



Monterey County Zoning Administrator

Agenda Item No. 2

Legistar File Number: ZA 18-067

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October 25, 2018

Introduced: 10/15/2018

Version: 1

Current Status: Agenda Ready

Matter Type: ZA

PLN180315 - GONZALEZ ENCARNACION & BENIGNA (AT&T WIRELESS)

Public hearing to consider the installation of a new wireless communications facility co-located on an existing transmission tower that will increase its height from 131 feet to 147.8 feet, and the installation of 12 new antennas and associated radio equipment.

Project Location: 1002 Dolan Road, Moss Landing (131-052-019-000), North County Land Use Plan

Proposed CEQA action: Exempt per Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Zoning Administrator:

- 1) Find 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;
- 2) Approve a Coastal Development Permit to allow increasing the height of an existing steel lattice tower from 131 feet to 147.8 feet, the installation of 12 mounted antennas and associated radio equipment, and the installation of a new equipment shelter at the foot of the tower.

The attached resolution includes findings and evidence for consideration (**Exhibit C**). Staff recommends that the Zoning Administrator adopt the resolution approving PLN180315 subject to seven (7) conditions of approval.

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Planning File Number: PLN180315

Agent: Tom Johnson, AT&T Wireless

Property Owner: Encarnacion & Benigna Gonzalez

APN: 131-052-019-000

Parcel Size: 4.027 acres

Zoning: RDR/5 (CZ) (Rural Density Residential/ 5-acre minimum)

Plan Area: North County Land Use Plan (Coastal)

Flagged and Staked: Photo-simulations provided

SUMMARY:

The applicant, representing AT&T Wireless, is requesting approval of a Coastal Development Permit to allow increasing the height of an existing PG&E transmission tower by approximately 17 feet and installing 12 mounted antennas and associated radio equipment. The antennas will be located on one of two transmission towers on the southern boundary of 1002 Dolan Road behind the property owner's single-family dwelling. The existing transmission tower is on a 4-acre parcel in the Rural

Density Residential district within the Coastal Zone. Given the submitted photo-simulations (**Exhibit F**), the proposed co-location of a wireless facility will not substantially alter the visual impact of the existing steel lattice tower.

DISCUSSION:

Setting:

The proposed co-location of the AT&T wireless facility is in a rural residential area of North County in the Coastal Zone. The parcels bordering the property are zoned Rural Density Residential, and neighboring properties are primarily residences. The property site is currently occupied by a single-family dwelling on approximately 4.027 acres. The existing PG&E transmission towers are located on the south side of the lot, about 325 feet from Dolon Road.

Co-location:

AT&T's objective in locating a wireless communication facility at this site is to provide improved serviceable in-building and in-transit wireless coverage. Monterey County Code (MCC) Section 20.64.310 encourages co-location of wireless facilities when possible. According to the applicant's project description and coverage map (**Exhibits D and E**), this new wireless facility will provide coverage to the surrounding residential area which currently have limited AT&T mobile service. Moreover, 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 MCC 20.64.310 C.7. Therefore, co-location of this wireless facility on an existing transmission tower satisfies the municipal requirements of MCC 20.64.310.

Visual Impact:

Section 2.2 of the North County Area Land Use Plan (Coastal Zone) emphasizes the importance of preserving visual resources in the community. Co-location of a wireless facility rather than building an entire new tower lessens adverse visual impact in the public viewshed. Pursuant to 20.64.310 H.1.b, co-location is encouraged when it will decrease visual impact and discouraged in cases when it will increase visual impact. The photo-simulations provided by the applicant (**Exhibit F**) does not portray a significant visual impact to the bulk, design, or the height of the existing tower. Visually, co-locating the wireless facility with associated radio equipment and antennas to the transmission tower and raising it 17 feet does not significantly alter the existing landscape. There is a pair of transmission towers parallel to Dolon Road a quarter mile north and a quarter mile south of the proposed co-location. From the site plans (**Exhibit C**), the mounted structures are not excessively bulky nor are the antennas greater than five feet in length. Furthermore, 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 Federal Communication (**Exhibit D**). The proposed wireless communication facility also complies with all the applicable requirements of both the Monterey County Code and the North County Area Land Use Plan.

Noise

The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed facility will not create unusual noise or other conditions that may be objectionable, detrimental or incompatible with the surrounding land uses. The proposed equipment associated with the telecommunication structure operates virtually noise free.

Radio Frequency

The applicant has submitted a statement that the proposed facility was evaluated by Hammett & Edison, Consulting Engineers. The report finds that the facility will comply with prevailing Federal Communications Commission (FCC) standards for limiting human exposure to radio frequency energy. AT&T's wireless telecommunications facilities (WTFs) operate at the lowest possible power levels and are well below established standards used by the FCC for safe human exposure to radio frequency electromagnetic fields.

CEQA EXEMPTION

The project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15303 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. This section exempts the construction of small facilities or new structures. Based on staff's review, the project is consistent with this exemption.

Staff recommends the Zoning Administrator approve the project. This recommendation is supported by the detailed discussion provided in the findings and evidence, conditions of approval, and project plans (**Exhibit C**).

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
- North 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 July 18, 2018, voted 5 to 0 to support the project as proposed.

Prepared by: Yasmeen Hussain, Associate Planner, x6407 
Reviewed by: Brandon Swanson, RMA Services Manager 
Approved by: John M. Dugan FAICP, RMA Deputy Director of Land Use and Community Development

The following attachments are on file with the RMA:

- Exhibit A Project Data Sheet
- Exhibit B Vicinity Map
- Exhibit C Draft Resolution, including:
 - Conditions of Approval
 - Site Plans
- Exhibit D Project Description
- Exhibit E Site Coverage Map
- Exhibit F Photo Simulations

cc: Front Counter Copy; Zoning Administrator; Brandon Swanson, RMA Services Manager; Tom Johnson, Agent; Encarnacion and Benigna Gonzalez, Owner; The Open Monterey Project (Molly Erickson); LandWatch (Executive Director); Project File PLN180315