

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

SAN DIEGO AREA
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SAN DIEGO, CA 92108-4402
767-2370



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REGULAR CALENDAR
STAFF REPORT AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATION

Application No.: 6-01-59

Applicant: AT&T Wireless Services/
Wireless Facilities Inc.

Agent: Doug Munson

Description: Installation of a three-sector wireless communication system consisting of a 38-foot high light monopole standard located in an existing parking lot within the Camp Pendleton Marine Base.

Site: At the Las Pulgas Road entrance to Camp Pendleton Marine Base, Camp Pendleton, San Diego County

Substantive File Documents: Previously Certified San Diego County Local Coastal Program (LCP); Coastal Development Permit Nos. 6-97-160 and 6-98-74, 6-00-58

STAFF NOTES:

Summary of Staff's Preliminary Recommendation: Staff is recommending approval of the proposed communications facility. Adverse impacts to visual resources is the primary issue associated with this project. In this case, potential impacts to the public viewshed along Interstate 5 (I-5) in the Camp Pendleton area have been addressed as designed by the applicant and as required in the attached special conditions. The project will be located on the east side of I-5 so no public view blockage issues arise with respect to ocean views. In addition, the proposed monopole has been designed to double as a light standard within an existing parking lot where other light standards currently exist, thus minimizing its visibility from I-5. Special Conditions require the applicant to agree to co-locate any future antennae at the project site if technologically feasible, and to submit a written agreement to remove the proposed facilities and restore the site to its former condition should technology changes render the facility no longer viable or necessary in the future. With these conditions all potential visual impacts associated with the proposed development will be reduced to the maximum extent feasible.

I. PRELIMINARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The staff recommends the Commission adopt the following resolution:

MOTION: *I move that the Commission approve Coastal Development Permit No. 6-01-59 pursuant to the staff recommendation.*

STAFF RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL:

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of the permit as conditioned and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PERMIT:

The Commission hereby approves a coastal development permit for the proposed development and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

II. Standard Conditions.

See attached page.

III. Special Conditions.

The permit is subject to the following conditions:

1. Co-Location of Future Antennae. PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall agree in writing to cooperate with other communication companies in co-locating additional antennae and/or equipment on the project site in the future, providing such shared use does not impair the operation of the approved facility. Upon the Commission's request, the permittee shall provide an independently prepared technical analysis to substantiate the existence of any practical technical prohibitions against the operation of a co-use facility.

2. Future Redesign. PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall agree in writing that where future technological advances would allow for reduced visual impacts resulting from the

proposed telecommunication facility, the applicant agrees to make those modifications which would reduce the visual impact of the proposed facility. In addition, if in the future the facility is no longer needed, the applicant agrees to abandon the facility and be responsible for removal of all permanent structures, and restoration of the site as needed to re-establish the area consistent with the character of the surrounding vegetation. Before performing any work in response to the requirements of this condition, the applicant shall contact the Executive Director of the California Coastal Commission to determine if an amendment to this coastal development permit is necessary.

IV. Findings and Declarations.

The Commission finds and declares as follows:

1. Project Description. Proposed is the installation of a three-sector wireless communication system consisting of a 38-foot high monopole/light standard located in an existing parking lot within the Camp Pendleton Marine Base. The proposed antennas will be housed within a radome enclosure to screen them from view. The site is located at the Las Pulgas Road entry into the Camp Pendleton Marine Base, on the east side of Interstate 5 (I-5) in northern San Diego County. Existing at the site is a two way paved access road at the entry gate. The road connects the entry into Camp Pendleton from I-5, about 1/2 mile. There is a one-story guardhouse approximately 250 sq.ft. in area. Just east of the guardhouse is an improved parking area. The parking area is currently lit with two approximately 30 foot high light standards located at either end of the parking lot; one of which will be replaced with a monopole approved by the Commission in CDP #6-00-58. The proposed new project would be installed within a new light pole resulting in 3 light standards in the parking lot.

