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Agenda Date: 3/19/2014

Agenda Placement: 8A

Napa County Planning Commission Board Agenda Letter

TO: Napa County Planning Commission

FROM: Charlene Gallina for Pete Parkinson - Interim Director
Planning, Building and Environmental Services

REPORT BY: Charlene Gallina, SUPERVISING PLANNER - 299-1355

SUBJECT: Pacific Union College AT&T Site Use Permit (P14-00045-UP)

RECOMMENDATION

AT&T WIRELESS/PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE—USE PERMIT (#P14-00045-UP)

CEQA Status: Consideration and possible adoption of a Categorical Exemption Class 3. It has been determined that this type of project does not have a significant effect on the environment and is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act. The project will not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern, has no cumulative impact, there is no reasonable possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances, will not result in damage to scenic resources, is not located on a list of hazardous waste sites, cause substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource or extract groundwater in excess of the Phase 1 groundwater extraction standards as set by the Department of Public Works. [See Class 3 (“New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures”) which may be found in the guidelines for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act at 14 CCR §15303; see also Napa County’s Local Procedures for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act, Appendix B.]

REQUEST: Approval to: 1) install twelve (12) panel antennas on a portion of the roof of Graf Hall on the Pacific Union College (PUC) campus, with an approximate maximum size of each antenna being 7.15-ft. in height, 1.3-ft. in width and 11.2-in. in depth; and 2) install twenty-four (24) small RRUs (remote radio units) behind the antennas; and 3) construct a 10-ft’ tall parapet wall along the parapet of the building to screen the antennas and other telecommunication equipment; and 4) connect the facility to the college’s existing emergency power system to provide a 24-hour on-site emergency power supply; and 5) install support equipment for the facility within the existing building below the panel antennas cables including but not limited to electrical panels, air conditioning and similar equipment; and 6) install emergency notification signs on the site. The facility would be located on the third floor of Graf Hall on the PUC campus within the Planned Development: Airport Compatibility (PD:AC) zoning district at 149 La Jota Drive, Angwin CA 94508 (APN 024-410-014).

Staff Recommendation: Find the project Categorically Exempt and approve the Use Permit subject to recommended conditions.

Staff Contacts: Terri Abraham, Planner, (707) 299-1331, terri.abraham@countyofnapa.org; Jerry Haag, staff planning consultant, (510) 644-2106, jphaag@pacbell.net

Applicant Contact: Eric James, Modus, Inc. (415) 350-5418

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proposed Actions:

That the Planning Commission:

1. Find the project Categorically Exempt based on Finding 1 of Exhibit A; and
2. Approve Use Permit #P14-00045 based on Findings 2-5 of Exhibit A, subject to recommended conditions provided in Exhibit B.

Discussion:

The applicant is proposing to construct improvements to AT&T's wireless communication network in the Angwin area which would provide enhanced coverage for PUC students, residents and improved emergency communication service. The site is on the roof of the multi-story Graf Hall building which is occupied by a college dormitory. The proposed panel antennas would be located on the north, west and south edges of the penthouse level of the building. Ground mounted equipment, including an emergency power connection to the college system, air conditioning units, electrical panels and related equipment, would be located within an unused storage area within the building below the antennas. The panel antennas are proposed to be screened by a new 10-foot tall parapet wall along the perimeter of the building in front of the antennas. A condition of approval will require staff approval of the final design, color, placement and material of the parapet.

Existing college roadways and parking areas would be used for construction and maintenance access. Underground electrical power and telephone connections to Graf Hall would be made between overhead poles elsewhere on the campus and the facility, as encouraged by the Napa County Code (Section 18.119.090). The applicant notes that the antennas have been designed to be co-locatable, which means that future carriers could also use the facility, if approved. Staff finds the proposal consistent with the intent of the General Plan and Napa County Code to make all telecommunication facilities "effectively unnoticeable" from adjacent roads and to blend in with the environment.

A Use Permit has been requested for this application since the roof of Graf Hall in this location is 49.5 feet, nearly at the maximum height limit of 50 feet established in the PD district. With the addition of proposed antennas and the 10-foot parapet wall, the top of the structure would be 59-ft. 6-in. Pursuant to Section 18.119.200 of the Napa County Code, exceptions to telecommunication standards require Planning Commission approval of a Use Permit.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Categorically Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, Class 3-New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures. Under Section 15300.2, a Class 3 Exemption (Section 15303) cannot be used if environmental sensitivities exist at the site or if there will be significant cumulative impacts. The proposed project is aimed to improve and enhanced AT&T's wireless communication coverage in the Angwin area. There are no environmental sensitivities, scenic resources, hazardous conditions, nor impacts to protected plant or wildlife resources. Although Graf Hall is an older building (circa 1930's), assessment of the building by an architectural historian has determined it has been remodeled many times during the past years and does not qualify as a historic resource. Therefore, this exemption is appropriate and this proposal meets the requirements of a Class 3 Categorical Exemption.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Owner: Pacific Union College

Applicant: AT&T

Applicant Representative: Eric James, Modus Inc. (415) 350 5418

General Plan Land Use Designation: "Angwin"

Zoning: Planned Development: Airport Compatibility (PD:AC)

Date Filed: September 27, 2013

Date Deemed Complete: January 7, 2014

Number of Employees: None, but periodic visits by maintenance staff

Site Access: From Howell Mountain Road

Emergency Power Supply: Provided as part of Pacific Union College emergency power system

Adjacent Zoning/Land Use:

North

PD:AC – college/vacant (174.80-acre parcel)

South

PD:AC - residential (numerous parcels, approx. 0.4 ac. each)

East

AP – college/undeveloped (221.56-acre parcel)

West

PD-college recreational field/undeveloped(76.79 acres)

Discussion Points:

Visual Impacts from Nearby Roads: The Napa County Code requires telecommunication facilities to be sited so as

to blend in with the surrounding environment to be “effectively unnoticeable.” Photo simulations supplied by the applicant (see Attachment C) demonstrate the proposed antennas, as screened by the proposed parapet walls and due to the site location within the PUC campus, would be effectively unnoticeable from nearby roads. Therefore, the County’s aesthetic standard can be met.

