**CONSERVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

**NAPA COUNTY**

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**IN RE: ITEM 9B AT&T WIRELESS/BIG RANCH ROAD SITE-USE PERMIT (#P12-00419-UP)**

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**TRANSCRIPT OF AUDIOTAPED PROCEEDINGS**

MEETING OF NOVEMBER 20, 2013

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PRESENT:

 TERRY SCOTT, Chair

MICHAEL BASAYNE, Commissioner

 BOB FIDDAMAN, Commissioner

 HEATHER PHILLIPS, Commissioner

 MATT POPE, Commissioner

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Transcribed by: Kathryn Johnson

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CHAIR SCOTT: Okay, moving on to Public Hearing Item 9B. Let’s see, Mr. Haag, would you like to lead us [into that?]

JERRY HAAG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Jerry Haag, I’m the Consultant Staff Planner for this project. Just a brief introduction to the project.

[Side comments.]

MR. HAAG: Thank you, sorry, a little technical difficulties with the computer. This is an application to construct an 85-foot-tall monopole disguised as a pine tree. And on that pine tree the applicant proposes to install 12 panel antennas, a GPS directional antenna, and 15 small remote radio units that are kind of boosters for the antennas. There will be a--this would all be placed on an approximately 45- by 20-foot lease area on the southeast corner of the site, which is currently a vineyard. Install a 24-hour emergency power backup supply, which is required by the County ordinance, and install emergency notification signs on the project site as required by ordinance. Staff is recommending that a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Class 3 be approved by the Commission to cover the CEQA requirements.

As noted, the project site’s located on the east side of Big Ranch Road north of Trancas Road, within an Agricultural Preserve zoning district. Properties to the west and south are within in the city of Napa, and have developed for commercial uses. A City park was recently built by the City of Napa to the east of this called the Trancas Crossing Park. The applicant will discuss the need for the project in terms of lack of sufficient wireless coverage in the north portion of Napa and the southern portion of Napa County, and will explain alternative sites explored by the applicant prior to making this submittal.

In reviewing the project, Staff has determined that it does comply with the standards of the County Telecommunication Ordinance. One issue that we looked at pretty hard was the visibility of the proposed 85-foot tower from Trancas and other local roads, as well as the County park to the east. After discussions, the applicant elected to disguise the tower as a camouflage pine tree, and would be sited in a small grove of existing trees consisting of redwoods, oaks, and pine trees so it would appear as effectively unnoticeable from Trancas Road, and from the park, as well as other local roads.

 So, therefore, this would be consistent with the County’s requirement of effectively unnoticeable. To ensure that the camouflage tree remains in good condition to the life of the project, a condition of approval would require that a yearly monitoring report be submitted to the Planning Department. And I believe we discussed this with the Commission a couple of months ago when the Verizon project on--north of Greystone was before the Commission, which you approved, with this same condition. So, we thought it was a good condition that would kind of ensure that the tree pole didn’t deteriorate over the life of the pole, which could be, you know, ten or twenty years, or perhaps longer.

Staff Report also notes that the proposed Use Permit applies with applicable General Plan and Zoning Standards, and we recommend that the Commission find a class re-exemption from CEQA is appropriate here, and approve the Use Permit subject to conditions.

CHAIR SCOTT: Okay. Any questions of Mr. Haag? Okay then, I will open the Public Hearing and hear from the applicant or their representative.

CHRISTY BELTRAN ROBERTS: Good morning, my name is Christy Beltran Roberts. And I live at 1168 Larkin Way in Napa, and I am representing the applicant, AT&T. On this facility AT&T is proposing is to install an 85-foot-tall tree tower on what is called Big Ranch Farms, and the owners are here. And they’re also going to be putting an equipment facility located at the base of the tower, as well as it’s going to be surrounded by a wooden fence.

