

Re: Case # U_2019_0011, Property Owner Bette Nixon, Project Applicant AT&T

APR 15 2020

Dear Planning Commissioners and Staff,

Planning & Building Services

The following quote is the Mission Statement of our Board of Supervisors:

“The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors’ mission is to create and maintain a responsive and responsible government that enhances the quality of life of the people of Mendocino County. The County’s mission is to deliver services that meet: Public safety, health, social, cultural, education, transportation, economic, and environmental needs of our communities”.

First, I am requesting that this planned meeting be postponed until the people of Mendocino County can attend and participate in an “actual” Public Meeting. Too many of our civil rights continue to disappear. Please do not erode the rights of our community residents.

Secondly, I am requesting that you reject this proposed tower project. Throughout the Draft Negative Declaration, it is stated in all categories that there is “No Impact, or Less Than Significant Impact.” Under **Biological Resources**, all categories a) through f) state “No Impact.” The public, planners, and supervisors cannot conclude that there will be no impacts of note to any species habitat, riparian habitat, wetlands, etc. without a specific study which also names and studies the species of plants and wildlife, including migratory species. In addition to the disruptive effect on the species through construction, road widening, etc., it has been widely scientifically documented that radio frequency radiation (RF) and microwave radiation have substantial negative effects on animals, birds, fish, and insects (including bees and butterflies). I am requesting that the County authorize a comprehensive biological and botanical field study to be completed and publicly available prior to any further ground-breaking activities. (I say “further”, as I understand that that some work has already begun before the public hearing.) I also oppose having cell towers in areas zoned as Rangeland (RL), regarding the welfare of the horses and other present or future range animals. I am also concerned about the negative effects to any farm projects, including the growing of food and vegetables. I saw no mention of this in the Negative Declaration. Any applications for towers should also take Residential zoning and population density into consideration.

This project has so many significant environmental impacts, that I am requesting that an Environmental Impact Report is completed to address them in detail.

Regarding the proposed tower facility site, on Page 6 of the **Planning Commission Staff Report for Major Use Permit states: “MCC Section 20.196.020 (C)** That such use will not under the circumstances of that particular case, constitute a nuisance or be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort or general welfare of persons residing or working in or passing through the neighborhood of such proposed use, or be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the county; provided, that if any proposed building or use is necessary for the public health, safety or general welfare, the finding shall be to that effect; The proposed wireless communication facility will not constitute

a public nuisance or be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort or general welfare of persons residing or working in the area of the proposed use if constructed in conformance with the recommended Conditions of Approval.” I fail to understand why it is stated above that this will not impact public health, safety or general welfare without very detailed studies specific to the proposed site.

The Staff Report includes Attachment R (Waterford Radio Frequency Emissions Compliance Report For AT&T Mobility. It states: “The proposed operation will not expose members of the General Public to hazardous levels of RF energy and will not contribute to existing cumulative MPE levels on walkable surfaces at ground or in adjacent buildings by 5% of the General Population limits”. And later states: Based on the computational guidelines set forth in FCC OET Bulletin 65, Waterford Consultants, LLC has developed software to predict the overall Maximum Permissible Exposure possible at any location given the spatial orientation and operating parameters of multiple RF sources”. I do not see any references in this report that discuss the ever-varying levels of RF emissions due to the frequent changes in weather patterns. Where were these tests completed? In a mountainous or flat zone? What time of year? I mention this because my home is near a ridgeline about 2,500 feet above sea level, and is in the line of sight of a cell tower approximately 1.5 miles away. I have Electromagnetic Sensitivity, and I experience greatly increased negative health symptoms on overcast and foggy days. I just called a friend who lives on Pine Mountain to ask if there is ever fog there. She said, “Generally there are frequent foggy mornings or days from Fall to Spring.” I am requesting that the County produce reports that include findings of Radio Frequency Emissions at all proposed cell tower sites and all existing sites in Mendocino County during various different weather patterns, including overcast, rainy, and foggy days. If I am affected 1.5 miles away, we can be sure that negative health effects will occur for residents of Pine Mountain, many of whom are living only a number of feet away. I see no reference to the cumulative effects from RF Emissions, from existing and the other proposed cell towers. I have heard that there are towers proposed for Timber Road and the Hearst Road areas in Willits. Please provide comprehensive studies on the cumulative effects of all towers in Mendocino County before any more damage is done.

The Draft Negative Declaration states that “The nearest existing or proposed school is located approximately 4.6 miles northwest of the project site. The Applicant has demonstrated conformance with EMF standards. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact from emissions as a result of implementing the proposed project”. Is this referring to Federal standards based on EMF emissions of over 2 decades ago, which does not demonstrate the effects on women, children, fetuses or even the average sized man? Federal standards are outdated for assessment of a significant or “a less than significant impact” from emissions in today’s world. I understand the report refers to the Willits Charter School. I ask why this is even mentioned, if there is no future concern for the health and welfare of the attending children? Does this perhaps infer some acknowledgement that emissions from cell towers can be detrimental to the health of children? I wish to add that most Willits schools are also within close range of the Charter School. For example, Baechtel Grove Middle School is only a further 0.5 miles from the Charter School, per Google directions, (therefore less than 0.5 miles as the

crow flies). Children are at high risk from detrimental EMF exposure. The term “Less than significant impact” in itself infers that therefore there will be some impact. What will be the impact to the children who currently live within a number of feet from the cell tower facility site? Has anyone already actually studied the levels of RF Radiation at any of the school sites, while they are in session?