In CDP #6-00-58, the Commission approved a similar project on the subject site consisting of a 38-foot high antenna system, a 240 sq.ft. equipment enclosure and a 6-foot high masonry block wall matching the block construction of the existing guardhouse. Screening vegetation was approved adjacent to the block wall and enclosure. The previously approved equipment enclosure is able to accommodate the proposed project; thus, only the monopole is proposed for Commission approval in this application.

Because there is no certified LCP for this area, the standard of review for this development is Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act.

2. Visual Resources. Section 30251 of the Coastal Act is applicable and states, in part:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas...

The project site is visible from I-5 that is a major public access route and is designated in the previously certified San Diego County land use plan as a scenic corridor. As such, installation of the proposed wireless communication facility could result in adverse visual impacts as viewed from I-5. However, the proposed antenna is located on the east side of I-5; therefore, ocean views from I-5 would not be adversely impacted by the proposed development.

Regarding visual impacts to inland areas within the coastal zone, in CDP #6-00-58 the applicant submitted and the Commission accepted an alternatives analysis for other potential locations for the subject facility. The project site was chosen over several other sites as the preferred location to fill a gap in the communication network for the I-5 corridor in the Camp Pendleton area. The Commission found that because of the site's distance from I-5 (about 1/2 mile) and because the antenna was disguised as a light standard the project would not result in adverse visual impacts and could be found consistent with Section 30251 of the Coastal Act

For the proposed development, the applicant has indicated there are no other existing co-locatable installations with other carriers within the needed area to be serviced. CalTrans would not lease area in their right of way unless access is provided from a source outside of the right-of-way. There is no such access existing in this area at this time. The applicant indicates the railroad right-of-way would have been acceptable except the railroad could not provide access easements to the power lines that could only be accessed across Camp Pendleton property. The Power Company expressed no desire to enter into a lease indicating it has generally become an intrusion into their ability to maintain their lines. According to the applicant, Camp Pendleton became the only viable solution. The military facility's environmental review section required the project take existing views and aesthetics into consideration. Additionally, this site was chosen because it is within an existing developed area on the Marine Base with access; thus, no impacts to surrounding coastal sage scrub vegetation will occur for the project or access thereto.

In response to a staff question regarding why two separate antenna poles are required to provide for service on the same site, the applicant indicates that each system will provide service for a separate broadcast spectrum. Spectrum is the designation for light, radio, microwaves and other phenomena. The applicant will be utilizing the two frequencies granted them along the Interstate 5 corridor by the FCC. The 1900 MHz spectrum was granted and the 850 MHz spectrum was obtained as a result of the applicant's purchase of another carrier (GTE). The 850 and 1900 MHz spectrums are designated areas on the whole of the spectrum. The carriers must transmit and receive within their specified frequency and must not interfere with other carriers using frequencies near them on the spectrum. The analog carriers that originally provided service in San Diego County (GTE) utilize the 850 spectrum and the new digital providers utilize the 1900 spectrum. As designed, coverage is provided for the existing GTE users with phones on the old analog system as well as the digital users from other markets utilizing the 1900 spectrum.

According to the applicant, co-locating would require an increase in the height of the originally approved pole. The two spectrums can co-locate together but there are vertical

separation requirements between the two antennas that would require the ultimate height of the pole to be increased to 46' (a two-foot vertical separation between the two sets of antennas and the additional 6' in height for the antennas themselves). The applicant indicates an additional pole has significantly less impact on the view corridor than an increase in height of the previously approved pole. Additionally, the applicant indicates Camp Pendleton requirements limit the project to the heights of existing surrounding utility poles, which are 38' in height. Thus, in this particular case, co-location is not a feasible alternative.

