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Agenda Date: 12/20/2017

Agenda Placement: 8B

Napa County Planning Commission Board Agenda Letter

TO: Napa County Planning Commission
FROM: Vincent Smith for David Morrison - Director
Planning, Building and Environmental Services
REPORT BY: Graham Hannaford, Planner II - (707)299-1361
SUBJECT: AT&T Quail Ridge Telecommunication Facility

RECOMMENDATION

AT&T Mobility Quail Ridge Site/ P17-00232-UP

CEQA Status: Consideration and possible adoption of a Categorical Exemption pursuant to Section 15303 (d) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Class 3, which exempts construction of new small structures or conversion of small structures. The project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

Request: Approval to: (1) construct a 64-foot tall monopole telecommunication facility; (2) install up to twelve (12) panel antennas and one (1) microwave dish; (3) place the tower and associated equipment within a 45' by 35' lease area (approximately 1,575 square feet) toward the middle of the property; (4) install underground power and telecommunications lines; (5) construct an approximately 120 square foot equipment shelter; (6) install emergency notification signs on the site; and (7) improvements to an existing access road. The facility would be located near the center of an approximately 80.53-acre parcel southwest of Highway 128, approximately 2,000 feet from the entrance to the Quail Ridge Nature Preserve, within the Agricultural Watershed (AW) zoning district, at 6850 State Highway 128, Napa, CA 94558; Assessor's Parcel 032-360-020.

Staff Recommendation: Find the project Categorical Exempt and approve the Use Permit based on the attached findings and subject to recommended conditions.

Staff Contact: Graham Hannaford, Planner II, 707-299-1361 , graham.hannaford@countyofnapa.org.

Applicant Contact: Maria Kim, AT&T Mobility, 916-247-6087, mkim@completewireless.net

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**Project Actions:**

That the Planning Commission:

1. Find the project Categorically Exempt based on Finding 1 of Attachment A; and
2. Approve Use Permit P17-00232 based on Findings 2-5 of Attachment A and subject to Conditions of Approval of Attachment B, attached.

Discussion:

The applicant is proposing to construct a new unmanned telecommunication monopole for AT&T on a ridgetop in a previously cleared area. The telecommunication facility is at least partially funded by the "Connect America Fund (CAF)" by the FCC. This fund specifically helps fund facilities to provide Broadband internet access to residents in rural areas. The location of the monopole is necessary to achieve the maximum coverage in line with the CAF's goals.

The 80.53-acre site is currently developed with a manufactured home, a detached garage, and a private road that will be used to access the proposed site. The nearest residence is approximately 910 feet northeast of the proposed location of the facility. The proposed AT&T telecommunication facility would be located roughly in the middle of the parcel, at the tallest point of the ridge that runs through the property. Proposed improvements would include a 64-foot tall monopole, ground mounted equipment, an on-site emergency backup generator, an approximately 120 square foot equipment shelter, and a chain link fence surrounding the 1575 square foot lease area. Site access would be gained via an existing unpaved road that begins at the parcel immediately to the west, south of Highway 128. Although the project is not co-located with other providers at this time, it could accommodate other carriers, depending on the number of additional antennas proposed.

The project site is hilly and rises in elevation approximately 200 feet from the western portion to the high point, which is about 1,400 feet. A blue line stream runs through the lower elevation of the western portion of the parcel. The applicant notes that the height of the tower is dictated by the necessary coverage area and the topography of the area. The proposed project is consistent with the intent of the General Plan and Napa County Code to make all telecommunication facilities "effectively unnoticeable" from adjacent roads and public gathering places. The project is also consistent with applicable sections of the County Conservation Regulations. This is discussed further below.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA under Section 15303 (d) of the CEQA Guidelines as a Class 3 Exemption, construction of new small structures or conversion of small structures; and Section 15304 of the CEQA Guidelines as a Class 4 Exemption, minor alterations to land.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Owner: Brian and Andrea Rahn

