-record hearing on the application via Zoom on September 11, 2023. Notice of the public hearing was mailed to property owners within 500 feet of the site, published in The Seattle Times, and posted on site on September 1, 2023. Public comment on the application included comments in support due to the poor cellular coverage in the vicinity and the proposed camouflaging of the facility, as well as questions relating to the potential for future collocation of other carriers and RF impacts. In order to ensure public access to the virtual hearing process, the record was held open two business days (through September 13, 2023) to allow written public comment to be received from members of the public who may have had difficulty joining the virtual hearings, with additional time arranged for responses by the parties. No post-hearing public comment was submitted, and the record closed on September 13, 2023.

Based on the information and analysis presented in the staff report and the evidence presented at the open-record hearing, the Hearing Examiner has recommended approval of the WCFP and CUP. The Hearing Examiner's report of her findings, conclusions, and recommendation is attached.

Note regarding SEPA review: WAC 197-11-800(25) states that the siting of wireless service facilities that is less than 60 feet in height and located in a commercial zone is categorically exempt from the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act ("SEPA"). The current application does not propose a wireless service tower that is greater than or equal to 60 feet. The SMC has adopted WAC 197-11-800 by reference. Therefore, the current application is exempt from SEPA review.

NEXT STEPS

As a Category III decision, the City Council, sitting in its capacity as a quasi-judicial body, makes the final decision to approve, deny, or condition the application for the WCFP and CUP, based on the evidence in the

record and the recommendations of the Hearing Examiner. The City Council may deliberate (either confidentially in a closed session or in a public meeting) and render a decision during the October 9, 2023, meeting, or if additional time is needed to review the Hearing Examiner's recommendations and/or to consult with staff or legal counsel concerning the decision, the Council may defer its decision to the following meeting.

PROPOSED ACTION

Motion to approve the application of DISH Wireless for a Wireless Communications Facilities Permit and Conditional Use Permit, and to adopt the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Hearing Examiner as those of the City Council.