

PLANNING COMMISSION

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Kris Becker

COMMISSION SECRETARY

Norma M. Villicaña

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AGENDA

CITY OF EL CENTRO PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

EL CENTRO POST OFFICE PAVILLION
230 SOUTH 5TH STREET
EL CENTRO, CA 92243

TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2014
5:30PM

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is a public meeting. If there is a matter on the agenda on which you wish to be heard, please come forward to the microphone; address yourself to the commission, stating your name and address for the record. Persons wishing to address the Commission are not required to identify themselves (Gov't Code § 54953.3); however, this information assists the Chairperson by ensuring that all persons wishing to address the Commission are recognized and it assists the Commission's Secretary in preparing meeting minutes. The Chairperson reserves the right to place a time limit on each person asking to be heard. If you wish to address the Commission concerning any other matter within the Commission's jurisdiction, you may do so during the public comment portion of the agenda.

Any information provided on the "Speaker Slip" is voluntary and will be public record.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent agenda items are approved by one motion. Commissioners or members of the public may pull consent items to be considered separately at a time determined by the Chairperson.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes of April 8, 2014.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. **Conditional Use Permit No. 14-01** – The project proposes the construction of an 80-foot monopalm telecommunications tower on property located at 2352 S. 4th Street. The project site is located in the CT, (tourist commercial) zone and is further identified by APN 053-810-002. The proposed monopalm tower will consist of 12 panel antennas and accessory tower-mounted and ground equipment. Pursuant to Section 15303 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, it has been determined that this project is exempt from formal environmental review.

Presentation: Michael Coyne, Assistant Planner

Recommendation: a) Motion to adopt the applicable findings and conditions under Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-____ approving Conditional Use Permit No. 14-01.

3. **Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment No. 14-02** – The project consists of a line item text amendment to the Manufacturing Zones Use Regulations, Section 29-69, Table 29-69.1(3) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow automobile storage yards in the ML, (light manufacturing) zone upon approval of a Conditional Use Permit application. Pursuant to General Rule Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA), it has been determined that this project is exempt from formal environmental review.

Presentation: Michael Coyne, Assistant Planner

Recommendation: a) Motion to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-____ recommending approval of Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment No. 14-02.

NON-ACTION INFORMATION ITEMS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the Commission after distribution of the agenda packet will be available for public inspection at the Community Development Department-Planning & Zoning Division located at 1275 W. Main Street, El Centro, California during normal business hours.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, you should contact the Community Development Department- Planning & Zoning Division at (760) 337-4545. Notification of at least 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make

reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to this meeting.

**CITY OF EL CENTRO
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 13, 2014**

ITEM NO. 2

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 14-01

STAFF REPORT

OBJECTIVE: Request is to allow the construction of an 80' wireless telecommunications monopole tower designed as an artificial palm tree (monopalm) that will be mounted with 12 antennas and will include the construction of a 11'9"x20'x21' equipment shelter wherein all incidental communications equipment will be housed.

APPLICANT: Verizon Wireless
c/o M&M Telecom, Inc.
6886 Mimosa Drive
Carlsbad, CA 92011

PROPERTY OWNER: El Centro Hotel Partners, LLC
Best Western John Jay Inn
2352 S. 4th Street
El Centro, CA 92243

ENCLOSURES: Location Map, Site Plan

LOCATION: 2352 S. 4th Street

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: APN 053-810-002; Parcel 1 of Parcel Map 053-705-003, Wake Subdivision No. 1

PRESENT ZONING & LAND USE: The project site is located within the parking area of an existing Best Western hotel. The project site is zoned CT, tourist commercial. The existing zoning is in conformity with the City's General Plan land use designation of tourist commercial.

SURROUNDING AREA: The site is bordered to the north by Interstate 8, to the west by the Comfort Inn & Suites Hotel, to the east by an IHOP restaurant, and to the south by the Panda Express restaurant. The site is surrounded by the CT, tourist commercial zone.

Required Findings:

1. Proposed use is permitted pursuant to Section 29-263 and of the City Code.
2. Proposed use is necessary or desirable for the development of the community, is consistent with the City's General Plan and is not detrimental to the existing uses or the uses specifically permitted in the zone in which the proposed use is to be located.
3. Proposed site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate said use.
4. Site for proposed use relates properly to streets, which are designed to carry the type and quantity of traffic to be generated by the proposed use.
5. Conditions as stipulated by the City are necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the community.

Project Description

The proposed conditional use permit to allow the construction of a new 80' high wireless telecommunications monopole tower disguised as an artificial palm tree (monopalm) has been reviewed by staff and the required findings for approval are outlined above. The monopalm tower will be mounted with a total of 12 panel-type antennas at a height of 72' around the faux palm fronds. The panel antennas will be 8' long, 16.3" wide, and 11.2" thick and will be mimic the color of the artificial palm fronds. Associated communications equipment will be housed within a 11'9"x20'x21' equipment shelter built as an extension of the hotel with similar architectural features. The public hearing has been duly noticed including direct mailing to 8 adjacent property owners.