The purpose of this facility is to provide better coverage and additional capacity to AT&T’s customers, as well as the emergency service providers who rely on their network. As far as coverage is concerned you probably understand that there is sufficient coverage, but what AT&T is working on is enhanced coverage for in-building service, not only just in transit or outside service, but as we become more and more dependent on our wireless devices that is actually replacing our landlines and our cable television sets. There is a high concentration of AT&T’s customers relying on their network, and because of this concentration they need to place additional facilities to off load other facilities nearby. And they have to strategically locate these facilities so that it’s separated equally from other facilities. And AT&T and their engineers had identified this area, and we chose this location because it is quite set back from the public corridors, Big Ranch Road, as well as Trancas Road. It’s also set back from Trancas Park--Crossing Park. I personally walked the park and took all the photographs from Trancas Park and found it very difficult to see where this tree could be seen from that location.

As you know, AT&T is ever-growing with all these numerous devices we have, the iPhone, the iPads and you can now tether your internet off of your iPhone with your laptop. So, if you can imagine that the network is becoming quite in demand of use. And we have to put these additional facilities in, and it’s amazing that they’re still using these facilities. And the type of technologies that are being pumped out of these facilities is amazing, so.

The other day I bought my son, who’s ten years old, his first iPhone, and I’m just--you know, and I think this is more and more common where these families are buying additional devices for not only themselves, the husband and wife, but also the kids, and they’re getting multiple devices. So, this demand is ever-needing, and it’s very much a concern of AT&T’s, and we want to be there for the technology and support Napa in that.

So, we decided to locate up--and I thought that it was a good location because it was set back from the public corridors, as I said. It’s about 600 feet from Big Ranch Road, and it’s about six or 700 feet from Trancas Road as well. And it’s about 330 feet from Trancas parking--Trancas Crossing Park.

So, we looked at six alternatives in the area that is feasible for a location for a co-location of this type of facility, and we found that this location was the most suitable location. We had an amenable landlord that was willing to enter into a long-term agreement, and we feel that it’s the best location for its purpose.

I can go through those alternatives, you have your information. And by the way, I wanted to thank Staff for their detailed analysis of the project and for Commissioner Scott for meeting with me and going over the project. So, I’m available, and if you have any questions, but I just want to respectfully request your support of the project as Staff has recommended in their Staff Report.

CHAIR SCOTT: Okay, Commissioner Basayne.

COMMISSIONER BASAYNE: Good morning, Christy, so obviously we’re concerned that, at least on one level, with regard to visibility and aesthetics. And because this is in fairly close proximity to an urban area, literally across the street is the City of Napa. My concern is whether or not this will indeed be visible, and if it is visible, how well does it blend in with the trees in this grove located literally 700 feet away, or 600 feet away from the various trafficked areas. So, I’ve seen different renderings, and in some of the renderings that have been presented it appears as if the trunk of the tree is bare. Literally it looks 20/30 feet high, and then what I just saw here on our screen was--looked more like a Christmas tree, where the branches went all the way to the bottom. So, I just really would like some guidance as to what we’re looking at, and what we’re going to see as the finished product.

MS. ROBERTS: Okay, that’s a very good question, and first to address as far as the City’s concern about the project, actually the City reviewed the project and in your Staff Report, the Planning Department provided their input, and they actually have no objection to the project. So, and then just to get my facts in order, the facility will be about 650 feet from Big Ranch Road, and is going to be about 580 feet from Trancas Street. So, it is fairly set back, and with the fence around the base of the tower and being so set back, I don’t think that you’re going to notice the tree trunk as well as you would if you were standing right next to the tree. The purpose of having the, I want to say, bareness on the bottom of tree, is to prevent people from climbing the branches, and vandalism, and kids getting up there and, you know, damaging AT&T’s equipment, and most importantly for safety purposes.

CHAIR SCOTT: Okay. Commissioner Pope.

COMMISSIONER POPE: Yeah, thank you Christy. Just wanted to talk a little bit--you touched on it briefly in the introduction, and we talked about this with the last cellphone application--tower application we had. In addition to servicing your AT&T customers there’s also a public safety aspect to this in terms of improving, I guess, inter-operability and communications. I was just wondering if you could talk just a little bit about that, in terms of how there would be a public safety benefit in expanding the usage.