Airport Land Use Compatibility: The site is located within an AC: Airport Compatibility overlay district due to the proximity of Parrett Field. The attached report to the Napa County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) (Attachment D) notes that the proposed telecommunication facility would be located at a lower elevation than surrounding improvements, including a lattice tower located elsewhere on the roof of Graf Hall. Parrett Field is also located in such a manner that the proposed AT&T would not present a hazard to aircraft. The staff’s finding was confirmed by the ALUC on February 5, 2014.

EMF Radiation: The proposed antennas would be located on the roof of a student dormitory, which is an inhabited structure. The applicant submitted a report summarizing the amount of electronic radiation (EMFs) expected to be generated by operation of the telecommunication Facility (see Attachment E). The Napa County Code refers to this as NEIR (Non-Ionizing Electromagnetic Radiation). The EMF/NEIR report was prepared by the firm of Hammett & Edison, a qualified professional engineering firm that has prepared numerous previous reports for other County applications. The report found that operation of the telecommunication facility would generate radiation equal to 5.6 percent of the FCC exposure limit, which would be a worst-case exposure limit. The report does not recommend the imposition of any mitigation measures, although it does recommend that the facility not be in operation during maintenance by AT&T staff. Staff also notes that the issue of public health in terms of operation of telecommunication facilities in terms of EMF/NEIR is subject to strict standards enforced by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC). Each telecommunication facility is licensed by the FCC. Under federal communication law, local agencies are pre-empted from enforcing radiation health requirements.

Potential Alternative Sites: The applicant submitted information to the County regarding other potential locations and configurations as alternatives to the current request. Three (3) alternatives have been identified by the applicant, summarized below. (Attachment F).

- a) Water tanks adjacent to Parrett Field. The applicant explored the possibility of adding 36-ft. whip antennas to existing water tanks adjacent to Parrett Field. This site was rejected due to inadequate coverage.
- b) Existing Verizon Telecommunication Tower. AT&T analyzed adding additional antennas onto an existing 128-foot tall tower at 1 Hillcrest Drive. Due to the presence of existing Verizon antennas, a proposed AT&T antenna would need to be placed lower on the tower and this location would not provide adequate coverage for AT&T customers.
- c) Irwin Hall, located at 146-168 La Jota Drive. Although the height of the building would provide adequate coverage, the design of the building was not suitable to accommodate antennas and the presence of existing poles would conflict with new antennas.

Therefore, the above potential alternative locations were found to be not suitable to meet the needs of AT&T.

Cultural Resource Investigation: A cultural resources investigation was prepared for the proposed project by Archaeological Resources Technology, dated December 17, 2013 to identify any cultural resources and make recommendations regarding the installation of antennae and other cellular equipment. This investigation concluded that there are no historic properties within the direct or indirect Area of Potential Effects (APE) which is comprised of the proposed lease area, trench routes and all ground disturbance for associated power and telco. The results of the field investigation for buried cultural resources were also negative.

Consistency with Standards:

General Plan Compliance - The proposed AT&T facility will be consistent with Economic Development Policy E-16 which supports expansion of telecommunication services. Furthermore, this 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,” since the project proposes to be mounted on the roof top of an existing building behind a proposed 10' high parapet screen wall extension painted and textured to match the existing building. The proposed facility would also be consistent with Policy CC-14 of the Community Character Element, since it is designed to be effectively unnoticeable from nearby roadways as demonstrated by the photo simulations.

PD:AC Zoning District Compliance – With approval of the requested Use Permit, the proposed project would be consistent with the PD zoning district regulations (Section 18.48.030 (G)) which conditionally permits major telecommunication facilities that do not meet one or more of the performance standards established in Section 18.119.200 and that are not wall-mounted antennas. In this instance, the proposed height increase of the antennas at 59.5-feet would exceed the maximum 50-foot height of structures in the PD zone as well as the maximum height of a telecommunication facility that could be administratively approved, which is 50 feet. All other provisions of the PD district are met, including setbacks.

Napa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Compliance - On January 15, 2014, the Napa County Airport Land Use Commission reviewed this proposal and determined the proposed antennas to be consistent with the applicable Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and therefore, consistent with the Airport Compatibility Overlay District as well.

Telecommunication Standards Compliance - Telecommunication facilities in the County are regulated by Chapter 18.119 of the County Code. The proposal, as conditioned will comply with all of the standards set forth in this section, including but not limited to basic tower design, setbacks, identification signs, fire protection and provision of a minimum of 24-hour emergency power supply.

Department/Division Review – The applicant will be required to obtain building permits from the Planning, Building and Environmental Services Department.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- A . Exhibit A - Findings
- B . Exhibit B - Conditions of Approval
- C . Photo Simulations
- D . ALUC Staff Report
- E . EMF (Electromagnetic Field) Analysis
- F . Alternative Analysis
- G . Application Packet
- H . Graphics

Napa County Planning Commission: Approve

Reviewed By: Charlene Gallina