



Monterey County Zoning Administrator

Agenda Item No. 1

Legistar File Number: ZA 19-095

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

April 18, 2019

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Current Status: Scheduled AM

Matter Type: Zoning Administrator

PLN180508 - MUSSALLEM (AT&T WIRELESS)

Public hearing to consider Use Permit for a new telecommunications facility on top of existing PG&E lattice power transmission tower increasing the height by 12 feet from approximately 87 feet to 99 feet.

Project Location: 674 Crazy Horse Canyon Road, Salinas (Assessor's Parcel Number 125-291-053-000), North County Area Plan

Proposed CEQA action: Exempt per 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Zoning Administrator:

- a) Find the project in the installation of a new wireless communication facility to an existing PG&E lattice tower, which qualifies as a Class 3 Categorical Exemption per Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines (New Construction or Conversion of Small structures), and there are no exceptions pursuant to Section 15300.2; and
- b) Approve a Use Permit to allow the installation for a new telecommunications facility consisting of twelve panel antennas on top of an existing PG&E lattice power transmission tower increasing the height by 12 feet from (87'-3" feet to 99'-3", with an equipment shelter and back-up generator installed at the base.

The attached resolution includes findings and evidence for consideration (**Exhibit C**). Staff recommends that the Zoning Administrator adopt the resolution approving PLN180508 subject to seven (7) conditions of approval.

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Agent: Tom Johnson, AT&T Wireless

Property Owner: Linda Mussallem

APN: 125-291-053-000

Parcel Size: 583.7 acres

Zoning: PG/40 (Rural Grazing/40-acre minimum)

Plan Area: North County Area Plan (Non-Coastal Advisory Committee)

Flagged and Staked: No

SUMMARY:

The applicant (Tom Johnson), representing AT&T Wireless, is requesting approval of a Use Permit to construct and operate a wireless communication facility at the location of an existing PG&E electrical transmission tower. Installation of the twelve panel antennas and supporting equipment will be mounted on a 12-foot-tall tower extension, which will raise the height of the existing tower from 87'-3" feet to

99'-3".

AT&T's objective in locating a wireless communication facility on this site is to provide improved in-building and in-transit wireless coverage. The proposed facility will provide coverage to the surrounding residential areas, including the agricultural areas that are present within this zone that currently have no AT&T mobile service. Once constructed and operational, the proposed facility will provide 24-hour service to customers seven (7) days a week. Apart from initial construction activity, an AT&T technician will only be servicing the facility periodically. It is reasonable to expect that routine maintenance/inspection of the facility will occur about once a month during working hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Beyond this intermittent service, AT&T requires 24-hour access to the proposed facility to ensure that technical support is immediately available in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.

DISCUSSION

Location:

The property site currently is currently vacant other than existing PG&E electrical transmission towers including above ground power lines extending across a 583.74+ acre(s) lot surrounded by mountainous terrain and open space lands. The proposed AT&T wireless facility will be located at the northwest boundary of the subject parcel lot Access Parcel Number 125-291-053-000 west of Crazy Horse Canyon Road and will include a 900-square foot leased area enclosed by a seven foot high wooden fence.

Co-Location and Site Analysis:

Monterey County Code (MCC) Section 20.64.310 encourages co-location of wireless facilities when possible. PG&E towers are ideal for telecommunications co-locations. They provide the necessary height for optimal antenna placement in areas that generally have maximum height restrictions. Additionally, these towers have a dedicated power source, and often have established access to the site. In this case, the site has currently has a dedicated power source and access via an existing gravel maintenance road.

The Service Coverage Maps have been provided for this project on behalf of the applicant (**Exhibit E**). The Service Coverage Maps illustrate signal strength in the area of the project under existing conditions, and also illustrate signal strength in the area of the project with the proposed facility operational. According to these Service Coverage Maps, the proposed Facility is necessary to close significant service coverage gap areas roughly bounded along Crazy Horse Canyon Road and San Juan Grade Road (**Exhibit E**). According to the applicant's project information and coverage map (**Exhibits D and E**), this new wireless facility will provide coverage to the surrounding residential area which currently has limited AT&T mobile service. Moreover, Monterey County Code (MCC) Section 20.64.310 C.7 dictates that co-location shall be pursued to the maximum extent feasible. This AT&T Mobility wireless facility will be on an existing PG&E transmission tower, pursuant to Monterey County Code (MCC) Section 20.64.310 C.7. Therefore, co-location of this wireless facility on an existing transmission tower complies with the municipal Monterey County Code (MCC) Section 20.64.310.

There are no other existing wireless facilities in the immediate area, and due to the size of this parcel

there were no other alternative sites evaluated since this location makes the most sense from co-location on an existing PG&E lattice tower. Co-locating on this tower eliminates the need for any new tower to be placed on the surrounding property.