Applicant: Maria Kim- AT&T Mobility c/o Complete Wireless Consulting; (916) 247-6087,
MKim@completewireless.net

General Plan Land Use Designation: Agriculture, Watershed, and Open Space (AWOS)

Zoning: Agricultural Watershed (AW)

Date Filed: June 12, 2017

Date Deemed Complete: August 22, 2017

Number of Employees: None, periodic visits by maintenance staff

Lease Equipment Area: 1,575 square feet

Site Access: From Highway 128, west of the parcel via private road

Emergency Power Supply: On-site generator (24 hour + power supply)

Adjacent Zoning/Land Use:

North: AW- Single family residence (43.23-acre parcel)

South: AW- Single family Residence (60-acre parcel)

East: AW- Open Space (466.27-acre parcel)

West: AW- Single family residence (22.5-acre parcel)

Discussion Points:

1) Visual Impacts: The Napa County Code requires telecommunication facilities to be sited and designed so as to blend in with the surrounding environment to be "effectively unnoticeable". Photosimulations supplied by the applicant (see Attachment D) shows that the proposed facility would be effectively unnoticeable from Highway 128. Other designs for the facility were taller and/or created a larger silhouette on the sky than the design proposed. The monopole design is the least visually intrusive design possible, and therefore meets the County's aesthetic standard.

2) Conservation Regulations/Creek Protection: The proposed project would not include construction or operational activities within creek setback areas. The facility is approximately 350 feet from the nearest blue line stream. Therefore, this proposal is consistent with the County Conservation Regulations and requirements.

3) Potential Alternative Sites: The applicant submitted information to the County regarding other potential locations and configurations as alternatives to the current request (Attachment D and E). There are few land owners in this area and other locations would require extensive grading to create a new access road. No other property owner in the area expressed interest other than the owner of the parcel which is the subject of this application.

4) Environmental Analysis: Staff is recommending adoption of a Class 3 Categorical Exemption to address CEQA requirements, which is intended to cover small scale structures where no adverse impacts could occur, and a Class 4 Categorical Exemption, which covers small trenching projects that are then covered. In this instance, the project site lies within a previously disturbed area with no nearby inhabited dwellings. Documentation has been submitted with the application stating that no significant adverse impacts would result to biological or

archeological/cultural resources on or adjacent to the project site. The recommended Conditions of Approval contain a provision to preserve undocumented archeological or cultural resources should they be discovered during project construction.

Consistency with County Standards

General Plan Compliance

The proposed project is in compliance with Economic Development Policy E-16, which encourages the expansion of energy and telecommunication services consistent with County Code Chapter 18.119 to all areas of the County where the services are required. Additionally, The project is consistent with Goal CC-1 of the Community Character Element of the General plan, which mandates that the County should "preserve, improve, and provide visual access to the beauty of Napa County." The proposed mono-pole facility is the least visually impactful design possible. This project is also consistent with Policy CC-14 of the Community Character Element as it is designed to be effectively unnoticeable from nearby roadways as demonstrated by the photosimulations provided by the applicant.

AW Zoning District Compliance

The proposed project is consistent with the AW zoning district regulations (18.20.030) which conditionally permits major telecommunication facilities that do not meet one or more of the performance standards established in Section 18.119.200. In this instance, the proposed height of 64 feet exceeds the maximum height of a telecommunication facility that could be administratively approved, which is 35 feet. The proposed application also proposes to install underground wires, which helps mask the tower and lowers fire risk. All other provisions of the AW district are met, including setbacks.

Conservation Regulations Compliance

Chapter 18.108 of the Napa County Code establishes provisions for protection of watercourses, hillside areas, riparian habitat and other natural resources. The proposed AT&T telecommunication facility is setback approximately 350 feet from the nearest blue line stream, well beyond the 40 foot requirement set forth in the Conservation Regulations.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- A . Recommended Findings
- B . Recommended Conditions of Approval
- C . Recommended CEQA Determination
- D . Application Material
- E . Graphics

Napa County Planning Commission: Approve

Reviewed By: Vincent Smith