GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Edgar T. Nunley, Chief
Zoning Review Branch
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs

FROM: Andrew Altman
Director

DATE: May 3, 2000

SUBJECT: Comment on Antenna Application for 4250 East Capitol Street, N.E.

The Office of Planning (OP) has reviewed the antenna application 4250 East Capitol Street, N.E. pursuant to subsections 701.8 and 701.9 of the Zoning Regulations.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Nextel, wishes to place 12 antennas on the roof of the 26foot-10 inch high apartment building in Square 5085. Square 5085 is located in the northeast quadrant of the District and is bounded by Blaine Street on the north, Benning Road on the east, East Capitol Street on the south and 41st Street on the west. Each of the antennas would have a rectilinear shape and would be approximately seven inches in depth by twelve inches in width by four feet in height. The antennas, which would be placed in groups of four, would be bolted to sled mounts located on the northern, southern and southwestern edges of the roof of the building. The antennas have mounted heights of ten feet above the roof when bolted to the sled mounts. All of the antennas would be set back at least ten feet from any edge of the building.

The apartment building at 4250 East Capitol Street, N.E. is located in the R-5-A zone district. The area immediately surrounding the apartment building contains rowhouses, apartment buildings and commercial structures that range from 25 to 40 feet in height. The surrounding area is zoned R-2, R-5-A and C-3-A.

BZA
Case No. 16635
Exhibit No. 5

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16635
EXHIBIT NO.5

CONCLUSION

The intent of the antenna regulations is to ensure that antennas have as little visibility as possible from public space. On lower buildings, antennas are not to be apparent from the surrounding public space. Our review indicates that the antennas would be visible from the surrounding public space even with the minimum 1:1 set back required by the Zoning Regulation. In discussions with the applicant, it was determined that the antennas cannot be shifted to another location within the apartment building complex or lowered without affecting their transmission quality.

East Capitol Street is a special street within the District. It serves as a major gateway into the city and has a residential character. Consequently, it is important to limit, if not totally eliminate, visual clutter along such a street. The proposal, as it would be placed on the site, would adversely impact the surrounding public space and set a precedence for other antennas to be located along this stretch of East Capitol Street, where the building are lower in height. Therefore, OP recommends **disapproval** of the subject antenna application as being inconsistent with subsections 701.8 and 701.9 of the Zoning Regulations.

AA/rd