

RPC
12/9/15
ITEM #6

Dear Commissioner Chair Pat Modugno,

Re: Project No. R2014-02389-(4)
Conditional Use Permit 201400111

The above mentioned item is a request to authorize the construction and maintenance of a 50-foot high unmanned mono-eucalyptus wireless telecommunications facility at 2356 Fullerton Road, Rowland Heights.

I am writing on behalf of the residents of Rowland Heights and we are in opposition of the proposed construction. We would like to request that the developer construct their tower on an alternate site which is not as close to residential homes as the current conditional use permit would allow. I am the resident who led the outreach to our community and obtained the live signatures presented to staff. I would like to also note the majority of the residents in our neighborhood do not speak English. All but 2 of the signatures I received from residents were aware of the proposed cell tower plans. Every single resident I spoke to was in objection to the planned construction.

On August 3, 2015 Rowland Heights Community Coordinating Council Vice President Deborah Enos and I met with Zoning Manager Ross Miletich to discuss if there was a willingness from Core Development Services to consider alternate locations, to consider co-locating towers, or to consider replacing or improving existing cell towers in the area. The Zoning Manager indicated they would not consider any alternatives regardless of community opposition to the project because they found a somewhat suitable location and the property owner was willing to lease the property. The only objection the Zoning Manager provided as a reason for not considering our alternatives was purely financial in nature and not at all based on what is best for the community.

Zoning Manager explained on August 3rd that the proposed site for the CUP is not the ideal location because it would not provide the best coverage for the need, but Core Development Services was not willing to pay the lease price requested by Carolyn Rosas LA County Park (Candidate 1).

Core was also not willing to consider co-locating antennas or improving/replacing the Monopalm located at (Candidate Site 2) because adding more antennas would make it look less like a palm tree (current CUP provides authenticity mandates per Zoning Manager). Additionally, Verizon is not willing to pay to enhance/replace an already existing cell tower they own with a tower that is more capable of meeting the demands of the surrounding areas because it is more expensive. This tower is across the street from the newly proposed cell tower and owned by Core Development Services.

Candidate 5 Gloria Heer Park: Zoning Manager indicated this site would be ideal but the lease price was much higher than what the gas station is asking and what Core or Verizon is willing to pay.

Candidate 6, This site will place the tower amid single family residences which is the reason for Core's objection to this site. The current proposed site is amid single family residences. The resident of our community do not understand the difference between our residences and the residences located on Batson.

Our area is currently surrounded by cell towers, several of which are owned by Verizon. When looking at the heat map provided by Verizon, there are two towers on either side of the proposed tower which according to the Zoning Manager are outdated and not powerful enough to provide enough reach for the need. We asked if they could enhance, improve or replace those towers and the answer was no. The reason per the Zoning Manager was that it would cost much more money to replace existing towers than to just build a new one. He also reminded us that they didn't need to exhaust other alternatives because they already had located available land and had a willing lessor.

The residents in our neighborhood ask that Regional Planning require Verizon and Core Development Services to locate their cell tower in an area away from residential homes. We request that Verizon and other telecommunications companies be required to improve their existing equipment or co-locate antennas and not be allowed to make decisions purely based on lease rates and how their profit margins are impacted. There are alternative options that come at a slight premium and Verizon (worth 202.5 billion) and their contracted land acquisition company is not interested in being more flexible. Additionally, Verizon has no intentions of removing old and outdated towers according to the Zoning Manager. The residents of Rowland Heights would like an explanation as to why outdated towers aren't being updated or replaced and why it is allowable for telecommunication companies to continue constructing new towers. We respectfully request that staff put a stop to this.

Thank you,

Michelle Nicolaus

Additional Notes:

Page 21 of the Officer Packet States:

GALATINA | Burden of Proof

A.

The proposed wireless facility will be designed and meet all health and safety regulations and standards. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has set safe operating standards that all wireless carriers must abide by and Verizon Wireless telecommunications facilities always operate well below the allowed levels of emissions. Therefore the community's health will not be at risk due to the operation of the proposed WTF. Rather than endangering the community, the wireless project will improve telecommunications in the area and will thus afford Verizon Wireless users improved wireless uses, which is particularly beneficial when residents need to call for help in emergency situations. Additionally, the improved wireless coverage and capacity that the project will produce may pose as a draw for residents to live in the area and may thus improve the value of the positively affected properties.

Survey article to claim the contrary:

A 2014 survey circulated online by the National Institute for Science, Law and Public Policy into public attitudes toward cell towers found that 79 percent of respondents would never purchase or rent a property within a few blocks of a cell tower or antennas. Our homes will be closer than a few blocks from the tower (within 400 feet). 94% of respondents reported that cell towers and antennas in a neighborhood or on a building would impact interest in a property and the price they would be willing to pay for it. We understand this information is considered subjective but would like to include an objection to Verizon's claim the cell tower will pose as a draw for residents to live in the area.

Michele Bush

From: Debbie Enos RH [debbie.rhccc@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, December 09, 2015 12:53 AM
To: Michele Bush
Cc: Rosie Ruiz; Ted Ebenkamp; Angie Valenzuela; Nicolaus, Michelle
Subject: Re: R2014-02389-(4) RHCCC Appeal Letter

Public Comment for December 9th Planning Commission Meeting; Item 6 to be read and entered into the official meeting record.

Dear Commissioners,

In reviewing the RCP package for the hearing on R2014-02389-(4) (Agenda Item 6, December 9, 2015 meeting) it was very disappointing to see a recommendation for approval despite the insufficiencies of the applicant's submitted documents and the project's inconsistencies with Rowland Heights Community Plan and Standards as objectively detailed in the addendum to RHCCC's opposition letter dated October 21, 2015.

RHCCC understands the Commissioners will independently weigh the provided project documentation and previously submitted opposition letters, emails, and petition and can deny the project based on both the submitted documentation and further testimony given on the day of the hearing. In support of that end, it is requested that this email be read and entered into the formal record of the hearing. RHCCC further respectfully requests the Commissioners give their full consideration to RHCCC's objections raised in the opposition letter and vote to deny the project as currently proposed.

If the Commission, decides against the Community and moves to approve the project as is, then RHCCC respectfully requests the Commission to consider and add, as a condition of approval, mitigation requirements upon the Applicant to bring the project into compliance with the intent of Rowland Heights Community Plan, Standards and the requirements set forth in LA County Policy No. 01-2010 Wireless Telecommunication Facilities by: 1. require the under-grounding of the equipment; 2. require site and climate adaptive landscaping to beautify the public ROW and further conceal/integrate the above ground portion of the WTC into the site; and 3. require Applicant to work with RHCCC and community to identify an acceptable site and community appropriate camouflage treatment other than the proposed visually intrusive mono-eucalyptus shrouding.

RHCCC submits the above would serve the greater good of the community and demonstrate that the CUP process is not unfairly weighted in favor of commercial interests over the interests of our residents and the character of our community. The Community Standards District and Community Plan help guide development of our community in a consistent and aesthetically in-character manner. Both of which have been sadly lacking over the last couple of decades of CUP approvals and inconsistent code enforcement. As a result the character of our community has been negatively impacted. RHCCC seeks to reverse this unfortunate trend by standing for and moving to strengthen our Community Plan and Standards, and the will of our residents when and where appropriate.

RHCCC therefore asks for your support and ruling in favor of our Community Plan, Community Standards and take a positive step toward restoring our Community's character by denying this project as proposed or, at the very least, require the applicant to implement the additional mitigation measures suggested as a requirement of approval.

Thank you in advance for the Commission's thoughtful and thorough consideration of this item and your support for the betterment of Rowland Heights.

Sincerely,
Debbie Enos
First VP, RHCCC