MS. ROBERTS: Well, in terms of public safety, AT&T provides the wireless communications to--provides [e9-1-1] services, as well as provides to the emergency service providers who rely on wireless networks. More and more these days people are making the 9-1-1 calls on their cellphones versus their landline phones. So, from a safety element, it’s providing additional capacity, which is providing better opportunities, especially in times of an emergency, where you really need to rely on that service. So, with the addition of this facility, you will be able to make more 9-1-1 calls, especially in times of, let’s say, natural disaster, or if there is a power outage, we will be able to provide that service during those times. And there will be the capacity available. There will be more capacity available than there currently is.

COMMISSIONER POPE: That kind of leads to just a follow-up question. Excuse me. So in the case of a major earthquake or something like that...

MS. ROBERTS: Right.

COMMISSIONER POPE: ...you know when everybody is going to be...

MS. ROBERTS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER POPE: ...dialing 9-1-1, is there a certain amount of backup redundancy that these kind of towers have that they can keep functioning?

MS. ROBERTS: Right. Well actually part of your ordinance requires that AT&T install an emergency generator that is to provide additional back up power. The cell sites, themselves, is equipped with backup power. But in addition to that--and that would be batteries--but in addition to that there is going to be an emergency generator that will provide additional communication should there be a natural disaster or the power goes out. And we would be able to provide that communication in that instance.

COMMISSIONER POPE: Great, thank you.

MR. HAAG: Commissioner Pope, if I could just add something from the Staff. There are kind of two factors written into the ordinance that kind of go along with your thinking. Number one, as Christy mentioned, the ordinance does require a minimum 24-hour, on-site back up power supply, either a generator, a battery pack, or whatever to supply that in case of a major earthquake or fire. The Code also requires that the site be designed to withstand a maximum credible earthquake for this portion of Napa County. So if there’s a tremblor, or a, you know, earthquake, it’s not going to fall over immediately. It’s going to have to be a pretty significant earthquake to be able to topple the tower. So.

COMMISSIONER POPE: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SCOTT: Commissioner Fiddaman.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: I’m just curious. I noticed this is going to be co-locatable. And what’s the likelihood that other service providers would use this tower?

MS. ROBERTS: Well, there’s a--you know--we’re going to--AT&T will design it to make it co-locatable. There is a good chance that there would be another carrier located on this facility. And what’s great about the tree tower, if you should decide to approve that, is that you can put these additional antennas inside the branches, and it will disguise the additional antennas.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: That was my other question, was--would that affect the appearance if other carriers decided to locate here. But I guess what you’re saying is not too much, then?

MS. ROBERTS: No, because they’re inside the branches, and they do a--they’re getting better and they do a really good job of painting those antennas like a dark color so they blend in nicely.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER POPE: The other carriers will have to provide the imitation squirrels and birds and other camouflaging features.

MR. HAAG: You could make that a condition of approval.

[Laughter.]

CHAIR SCOTT: Well, the one concern that I had, Christy, and that is regarding the maintenance of the color of the tree. And as has been mentioned, we required that in our last one, and I know it’s included here. That’s important, over time in ten or fifteen years we don’t want to be looking at an iridescent orange pine tree.

MS. ROBERTS: I understand. And I agree. And I believe that--yours--in fact I’m just double-checking here, your conditions of approval addressed...

CHAIR SCOTT: It does.

MS. ROBERTS: ...the exterior maintenance of this facility.

CHAIR SCOTT: Thank you. Commissioner Phillips.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPS: This is actually a question for Staff. And I realized as I was reading this earlier, that one thing that I should probably brush up on is, you know, that we’re seeing more of these, and they’re all in AP zoning. And it’s a commercial use within the AP. And I know--are telecommunications then--John I just saw you make a move for your--a little bit about how we rationalize the use of commercial within the AP?

JOHN MCDOWELL: We view this as a utility. So, just like PG&E will have a gas line that runs in the street through AG Preserved land, and in many cases across AG Preserved land, the telecomm facilities, which are protected in many ways by the Public Utilities Commission, don’t fall within the realm, even though they’re operated for profit companies, it’s not considered like a retail or other form of commercial use as we define it in the Code.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPS: But the difference with that would be that Pacific--that PG&E wouldn’t pay you to put those gas lines through your property.

