

**CITY OF ESCONDIDO**

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
ESCONDIDO PLANNING COMMISSION**

**September 13, 2011**

The meeting of the Escondido Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Caster, in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.

**Commissioners present:** Darol Caster, Chairman; Jack Campbell, Vice-chairman; Edward Lehman, Commissioner; Guy Winton, Commissioner; Bob McQuead, Commissioner; and Jeffery Weber, Commissioner.

**Commissioners absent:** Don Yerkes, Commissioner;

**Staff present:** Bill Martin, Principal Planner; Jay Paul, Associate Planner; Homi Namdari, Assistant City Engineer; Corrine Neuffer, Deputy City Attorney; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

**MINUTES:**

Moved by Commissioner Lehman, seconded by Commissioner Weber, to approve the minutes of the August 23, 2011, meeting. Motion carried. Ayes: Caster, Campbell, Lehman, and Weber. Noes: None. Abstained: Winton and McQuead. (4-0-2)

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS** – Received.

**FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS** – None.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** – None.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**1. MODIFICATION TO A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 11-0029:**

**REQUEST:** A modification to a previously approved Conditional Use Permit for AT&T to replace the existing wireless communication antenna panels located on an existing, approximately 62-foot-high lattice tower with twelve, eight-foot-high panel antennas.

**PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION:** The property generally is located south of Hubbard Avenue, west of Conway Drive, addressed as 1225 Hubbard Avenue (APN 227-430-25 and -06).

Jay Paul, Associate Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff had not identified any issues with the request. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The proposed facility would be consistent with the Communication Antennas Ordinance since the new panel antennas and support radio equipment would be mounted onto an existing communications antenna. The existing panel antennas would be removed and the number of new panels were limited and would be installed on an existing antenna array to be in scale with the lattice tower. Any new support equipment cabinets would be placed within an existing equipment building. The facility (as conditioned) would be consistent with the Wireless Facility Guidelines since it would not result in any adverse visual impacts; is located on a non-residential site in a residential zone; would use an existing facility to mount the panels rather than construction of an additional structure; and would be in conformance with FCC emission standards; and 2) Staff felt the proposed facility would not result in a potential health hazards to nearby residents since the Radio Frequency (RF) study prepared for the proposed project indicates the facility would be within maximum permissible exposure (MPE) limits and Federal Communication Commission (FCC) standards. The proposed project also would not result in an increase in RF emissions previously approved for the site.

Commissioner Campbell asked if the power at the AT&T cellular facilities went out during the recent county-wide power outage. Mr. Paul noted that his understanding was that each facility had battery backup power.

**Mark Phillips, San Diego, representing AT&T**, noted that the sites have battery back-up power which lasts approximately 6 hours. He also stated that the sites had adapters for generators in case the power was out for longer periods of time.

Chairman Caster noted that an article in the paper stated that AT&T was without power for up to 6 hours.

Commissioner Weber asked Mr. Phillips if he knew how many generators AT&T had for their sites. Mr. Phillips noted that he did not have this information. Commissioner Weber suggested Mr. Phillips report back to the carrier that there were problems with coverage during the recent power outage.

**Ryan Hart, Escondido**, read a letter into the record dated September 12, 2011 that he wrote with Karen Betz. He stated that he felt the proposed modification to the Conditional Use Permit was not in conformance with Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act. He felt replacing one tower with twelve was a significant modification and represented a material expansion of the subject facility. He noted that they were concerned with the negative health impacts the project could have on those who lived in the area as well as having a negative impact on the property values. In conclusion, he requested that the project be

required to comply with CEQA requirements and that the Commission deny the CUP.

**Karen Betz, Escondido**, expressed her view that the proposed modification did not comply with the requirements of the CUP. She felt the expansion created environmental concerns for the residents and individuals attending church in the area. She asked that the Commission deny the CUP and that the project be subject to the requirements of CEQA.

Chairman Caster explained that currently the site was approved for 12 antennas, noting the site had nine and was requesting a substitution of antennas up to the amount originally approved.

Commissioner Winton noted that the City was prohibited from denying the project based on health-related concerns if the facility complied with FCC radio frequency standards and limitations.

**ACTION:**

Moved by Commissioner Winton, seconded by Commissioner McQuead, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0)

**2. MODIFICATION TO A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 11-0013:**

**REQUEST:** A modification to a previously approved Conditional Use Permit for AT&T to replace the existing wireless communication antenna panels located on an existing, approximately 35-foot-high simulated tree with eight new panel antennas.

**PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION:** The approximately 60-acre property generally is located north of El Norte Parkway, east of La Honda Drive, addressed as 2365 and 2355 East Lincoln Avenue (APN 225-041-09 and -03) (known as Henry Avocado Ranch).

Jay Paul, Associate Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff had not identified any issues with this request. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The proposed project would be consistent with the Communication Antennas Ordinance since the antenna panels would be located onto an existing simulated tree that was designed to accommodate wireless facilities and was a stealthy design that blended in with the surrounding environment; the facility was located on a large agricultural site in a residential zone; the facility was in conformance with the height requirements for the residential zone; any additional support equipment would be placed within an

existing building that was screened from public view; and the facility would be in conformance with FCC emission standards; and 2) Staff felt the proposed facility would not result in potential health hazards to nearby residents since the Radio Frequency (RF) study prepared for the proposed project indicated the facility would be within maximum permissible exposure (MPE) limits and Federal Communication Commission (FCC) standards.

Discussion ensued regarding a clarification of the zoning and residential use for the small parcel that appeared to be landlocked within the 60-acre parcel as shown on the location map.

**ACTION:**

Moved by Commissioner Winton, seconded by Commissioner Weber, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0)

**3. MODIFICATION TO MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN – PHG 11-0023:**

REQUEST: A Modification to the Master Development Plan for ARCO La Terraza (90-47-PD) to modify and increase the size of the existing ARCO monument signs to accommodate brand and price signage for the Propel alternative fuel site recently approved to collocate on the ARCO property.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: The 0.85-acre ARCO La Terraza site is located on the southeastern corner of the intersection of West Valley Parkway and La Terraza Boulevard, addressed as 100 La Terraza Boulevard.

Bill Martin, Principal Planner, referenced the staff report and the background history for the project and recommended approval of the modification to the Master Development Plan.

**Danny Ramirez, Young Electric Sign Company**, noted he was available for questions.

Commissioner Weber asked if the sight distance had been taken into consideration looking west on Valley Parkway. Mr. Ramirez noted that the sign was actually being moved closer the building.

**ACTION:**

Moved by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Lehman, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0)

**CURRENT BUSINESS:** None.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**PLANNING COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner Campbell referenced the written communication dated September 9, 2011, from Patty Simpson regarding Calvin Christian High School's stadium lighting. He asked what the options were for the Commission. Mr. Martin noted that the Commission could request an agenda item to discuss the issue and could at that time consider holding a future public hearing.

Commissioner McQuead asked if staff could keep the Commission updated on the status of the code enforcement.

Commissioner Weber referenced the letter and felt the church owed a duty to be a good neighbor.

Mrs. Neuffer recommended the Commission direct staff to schedule a discussion item for a future agenda if they wanted to discuss this issue further. The Commission requested staff to provide an update in one month.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Chairman Caster adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for September 27, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.

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Bill Martin, Secretary to the Escondido  
Planning Commissioner

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Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk