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Agenda Date: 7/6/2011  
Agenda Placement: 8A

## Napa County Planning Commission Board Agenda Letter

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**TO:** Napa County Planning Commission  
**FROM:** John McDowell for Hillary Gitelman - Director  
Conservation, Development & Planning  
**REPORT BY:** John McDowell, Deputy Planning Director - 299-1354  
**SUBJECT:** Napa Verizon Wireless Tower Extension / Silverado Soscol LLC

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **VERIZON WIRELESS/SILVERADO SOSCOL SITE—USE PERMIT #P11-00125-UP**

**CEQA Status:** Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15303 (d) of the CEQA Guidelines as a Class 3 Exemption, construction of new small structures or conversion of small structures.

**REQUEST:** Approval to: (1) Install six panel antennas on top of an existing 136.8' PG&E power line transmission tower, which would increase the tower height to 142.8' above MSL; and (2) place ground-mounted equipment on a 16' by 30' lease area north of the PG&E tower; and (3) construct a 6' tall wooden fence to screen the ground-mounted equipment area; and (4) install both a battery back-up array and a 30KW emergency generator within the fenced lease area; and (5) trenching for installation of underground power and telecommunication lines; and (6) install an unpaved access drive from Anderson Road to the ground-mounted equipment area; and (7) install emergency notification signs on the site. The facility will be located on a portion of a 143.26 acre site east of Anderson Drive, approximately 700 feet south of the intersection of Napa-Vallejo Highway (State Route 221) and Anderson Road, within an Agricultural Watershed:Airport Compatibility (AW:AC) zoning district, Assessor's Parcel 046-400-047 at 400 Anderson Road, Napa CA, 94558

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

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Proposed Action:**

That the Planning Commission:

1. Find the project Categorical Exempt based on Finding 1 of Exhibit A; and
2. Approve Use Permit #P11-00125 based on Findings 2-5 of Exhibit A.

**Discussion:**

The applicant is proposing to construct improvements to Verizon's wireless communication network in the southern portion of Napa County. If approved and constructed, the facility would provide enhanced coverage for Verizon customers in the geographic area generally bounded by State Route 221, the intersection of Highways 21 and 29 and the Napa Valley Corporate Park. The site is currently occupied by a PG&E major power line transmission tower. In September 2005, the Planning Commission approved a Use Permit for Metro PCS to install panel antennas on the same tower as well as a waiver to install a 24-hour on-site emergency power supply. This facility was subsequently constructed. A second application to add antennas on the same tower for T-Mobile was approved in 2007 and subsequently constructed. The proposed Verizon wireless facility would add new antennas on the same PG&E tower, but at a higher elevation on the tower to avoid radio interference with the two existing carriers. Ground mounted equipment, including an emergency power back-up generator, would be located northeast of the tower. A 12-foot wide unpaved access drive would be added between Anderson Road and the ground-mounted equipment. Underground connections would be made between the ground equipment and the tower, as encouraged by the Code. The proposal is consistent with the intent of the General Plan and Napa County Code to co-locate facilities to the fullest extent feasible and to make all telecommunication facilities "effectively unnoticeable" from adjacent roads.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?                      No

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

Categorically Exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, Class 3-New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

**Owner:** Silverado/Soscol LLC

**Applicant:** Verizon Wireless

**Applicant Representative:** Pamela Nobel, NSA Wireless

**General Plan Land Use Designation:** Agricultural Watershed/Open Space

**Zoning:** AW:AC (Agricultural Watershed:Airport Compatibility)

**Date Filed:** March 30, 2011

**Number of Employees:** None, with period visits by maintenance staff

**Ground Mounted Equipment Area:** Four hundred and eighty-feet (480')

**Site Access:** From Anderson Road via a 12-foot wide access easement

**Emergency Power Supply:** Battery-Pack and an Emergency Generator

**Adjacent Zoning/Land Use:**

North

AW:AC—vacant (160-acre parcel)

South

AW:AC-electrical substation/vineyard (5.97-acre parcel)

East

AW:AC-vacant (160-acre parcel)

West

Soscol Road

**Discussion Points**

1) ALUC Consistency: The Napa County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) held a meeting on June 15, 2011 to consider consistency of the proposed project with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. The ALUC staff report for the meeting noted that the project site is located within Napa County Airport Influence C, an Extended Approach and Departure Zone and is approximately 1.42 miles northeast of the Runway Protection Zone. The existing PG&E tower does not extend into FAR Part 77 surfaces and staff notes that even with the proposed 6-foot increase in height, there would not be an inconsistency with the Airport Land Use Plan.

2) Visual Impacts: The Napa County Code requires telecommunication facilities to be sited so as not to silhouette against the sky from a major County ridgeline and that it blends in with the surrounding environment to be "effectively unnoticeable." Photosimulations supplied by the applicant (see Exhibit E) demonstrate the County's aesthetic standard can be met. Proposed Verizon facilities will blend in with the existing PG&E tower, overhead power lines and other approved telecommunication facilities on the tower.

3) Potential Alternative Sites: The applicant notes that the proposed facility was selected due to lack of other existing buildings in the immediate vicinity with sufficient height to accommodate antennas that would provide needed telecommunication coverage. One other alternative to the proposed facility would be to construct a new free-standing monopole or similar facility in lieu of co-locating on the PG&E tower; however, such an alternative would be inconsistent with the Napa County Code that encourages telecommunication facilities to co-locate with similar facilities.

**Consistency with Standards**

Zoning

The proposed project is consistent with the AW zoning district regulations (Section 18.20.030 K) 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 increase of the PG&E tower would exceed the maximum height of a telecommunication facility that could be administratively approved. All other

provisions of the AW district and provisions established for telecommunication facilities are met.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

- A . Exhibit A - Proposed Findings
- B . Exhibit B - Proposed Conditions of Approval
- C . Application Materials
- D . Project Graphics

Napa County Planning Commission: Approve

Reviewed By: John McDowell