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CEQA Memorandum



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David Morrison
Director

MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Commission

From: Jerry Haag, Staff Planning Consultant

Date: September 21, 2016

Re: CEQA Determination
Verizon Wireless Ragatz Lane Site
Use Permit #P16-00193-UP
1181 Ragatz Lane, Napa; APN 36-120-001

Pursuant to Section 303 of Napa County's Local Procedures for Implementing the California Quality Act (CEQA), the Planning Department has prepared this environmental evaluation for the proposed Verizon Wireless Ragatz Lane Site Use Permit (File No. P16-0093-UP).

The proposed project involves construction of an approximately 65-foot tall cell tower on property located on the east side of State Highway 29 and south of Yountville off of Ragatz Lane. The tower would be located on the edge of a vineyard on an approximately 22' x 22' (484 square foot) lease area. The proposed tower would be set back from State Highway 29 approximately 4,000 feet and screened by intervening trees and other vegetation. The Verizon facility would be built as a faux water tower to blend in with the surrounding agricultural setting. There would also be a small amount of ground-mounted equipment under the proposed tower that would be screened with a wooden fence.

No exemptions from County telecommunication standards have been requested. The site is zoned Agricultural Preserve (AP) and major telecom facilities are a conditionally permitted use. The site is flat and contains no major trees. An agricultural shed borders the proposed tower to the north. The site is located approximately 4,000 feet west of the Napa River and approximately 40 feet from an unnamed creek tributary to the west.

Similar to all other previous telecom Use Permit applications, this project would qualify as a Categorical Exemption pursuant to Section 15303 (d) of the California Environmental Quality Act, Class 3, which exempts the construction of new small structures or conversion of small structures. This project is not on any lists of hazardous waste sites enumerated under Government Code Section 65962.5.

Under Section 15300.2 of the California Environmental Quality Act, a Class 3 (Section 15303) cannot be used if environmental sensitivities exist at the site or if there will be cumulative impacts. The proposed project is aimed to improve and enhance Verizon's wireless communication coverage in the mid-County area since there are no other facilities available in the vicinity. There are no environmental sensitivities, scenic resources, hazardous waste sites, nor historic resources identified on the site, and no, cumulative impact associated with the location of this telecommunication tower. Therefore, this exemption is appropriate and this proposal meets the requirements for this Categorical Exemption as discussed above.