

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

RECORD OF ACTIONS

May 28, 2009

A. Call to Order 9:00 a.m.

Board members present: David Brown, Carol Bell, Sandy Diefenbach, Merle Watson, Karl Ulle and Cathrine Laguna.

Board members absent: Rob James

Staff present: Rozanne Cherry

B. Record of Actions from the May 14, 2009 meeting:

MOTION: Moved by C. Laguna, seconded by S. Diefenbach, to approve the minutes.

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0-0

C. Oral and Written Communications: Item E.3 was withdrawn

D. Consent Calendar: None

E. Individual Case Review:

1. ENV 09-0003 Reconstruction of Lift Station No. 4 to include new perimeter block walls and entry gate, and new masonry equipment/electrical building, located at 1750 W. El Norte Parkway. Zoning: R-1-7.

Applicant: Nelson Nuezca, City of Escondido Utilities

Planner: Jay Paul

Staff described the project which would relocate the equipment and new equipment building, add underground storage tanks, build a six- to ten-foot high combination retaining/screen block wall around the perimeter of the site to protect adjacent neighbors' walls and fences, add a new metal entry gate, and reconstruct the driveway. Staff recommended approval with the addition of a decorative wall cap and pilasters at each site of the new gate and along the wall fronting El Norte Parkway.

Board member Ulle expressed concern that building a wall against an existing wall could create a space that could collect trash and debris. The applicant stated they were looking at filling the lower portion of the gap with dirt. The interior block wall would protect the station and staff from the neighbors' deteriorated walls and fences falling into the site. Board member Ulle stated that with the addition of pilasters, the project would meet his approval.

Board member Diefenbach clarified the project would only fill in between the walls and not between the walls and fences. Board member Watson questioned the landscaping plans. Staff noted the project proposed concrete from the back of the sidewalk to the site wall because there was no existing irrigation, maintenance district or HOA anywhere nearby.

Chairman Brown clarified that, of the existing wooden light poles, one would be removed and one would be relocated to the southeast corner.

Board member Ulle suggested wire netting with small holes to cover the top of the gap between the walls to keep out animals and trash, but noted it would require maintenance. Board member Watson also noted that the netting would deteriorate over time and suggested the general use of good housekeeping practices.

MOTION: Moved by K. Ulle, seconded by M. Watson, to approve staff recommendations.

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0-0

2. PHG 09-0008, Wireless Communication Facility consisting of three panel antennas mounted onto a faux broadleaf tree, 25005 N. Centre City Parkway, Zoned RE-80

Applicant: Franklin Orozco for Cricket Communication, c/o Meridian Telecom, 4031 Sorrento Valley Road, San Diego, CA 92121

Planner: Jay Paul

Staff described the proposal for a faux broadleaf tree, 25' high, with 3 panels mounted in close proximity to the trunk. Staff expressed concern the faux tree might draw attention to itself as there were no other full size trees on the site, and recommended the applicant plant 2-3 full size trees with the faux tree to provide the appropriate context. The project also included 2 equipment cabinets with a 6' block wall surrounding them. The applicant would need to mitigate for sage scrub removal and would need to supply a water tank for irrigation. After reviewing alternatives, staff felt this faux tree design was the most appropriate design for the site.

Vice chair Bell was not in favor of the project because she felt the faux tree would stick out among the natural trees. Board member Diefenbach felt the faux tree would blend in satisfactorily with the natural trees. Board member Watson stated that faux trees, when installed, never looked like the exhibit samples and simulations. He expressed concern for how the natural and faux trees would blend together when the faux tree would be so much larger. In general, he felt that maintaining landscaping seemed to be a low priority for wireless companies.

Board member Laguna asked about the possibility of future towers at this same site. Staff stated that another carrier was proposing one additional facility on the site, which would consist of the older "popsicle stick" type design. Board member Laguna asked if the height could be reduced. The applicant stated the current proposal was designed to serve the I-15 corridor. There was a chance they could combine with T-Mobile on one tree if the separation worked, but the tree would have to be taller than 25'. Staff stated that co-location would require a taller tree with larger antennas arrays, which would make the facility much more visible.

Board member Watson confirmed the height of the existing faux water tower to be approximately 30'. Staff explained that it might not be feasible to put the antenna in the frontage road right-of-way since the topography of the site might block coverage to the east.

Board member Ulle agreed with staff that the concept of a lower profile, smaller facility would be better at hiding the equipment than a larger, taller tower. Chairman Brown commented that

he would rather the facility were not there but since it is, adding another facility would not make it much worse.

Vice chair Bell stated this project did not provide any samples or simulations of the proposed style of the faux tree.

MOTION: Moved by M. Watson, seconded by K. Ulle, to approve the concept but requiring the tree specifications and details to come back to DRB with photos of similar faux trees and the natural trees that are proposed.

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0-0

3. withdrawn

F. Current Business: None

G. Oral Communications: None

H. Board Member Discussion: Board member Diefenbach stated that it appeared that green slating was being used to screen the metal hoods at the Police and Fire Administration Building. Was there to be a cap on top of the wall between the building and the parking lot? Staff agreed to check with Bill Martin.

I. Recessed to tour at 9:47 a.m.. Reconvened at 432 W. 7th Avenue at 10:00 a.m. with D. Brown, C. Bell, S. Diefenbach, M. Watson, K. Ulle, C. Laguna of the Board, Mrs. Watson of the public, Ben Cueva, property owner, and Darren Parker and R. Cherry from the City present. The group toured three buildings and discussed the construction process and problems that occurred along the way.

J. Adjournment at 10:50 a.m. to the next regularly scheduled Design Review Board meeting on Thursday, June 11, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. in Training Room #1 at City Hall, 201 North Broadway.

David Brown, Chairman
of the Design Review Board

Rozanne Cherry, Secretary
of the Design Review Board