

June 30, 2019

Mendocino County Planning Commission  
Mendocino Department of Planning and Building  
860 North Bush St.  
Ukiah, CA 95482

RE: Proposed Cell Tower in Potter Valley (U 2017-0038, Continued from May 16, 2019)

Dear Commissioners,

Every day most of us drive by cell phone towers. They stick out, tall, metal, and sometimes obtrusive. We see them attached to church steeples or signs, or just on large towers. Even so, we have come to take cell service and internet for granted—we expect it. We have even become to some degree reliant on it.

Before you is the question of whether to approve the cell tower north of Potter Valley, along the Eel River. This several mile long canyon area stretching from Lake Pillsbury west to Van Arsdale lies cut off from any cell service, due to its topography. Even though hundreds of people reside there and thousands pass thru there on their way to Lake Pillsbury, there is simply no cell service in this area; no means to call for help or receive emergency alerts; no means to stay connected like the rest of the world because there's no reasonable internet available.

The proposed tower before you today is unique though—it would be hidden in the middle of a forest. Even though there are homes within ¼ mile of the site, none of the properties nearby would be aware of its presence simply because the tower will be surrounded by forest. It is true that folks quite some distance from the tower may be able to see the tip of the tower, but that is entirely different from almost every other tower you and I pass by on a regular basis. This proposed tower is in the optimum, best case scenario location—hidden in the middle of a forest with only a small tip exposed. And even greater—that small tip is only visible from properties quite a distance away. No nearby residents will be able to see the tower! Even the closest property has more than 150 yards of dense forest between it and the tower.

Please approve this site, as it not only gives residents proper internet and cell service, but provides *negligible* visual impacts!!! This IS the optimum location for a tower—in terms of service AND aesthetics!

According to the Telecom Act of 1996, a new tower cannot be denied if it alleviates a wireless gap and is the least intrusive option. Other site options would be potentially intrusive visually. This IS the least intrusive option! Furthermore, for some reason if you were to deny this permit, it seems AT&T would have no option but to abandon this tower, leaving us forever stuck in the dark. Please, please realize that no objective argument has been raised to suggest this is not an appropriate site for a cell tower.

We beg you, allow us to stop being cut off from the world in this dark canyon area of Van Arsdale north of Potter Valley—for the sake of cell and internet use AND for safety.

Thank you respectfully for your consideration,

Hal Pauli

President of the Board of Directors, Hartstone Bible Camp

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