MR. MCDOWELL: That’s true. Well, I guess I’ll approach it from another aspect. There’s a provision in Napa County Code that not only public utilities, but quasi-public utilities are allowed within the AG zoning districts by grant of use permit. So, if you wanted to do a wind generation power plant, which we’ve seen some of those...

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPS: And we did an ordinance on, yeah, I remember that.

MR. MCDOWELL: ...you can come in and get a use permit for that. Now we don’t do use permits--typically--do use permits on the telecomm facilities because they’re, I’ll say, a lesser feature than what you would see at a power plant. But, it’s a--maybe it’s nuance, but it’s a differentiation from somebody who’s looking to, I’ll say it, open a shop and sell left-handed smoke shifters, or trinkets--rose bushes.

[Laughter.]

CHAIR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. McDowell.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPS: Brownies, or...

MR. MCDOWELL: Brownies, yeah.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPS: ...caramels.

MR. HAAG: If I could just tag on to John’s explanation, when I kind of took over this position as consulting planner, and thank you for that position, I’ve enjoyed working here, it was explained to me that in 1996 when the ordinance was first written, it was kind of sold to the County as these facilities would also supply emergency--would be part of the County’s emergency network, as Commissioner Pope had asked about, you know, would they provide this, and the answer is yes. Which is why those two provisions I mentioned, the 24-hour on site power supply and the withstanding an earthquake was put into the Code. So, kind of, the more remote areas of Napa County people could rely on their cell services within--for at least a day after a crisis happened, as well as service providers. So, that was kind of a reason they were allowed, in kind of more remote locations, which is why you’re seeing them in the AP Zone.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPS: Okay. Okay.

CHAIR SCOTT: Commissioner Fiddaman.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: Yeah. My last question is a very general one. I’m just curious, since we have you here, where does Napa County fit in to the overall scheme of things in terms of how we’re regulating this. And this might be a question for Jerry to chime in on too. But I’m just curious, are we kind of in the main stream of requirements, are we easy, or difficult?

MS. ROBERTS: I think you’re just right.

[Laughter.]

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: A very political answer. I asked for that.

MR. HAAG: I second that opinion.

COMMISSIONER POPE: That’s called the goldilocks response.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: So there’s no--but I mean--but there’s--is there anything we’re missing out on in terms of how we regulate this and the care we take with it?

MS. ROBERTS: I think that, you know, you provide a fair ordinance, and you’re asking all the right questions, and I believe that it is a good facility, so there isn’t--and it’s not controversial, which really helps. I think that at the end of the day, it’s a win-win. It’s a win-win situation for AT&T, obviously. It’s a win-win for Big Ranch Farms, they get a little bit of income to help their farming, you know, offset some of their farming production. It’s also--you guys would get additional enhanced capacity and coverage to the area, and you can serve Napa County, and yes, you can serve the City as well, where we all go to and from.

And again, these devices are not going away. We are only continually adding more and more devices as we become more and more dependent on our wireless technology. So I think it’s good that you’re keeping up with the mainstream, and especially in times of an emergency situation that you’ll have the additional capacity that will be available because everybody will be using their cellphones and their wireless devices to figure out what’s going on. And Napa County will be more prepared than other jurisdictions who are irrational, or difficult. So, again, I’m going to second that I think you’re doing the right thing and asking--answering the right questions, and your ordinance is very fair, and you’ve got a--you know, you’ve got a good process for this application--type of application.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: Thank you.

CHAIR SCOTT: Commissioner Basayne.

COMMISSIONER BASAYNE: Christy, nice presentation, I appreciate it. But to your point of the, you know, the hand-held devices are not going away, they’re becoming more and more abundant. Soon not only 10-year-olds will have them, but 7-year-olds will have them...

MS. ROBERTS: Right.

COMMISSIONER POPE: ...or they already have them perhaps.

MS. ROBERTS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER POPE: But, so, you know, in terms of creating this more complete matrix of communication, and the better and better coverage that’s being demanded, and so forth, you know, my concern is, and I’ve just asked since you’re here...

MS. ROBERTS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER POPE: ...to weigh in on this, you know, we’re going to have that better coverage by virtue of more and more requests for these towers.

MS. ROBERTS: Right.

