

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ACTION

RE: 129 CHURCH STREET, Special Permit for Additions to Existing Rooftop Telecommunications Facility (Owner: JMJ Services, Inc.; Applicant: Sprint Nextel Corporation).
REPORT: 1438-02
ACTION: Approval with Conditions

BACKGROUND

Sprint Nextel Corp. seeks a Special Permit for Additions to an existing Rooftop Telecommunications Facility on a building in the Ninth Square National Register Historic District. Sprint currently has telecommunications equipment on the building and will be adding additional equipment to existing mounting equipment. The reason for the upgrade is to provide better and more varied service to customers.

129 Church Street is located within the Ninth Square National Register Historic District and is a contributing building. It is described as a Georgian Revival built in 1914 having granite-faced 1st and 2nd floors dominated by an arcade of three large arched openings; rusticated granite on the 3rd and 4th floors; brick and pink granite pilasters from the 4th through 8th floors; paired windows; carved spandrels; and a pronounced denticular cornice. A pedimented entrance was removed.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The site plan shows the existing and proposed arrangement of telecommunications equipment. Two new dish antennas will be mounted on existing equipment at the northeast corner, a GPS antenna and an additional cabinet will be mounted on an existing equipment area on the north side, and a new panel antenna will be mounted on the west side penthouse on an existing frame. One new conduit will be installed on the roof surface. All new equipment will be painted a matching color.

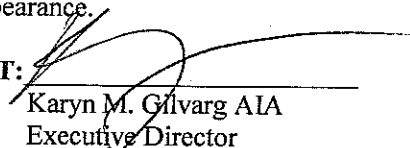
The submitted elevations and photosims show that the only new antenna visible from the street will be the one mounted to the penthouse. Two Sprint antennas currently exist here. The additional antenna is barely discernable and has no negative visual impact. The Commission notes the historical façade of the building, the part the public takes note of, will not be altered. In fact, the modern entry harms the architectural integrity of the building far more than rooftop antennas.

ACTION

The Commission notes the additional equipment takes advantage of existing frames and other mounting equipment and that the new antennas match the building color having a visually benign effect. Therefore no harm will be done to character of this contributing structure or the Ninth Square Historic District. For these reasons the Commission approves the proposal with conditions:

1. An original signed copy of this decision/report shall be recorded on the City's Land Records. Proof of such recording (volume and page number) shall be provided to the City Plan Department, prior to issuance of permit for installation.
2. All antennas shall be painted a color that exactly matches the building portion to which they will be affixed.
3. There shall be no advertising of any sort allowed on any Wireless Telecommunications Facility visible to the public.
4. Sprint Nextel Corporation shall submit to the Zoning Administrator annually during the month of January an affidavit that the facility is in active use as a wireless site and shall certify that such use will continue for the coming calendar year.
5. If this wireless site becomes inactive for six consecutive months in any calendar year or part of any calendar year, the service facility owner shall remove it. This removal shall occur within ninety days of the end of such six-month period. Upon removal the site shall be restored to its previous appearance.

ADOPTED: March 17, 2010
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg AIA
Executive Director