Attachments N and Q of the staff report show drawings/plans of the proposed tower facility which state “Future Microwave” and include a drawing of a microwave dish. This is a terrifying concept to many of us who have looked into side effects, and/or live with side effects. After the 4G, comes 5G which, AT&T Mobility and their partners can add at any time when it may be lucrative for them to do so. I am hereby requesting that the County Planners provide further information to the public regarding the specific distance(s) that the radiation from a future microwave dish will reach. I have heard 6.2 miles. If this is so, could this not affect all of the schools within the City of Willits? I request that our County administrators do no harm. For those who are sensitive to Electromagnetic Frequencies (EMF), symptoms include headaches, nausea, light headedness, dizziness, loss of balance, brain fog, short-term memory loss, heart palpitations, cardiac issues including heart attacks, and cancer, etc. Children are particularly affected more than adults. The younger and smaller they are, the more vulnerable. For them, for persons with compromised immune systems, and others, it can be extremely debilitating and even fatal. How much will the RF emissions from the proposed cell Tower impact fragile patients at Howard Hospital? Will the County or the telecommunications agencies fund safe spaces for the EMF sensitive in our hospitals? In Britain, Gatwick Airport has recently added EMF safe zones. Who will be sued or liable for the wrongful injury or death, and loss of ability to live a normal healthy, life and to work? For those having heart problems due to EMF, and subsequently being treated in a hospital where the EMF levels are already high, having no precautionary safe measures in place may be a fatal.

I understand that due to Federal guidelines, the County is not required to review, or should ignore potential health effects of cell towers, antennae and potential future enhancements such as microwave dishes. However, Mendocino County signed its Precautionary Principle Policy which states: “There is a duty to take anticipatory action to prevent harm”. I ask that you follow this path and do no harm.

By following this current trend of cell tower proliferation, endorsing those projects, and allowing the telecommunications agencies to then add whatever enhancements they choose without further public hearings, the County is literally choosing between life and death, and a whole range of medical expenses, pain and suffering in between. Just like Covid-19 it can affect anyone. For those already affected by EMF, this is truly a matter of life and death. Please make informed choices. I believe that if there was a scenario where Federal guidelines stated that County Officials could injure a particular group of our county residents, that you would likely make your best efforts to seek a remedy in order to do no harm to the public. I ask sincerely that you give the same serious consideration to the very unsafe projects that are before us.

To increase the speed and availability of internet and changing needs of our County, please approve only fiber-optic cables, and/or other safer alternatives before increasing electromagnetic pollution from the many existing and proposed tower projects. The cost of peoples' lives is not worth any potential financial and technological gains. Many of us moved from cities to Mendocino County to live a peaceful, rural, and healthy country life. Many residents and property owners are satisfied with the internet access they already have. These dangerous projects should not be forced upon us.

This tower project is in a **"Very High Fire Hazard"** Zone. Adding any additional fire hazards to our very vulnerable county is extremely concerning. Many of us are working very hard to create defensible space and home hardening around our rural homes. Unfortunately, there is an expensive and ongoing need for us to attempt to be safe from the threat of fires. I appreciate all of the work that has been done and continues to be done by Supervisor John Haschak, and Sherwood Firewise to improve the safety of the Sherwood Corridor. The Redwood Complex fires of 2017, which also impacted Pine Mountain, were a wake-up call to many of us. With Climate Change bringing unpredictably high winds, fires spread at rapid speed. Adding cell towers, and fuel storage in very high fire hazard zones seems unfathomable. Please review safer options to provide high-speed internet. Also, some cell towers failed during the 2017 fires. I rely on my landline for safety messages. During the PGE shut-off in 2019, some cell towers again failed. For many, the only means of communication were our landlines.

Available grant money for these projects are not a fair or lucrative trade for the numbers of people who will become ill and die prematurely from the harmful effects caused by such an onslaught of radio frequency (RF) and microwave radiation from such levels not tested for safety. FCC documented health concerns are antiquated, pre-smart phones, and before high-speed internet. Many people get headaches and other symptoms from over exposure when using cell phones and streaming live shows. DVDs, for example, (which I and many Willits residents choose to use) are so much safer. Technology is progressing fast and the necessary research and testing for health effects by our government is not staying current. Every increase in exposure has a cumulative effect on our health.

Thank you in advance for exploring the above concerns further and for mitigating the health and other risks before moving forward with this and other proposed cell towers and antennae, etc., in our beautiful County.

Most sincerely,
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