Regarding visual impacts, the guardhouse on the site is only visible on the northbound side of I-5 as you pass the exit at Las Pulgas and look back towards it. Otherwise, the site is not visible as you drive north. On the southbound side, the site is barely visible from a mile out. As you drive south and get closer the median fence obstructs all views of the site. One cannot see the guardhouse from the southbound lanes because of the median fencing. Additionally, the site is buffered from I-5 by a raised railroad right-of-way that is approximately 20-feet in height. The only portion of the installation that would be viewed from either northbound or southbound traffic on I-5 will be the upper 6-feet of the pole. A taller pole with co-located antennas would be more visually prominent than two shorter poles that are the same height as other light poles on the site. Additionally, the 240 sq.ft. equipment building area approved in CDP 6-00-58 (radio and power cabinets) will also be utilized by the proposed project. The equipment building has been designed to match the aesthetics of the existing guardhouse and will be screened by the previously approved masonry wall built to match the design of the guardhouse. Landscaping will be provided (24-inch box toys) around the perimeter of the equipment enclosure to screen it from public views. Finally, because of the small width of the poles and the distance to I-5 (about 1/2 mile) there should be no adverse impact on any view corridor along I-5. Moreover, while the proposed project will be approximately 38 feet high, the antennas will be housed on a new light standard at the parking area adjacent to the guardhouse and as such the mast which contains the antennas will be disguised as a light from the parking lot.

While the proposed facility will not have significant adverse impacts on the visual quality of the area, the Commission is concerned that cumulatively, installation of additional similar projects in the area could have adverse impacts on visual resources. As demand for wireless communication facilities increases, it is likely that other service providers will be interested in placing additional structures, antennae and equipment in the project area, and the Commission is concerned that cumulatively, installation of additional similar projects in the area could have adverse impacts on visual resources. As noted above, in this case, while it may be possible to co-locate the proposed antenna with the antenna the Commission previously approved on this site, it would result in a taller monopole that would be more visible from I-5. Thus, the Commission is not requiring co-location in this case. However, the Commission will continue to require that future cellular projects provide such an analysis to ensure such facilities can be co-located when feasible. As such, Special Conditions #1 and #2 have been attached. Special Condition #1 requires that the applicant submit a written statement agreeing to cooperate with other communication facilities in co-locating additional antenna on the proposed development,

unless the applicant can demonstrate a substantial technical conflict to doing so. Special Condition #2 requires the applicant to submit a written statement agreeing to remove the structures and restore this site in the future should technological advances make this facility obsolete. In this way, it can be assured that the proliferation of these types of facilities can be limited to appropriate locations, and that the area will not be littered with outdated and obsolete facilities in the future.

In summary, while the proposed cellular facility will extend 38-feet high, it will not result in public view blockage, will only be partially visible from I-5 and will be disguised as a light pole within an existing improved parking lot. Therefore, the Commission finds that as conditioned, impacts to scenic coastal resources have been reduced to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with Section 30251 of the Coastal Act.

3. Local Coastal Planning. Section 30604 (a) also requires that a coastal development permit shall be issued only if the Commission finds that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a Local Coastal Program (LCP) in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. In this case, such a finding can be made.

The subject site is located on the Camp Pendleton Marine Base, a federally owned and operated military facility used by the United States Marine Corps and located in an unincorporated area of the County of San Diego which is not subject to local permit review by the County. In addition, although the project is subject to the Commission's Federal Consistency Review Process, the Commission's act of granting a coastal development permit to the applicant functions under the California Coastal Management Program as the equivalent of a concurrence under the Coastal Zone Management Act. Because there is no certified LCP for this area, the standard of review for this development is Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. Based on the above discussion, the Commission finds that the proposed development, as conditioned, is consistent with all applicable Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act and no adverse impacts to coastal resources are anticipated.

4. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 13096 of the California Code of Regulations requires Commission approval of a coastal development permit to be supported by a finding showing the permit to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect which the activity may have on the environment.

As discussed herein, the proposed project, as conditioned, will not cause significant adverse impacts to the environment. There are no feasible alternatives or mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact which the proposed activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds the proposed project, as conditioned, is the least environmentally damaging feasible

alternative and can be found consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act to conform to CEQA.