COMMISSIONER POPE: And so, what is happening on the front potentially of new technology, that, sort of, lowers the elevation of these towers, or creates some kind of new technology that you may be aware of down the road, and certainly not next year, but maybe five years hence, or what have you, we’re not having to approve a blanket-the-earth-type policy where we just have cell towers everywhere.

MS. ROBERTS: Right. And that’s a really good question. There’s a couple of--there probably will be--you’ll probably have to consider additional cell towers. However, the technology, as we, over the course--I’ve been doing this for over 20 years, and I’m just amazed that there isn’t more cell towers. Because given that all the devices and what we do with those devices, we’re not just talking on the phone, we’re texting, we’re downloading, we’re streaming video. So, the technology is actually surpassing, I think, then, the amount of cell towers that are needed. And honestly it’s becoming more and more difficult to get them approved, so these companies are having to be more creative and develop more advanced technologies to alleviate going through the process of getting the approvals for a new tower. So, I mean, that’s what it is. And I think that it’s going to--as we grow they’re going to have to grow as well, because the process is not an easy one to put up these towers.

CHAIR SCOTT: Next thing you know, they’ll have to do underground wires.

[Laughter.]

CHAIR SCOTT: Commissioner Phillips.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPS: I was just going to pass along that, you know, I was able to drive the spot where the cell tower--drive past and see that. But I was just going to pass along that it was really helpful to have the photos of the alternatives and the discussion laid out like that.

MS. ROBERTS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPS: That was--because I wasn’t able to drive those spots. So that was really nice to have that.

MS. ROBERTS: Thank you very much. Appreciate that.

CHAIR SCOTT: Commissioner Fiddaman.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: Well I already said I asked my last question. But, I do have one more general question, and it’s a good opportunity for us to get educated on where this stuff is going. And it’s kind of following up on Commissioner Basayne’s question.

I’ve been reading about--I think Los Angeles has a proposal right now to have city-wide Wi-Fi. And it’s a three-billion-dollar cost, or something, to do that. And that’s been around for a long time. And I know various cities are doing it. Google, I think, is doing it in a couple places. So, my question is if we got Wi-Fi throughout Napa City, for example, is that going to reduce the need for cell towers? Or would Wi-Fi require towers? I mean, what’s our--what’s the likelihood of our future here, more of these towers, or fewer?

MS. ROBERTS: Well, I wouldn’t compare Napa to the city of Los Angeles because...

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: We’re smaller.

MS. ROBERTS: Yeah, and I think you want to remain that way, which is a good thing. And I think that they can work in conjunction with each other, the City and the different carriers to offload, AT&T or other carriers, those city services can do that. But. Again, I don’t think that--I mean you may--the City may want to go in that route, but all these technologies can work, like I said, with each other and help support each other’s network.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: Is Wi-Fi done with towers, though, the same way that cellular is?

MS. ROBERTS: Well, they use antennas to transmit and receive information. And where they place those antennas they can use buildings to co-locate on. They could put up towers. They could go on utility poles, light standards, what have you.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SCOTT: Okay. Any other questions of Mrs. Roberts? Thank you. Is there anyone else in the audience who would like to address us regarding this application?

There being none, I will close the Public Hearing and refer the matter back to the Commission for comments, discussion, and/or motions. And I will--for a change, I will lead off. I had the fortune on top of the mis-fortune of taking advantage of the services about two and a half years ago. And I’m glad that that cell service was available at this point in Silverado. And anything that we can do I think does provide a measure of safety to our public, as both individuals and public. It doesn’t have to be a natural catastrophe, it could be a heart attack, or what have you. And the ability to reach the EMTs, to reach Queen of the Valley, or St. Helena Hospital is very, very critical to the wellbeing and the support of our community. And so for that reason, and for the design specifications, and the caution that has been added to making this a complete project application, I support it.

Let’s see, I guess it was Commissioner Basayne.

COMMISSIONER BASAYNE: Likewise, I am supportive. I am certainly--through my comments, you know, I have expressed concern with regard to where we might be going with this just in terms of aesthetics, and view shed here in the county. But I also agree that we are indeed tethered to our devices, and perhaps in a good way. Certainly when I go out to eat and my wife is looking at her cellphone, sometimes I don’t always feel that. But I’m guilty of that as well. And so, but I do believe that the emergency public safety component is very important here. And for that reason this has my support. And a good presentation.

CHAIR SCOTT: Okay. Commissioner Pope.

COMMISSIONER POPE: Yeah, I think Commissioner Phillips raised a really excellent question about looking at our policy in terms of zoning and putting these devices in AP zoning, and the public utility aspect that was explained. And that’s why I intend to ask the question about the public safety benefits that will come to the county as a result of this. As we know, whether it’s, as Chair Scott brings up, you know, whether it’s an individual medical emergency or whether it’s a catastrophe where everyone is going to be whipping out their phones at the same time and you’re going to have, not only, you know, the likelihood of compromised infrastructure at that time, but you’re also going to get an overwhelm as everybody’s trying to contact their loved ones. And as a public safety announcement everybody should always make sure in areas like this where we live near faults, you know, to find a number outside the area, the relative who lives in another state or another place to use as a central call-in place to have your loved ones call there because it might be very, very difficult to talk amongst ourselves here in the Bay Area is something that I was--anyway.

So yeah, I do think there is an appreciable quasi-public-utility benefit that we get from this. And I think, you know, it’s been a challenge, I know, across the State of California for rural areas to get, not just in terms of cellphone service, but also wireless and other things that are increasingly important, not just in communication and convenience, but also education and other public benefits. So, I think there’s been an effort put here, I think it sounds like we’ve set some good precedents from some of our previous deliberations of these issues that are finding their way into policy, which is good. And I would be supportive.

CHAIR SCOTT: Commissioner Fiddaman.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: Yeah, I support this. We don’t, as a Commission, I think, have a lot of knowledge and understanding of what’s going on in other jurisdictions. But I think we have to rely on Staff. And then the questions that we ask here that are logical and to keep ourselves educated on this. I just want to make sure that we’re not missing anything in terms of regulating the location of these devices. But I would have to say my personal impression driving around the county is that we’re not, you know, ruining the place with the cellphone towers that--I mean, I never notice them myself, so I think we’ve done a relatively good job. So I’m in favor of this.

CHAIR SCOTT: Well, I’ll make one last comment. And that is the location of this particular tree tower opposite the Silverado shopping center is--as you drive on Trancas, you have a winery to the left, closer to Big Ranch Road, and then you have a Chevron gas station to the right. And, which pretty much blocks a view from different angles of this particular location. And so you have fleeting glances, unless of course you’re walking, or standing there looking at it. In which case you’re going to see a very large, well foliaged tree. And so I think it’s the best technology currently available. And I think that’s what we have to live with. And hopefully we will continue to live with it.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPS: And I think that the yearly maintenance plans makes it better that we could live with it.

CHAIR SCOTT: Yeah. More tolerable.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPS: Yeah.

CHAIR SCOTT: Commissioner Basayne.

COMMISSIONER BASAYNE: If no one else wishes to weigh in at this point, I’d like to propose an action that the Planning Commission find the project Categorically Exempt based on Finding 1 of Exhibit A. And two, approve Use Permit #P12-00419 based on Findings 2 through 5 of Exhibit A, subject to recommended conditions provided in Exhibit B.

COMMISSIONER FIDDAMAN: Second.

CHAIR SCOTT: There’s a motion and a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

ALL COMMISSIONERS: Aye.

CHAIR SCOTT: Opposed? The measure carries unanimously. Okay.

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I, Kathryn F. Johnson, do hereby certify and believe:

 That the foregoing pages are a true and correct transcript of the proceedings before the Napa County Conservation, Development and Planning Commission, County Building, Board Chambers, Napa, California, excepting words noted “inaudible” or words placed in [brackets] to the best of my ability. Speech disfluencies, discourse markers and pause fillers have been deleted, except when deemed function words. Commas may be used for emphasis as well as for grammar.

 I further certify that I am not interested in the outcome of said matter or connected with or related to any of the parties of said matter or to their respective counsel.

 Dated this 30th day of December 2013.

Kathryn F. Johnson