Visual Resources and Design:

Monterey County Code (MCC) Section 20.64.310 (H)(b) dictates that co-location is encouraged when it will decrease visual impact and discouraged when it will increase visual impact. Aesthetics and potential visual impacts are a typical concern associated with this type of use due to the heights of towers on which wireless communication antennas are mounted. Further, the height of a wireless communication tower is a function of its use because the effective operation of wireless communication antennas requires such improvements to be installed at relatively high elevations.

The site is relatively flat surrounded by mountainous terrains and open grazing lands. There is no designated public viewing area, environmentally sensitive areas, or resources identified onsite. However, Crazy Horse Canyon is identified as a notable “Scenic Corridor” located 4,510 feet (approximately one mile) east of the proposed project site. The existing corridor is surrounded by several visible existing PG&E transmission towers and overhead distribution lines adjacent along Northbound and Southbound lanes. The proposed project would extend an existing 87’3” PG&E electrical tower an additional 12’ in height resulting in negligible or no visual impact. Therefore, the proposed tower extension would not significantly change or impact existing scenic vistas located along Crazy Horse Canyon. The photo-simulations provided by the applicant (**Exhibit G**) do not portray a significant visual impact to the bulk, design, or the height of the existing tower.

The following table below identifies the land uses immediately surrounding the project site. The project setting can also be seen in the following chart below for this Project Analysis:

Surrounding Land-Uses			
Project Site	Land Use	Zoning	General Plan
North	Single-family unit/Open space	RRD-5	Rural Density
South	Open space	PG-40	Rural Grazing
East	Open space	PG-40	Rural Grazing
West	Open space	PG-40	Rural Grazing

In this instance, twelve panel antennas with related equipment will be mounted on a twelve (12’) foot tall tower extension, which will be installed on an existing eight-seven and three inches (87’-3’’) feet PG&E electrical transmission tower resulting in a ninety-nine and three inches (99’-3’’) foot overall tower height. Additionally, a two-foot diameter microwave dish will be mounted on the subject PG&E electrical transmission tower at 50 feet elevation.

As indicated on the Applicant’s Project Plans (**Exhibit C**); the project is proposing the installation for a new telecommunication facility including a (12-foot-tall tower extension) on top existing PG&E lattice tower. The proposed project complies with the Monterey County General Plan, Rural Grazing Ordinance (PG-40), Wireless Facilities Design Guidelines (Findings), and other development standards and design guidelines.

Radio Frequency

The applicant has submitted a Radio Frequency compliance report prepared by EBI Consulting Engineers on October 22, 2018 (**Exhibit F**). The report finds that the facility will comply with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards for limiting public exposure to radio frequency energy, including the installation of all proper required (FCC) signage and/or barriers. The site is adequate for the proposed development of the wireless communication facility and the applicant has demonstrated that it is the most adequate for the provision of services as required by the (FCC).

CEQA EXEMPTION

The project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15303 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. The project is a small structure, which qualifies for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption per Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines and does not meet any of the exceptions under Section 15300.2. The installation of a new wireless communication facility to an existing PG&E lattice tower. Therefore, the proposed development is consistent with the parameters of this exemption. The technical reports prepared for the project do not identify any potential significant or cumulative impacts, and no evidence of significant adverse environmental effects was identified during staff review of the development application.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The following agencies have reviewed the project, have comments, and/or have recommended conditions:

- Environmental Health Bureau
- RMA-Public Works
- RMA-Environmental Services
- Water Resources Agency
- South County Fire Protection District

LUAC:

The project was referred to the North County Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) for review. The LUAC, at a duly-noticed public meeting on February 6, 2019, voted 5 to 0 to support the project as proposed.

Prepared by: Kenny Taylor, Associate Planner, x5096 *KIT*
Reviewed by: Brandon Swanson, Interim RMA Chief of Planning *BS*
Approved by: John M. Dugan, FAICP, RMA Deputy Director of Land Use and Community Development *JMD*

The following attachments are on file with the RMA:

- Exhibit A - Project Data Sheet
- Exhibit B - Vicinity Map
- Exhibit C - Draft Resolution including:
 - Draft Conditions of Approval

- Project Plans

Exhibit D - Description of Wireless Facility

Exhibit E - Site Coverage Map

Exhibit F - Radio Frequency Report

Exhibit G - Photo Simulations

cc: Front Counter Copy; Zoning Administrator; Craig Spencer, Interim Planning Services Manager, Brandon Swanson, Interim RMA Chief of Planning, ATT&T Wireless, Agent; Tom Johnson, Owner; The Open Monterey Project (Molly Erickson); LandWatch (Executive Director); Project File PLN180508

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