STANDARD CONDITIONS:

1. Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment. The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. Expiration. If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date on which the Commission voted on the application. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
3. Interpretation. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
4. Assignment. The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
5. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land. These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

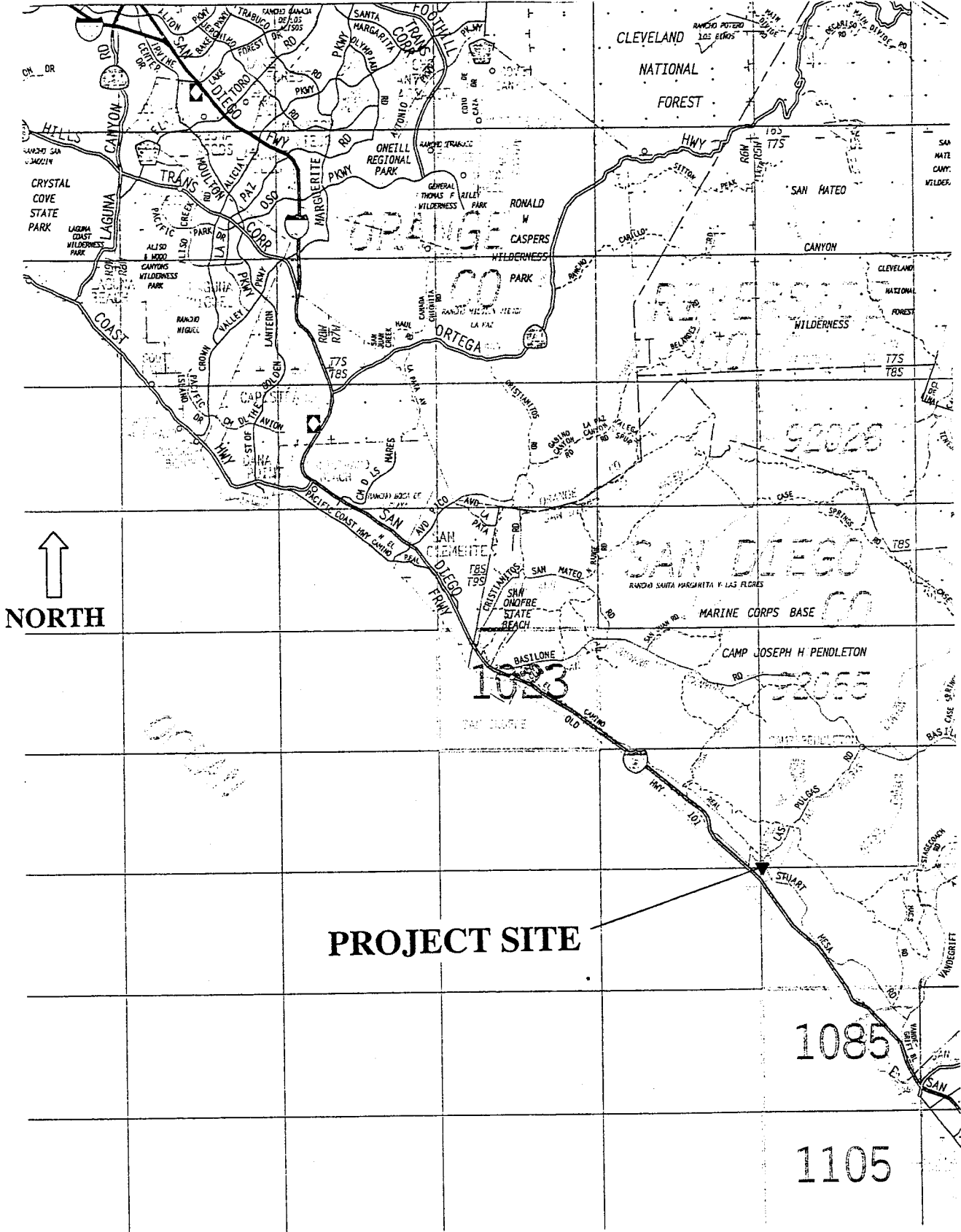
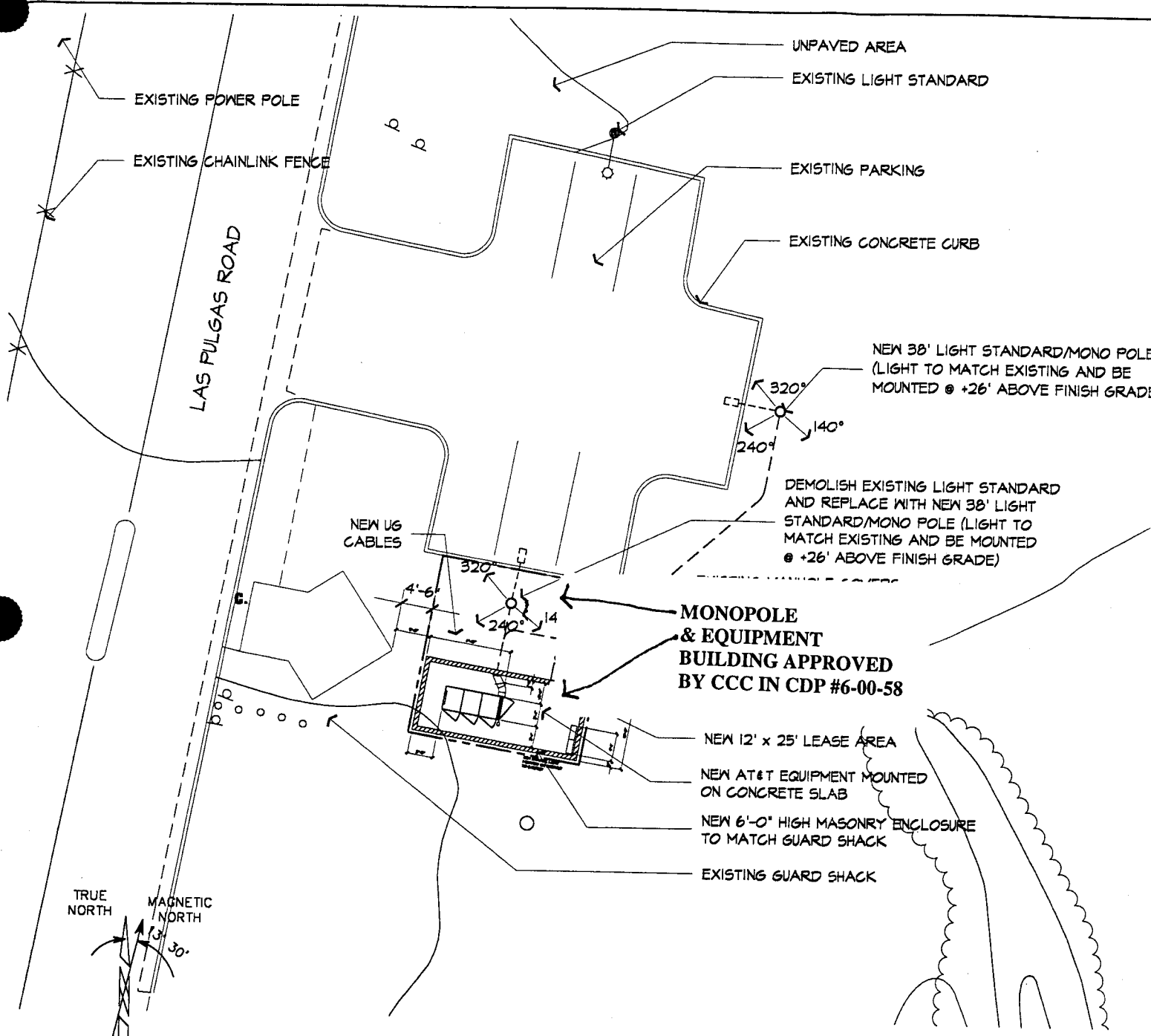
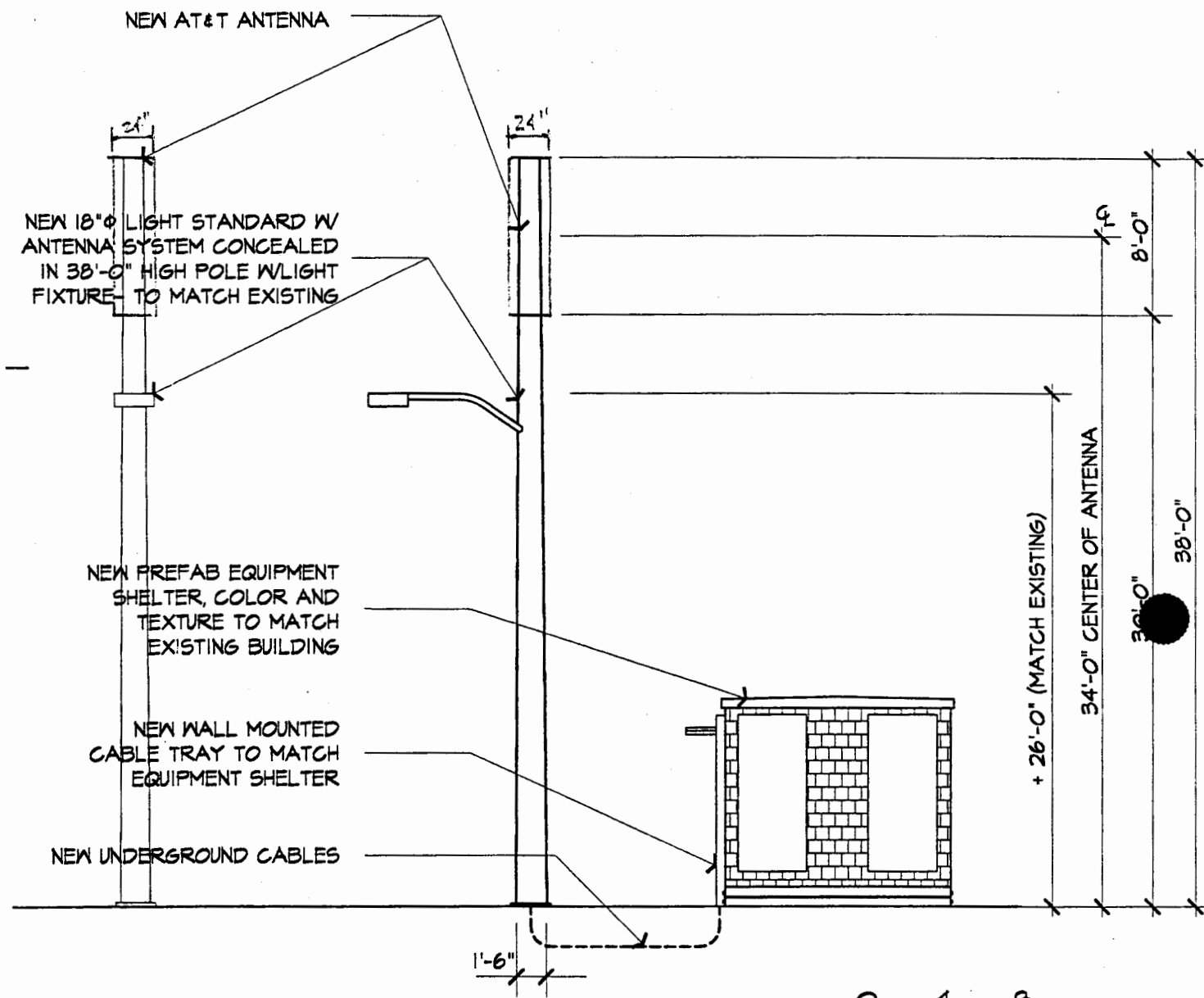


EXHIBIT NO. 1
 APPLICATION NO.
6-01-59
 Location Map



SITE PLAN
SCALE 1/16" = 1'-0"

EXHIBIT NO. 2
APPLICATION NO.
6-01-59
Site Plan
California Coastal Commission



2 WEST ELEVATION
 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

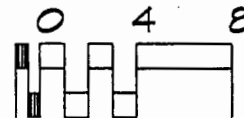


EXHIBIT NO.
APPLICATION NO.
6-01-59
Elevation