

Exhibit A

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EXHIBIT A DISCUSSION

The Applicant requests approval of a Coastal Development Permit to allow a 10-foot height addition to an existing telecommunications structure (from 23.5 feet to 33.5 feet), and installation of one 6-foot microwave dish and a radio unit. The Monterey County Zoning Ordinance (Title 20), Section 20.62.030.B, allows increases in telecommunications structure height subject to the granting of a Coastal Development Permit. The proposed height increase is needed to ensure adequate separation to avoid signal interference between the existing antennas and the new 6-foot microwave dish. The only potential issue is related to possible visual impacts to the Highway 1 and Point Lobos viewshed.

Setting

The 27.74-acre parcel is vacant except for the existing wireless communications facility. The existing facility was originally approved by Coastal Commission permit number 87-33 and County planning file number PC05990. A Negative Declaration was adopted by subsequent permit approved by the County (PC07182). The facility is a co-location site housing facilities for several wireless carriers. The existing heights of the antenna towers on the site were approved under RMA-Planning File Nos. PLN080442 (23.5 feet) and PLN090271 (40 feet). After installation of the 10-foot tower extension, the 33.5-foot height would still be 6.5 feet lower than the adjacent tower. The surrounding area contains limited residential development on large parcels, or parcels dedicated to open space or resource conservation (i.e., parks).

Visual Resources

The Visual Resource policies of the Carmel Area Land Use Plan (LUP) are designed to protect the public viewshed, which is defined as areas visible from major public use areas including Highway One and Point Lobos State Reserve (LUP Map A, General Viewshed). The project, as proposed and conditioned, is consistent with policies of the LUP dealing with visual resources, will have no adverse impact on this highly sensitive viewshed, and will not result in ridgeline development. The existing facility is well screened from Highway 1 and Point Lobos by trees, vegetation, topography, and distance. In addition, the proposed dark green color of the structure extension and microwave dish would blend with the surrounding trees and vegetation. Based on staff's analysis, the project would not result in an adverse visual impact to the viewshed.

The project was referred to the Carmel Highlands Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) for review. The LUAC, at a duly-noticed public meeting on July 5, 2016, voted 3-0-1 (3 yes; 1 abstention) to support the project as proposed.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Zoning Administrator find the project categorically exempt per Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines, and approve a Coastal Development Permit and Design Approval to allow a 10-foot height addition, and installation of a microwave dish and a radio unit to an existing telecommunications structure, based on the findings and evidence and subject to twelve (12) conditions of approval.

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