The proposed tower will be located within an existing landscape planter within the parking area north of the existing hotel at the project site. The accessory ground equipment and equipment shelter will be located adjacent to the hotel within a new addition. The site has full municipal services and direct access from 4th Street. The site is in the CT, tourist commercial zone and is designated for tourist commercial development in the General Plan Land Use Element. The existing zoning is in conformity with the City's General Plan land use designation.

The new tower will be operated and maintained by Verizon Wireless as a wireless telephone facility. The proposed monopalm tower will be connected to the accessory ground equipment with new underground electrical and coaxial wiring through the parking area in order to make the tower and its associated equipment less obtrusive. The equipment shelter will contain ground-mounted transceiver equipment, an electric meter, and telephone interface panels necessary to operate the tower. In addition, a new natural gas powered 30kw emergency generator will be placed next to the proposed equipment shelter. The proposed tower will be an unmanned facility with only one visit per month by maintenance personnel. Access to the site will be from Fourth Street and Wake Avenue. The proposed height of the tower (80') is allowed with approval of this Conditional Use Permit in the CT zone.

Environmental Review

The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended, pursuant to Article 19, Section 15303, Class 3 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, pertaining to the construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures.

Staff Analysis

The project site is located within the CT, tourist commercial zone. The CT zone is intended to provide for the development of motels, resort hotels, related tourist commercial uses, limited retail and freeway-oriented businesses. The CT zone is intended to implement the tourist commercial general plan land use designation. Communication facilities are permitted in any commercial zone upon approval of a Conditional Use Permit pursuant to the provisions of Section 29-263. The City's Communication Facilities section of the Zoning Ordinance (Section 29, Article IV, Division 8 of the City Code) discourages the proliferation of tall, unsightly towers throughout the City, particularly in residential zones, while acknowledging their important value to the community particularly in improving telecommunications coverage and access to City residents and businesses. The proposed tower meets the criteria set forth in Section 29-263 for construction of new telecommunications towers. The tower is necessary in order to improve high speed wireless connectivity within Verizon's coverage area within the City, particularly to the southwestern portion of the City where coverage is currently spotty. Collocation onto another tower has been deemed infeasible because there are no existing towers within the vicinity of the subject site wherein the proposed antenna and facilities can be placed that would produce an adequate improvement of wireless telecommunications coverage in the area. Although it will be located next to Interstate 8, it is being sited and camouflaged to minimize the impact to the area. The proposed design as a palm tree will meld well with the existing landscaping of the property, which consists primarily of Mesquite trees and Mexican fan palms. The proposed equipment shelter in which the tower equipment will be stored will be built into the existing hotel while maintaining the architectural integrity of the hotel in order for the tower to be as least obtrusive as possible. Sounds emanating from the tower equipment are primarily humming sounds from fans (used to cool the equipment) and will be barely audible to surrounding properties, particularly with the additional attenuation from the walls of the proposed equipment shelter. The project would be required to maintain or replace any disturbed landscaping around the proposed monopalm tower. Additional comments from City staff are attached as "Exhibit A."

Summary and Recommendation

Overall, the project is in conformity with the City's development standards and General Plan. Options available to the Commission regarding the conditional use permit include:

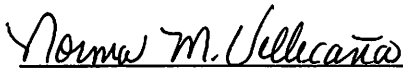
1. Motion to approve the permit as submitted with the adoption of the required findings and conditions.
2. Motion to approve the permit with modifications and with the adoption of the required findings and conditions.
3. Motion to deny the permit with the adoption of the appropriate findings against the proposal.
4. Motion to continue the hearing for further study.

Action Requested:

It is staff recommendation that the Commission open the public hearing and allow input from all proponents and opponents of the proposed project. Because the project is in conformity with the City's General Plan and would serve to further the goals and objectives of the Communication Facilities section of the Zoning Ordinance, it is staff recommendation that the conditional use permit be approved by taking the following actions:

1. Motion to adopt the applicable findings and conditions under Planning Commission Resolution No. 14- (Exhibit B) approving Conditional Use Permit No. 14-01.

Prepared by: Michael Coyne, Assistant Planner



Norma M. Villicaña, AICP
Director of Community Development

NMV:mc

EXHIBIT A

STAFF COMMENTS FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 14-01

Comments included:

- **Community Development Department – Building & Safety Division**
- **Fire Department**

**City of El Centro
Interoffice Memorandum**

**Department of
Building and Safety**

To: Michael Coyne, Assistant Planner
From: Frank Soto, Acting Building Official
Date: 02/11/2014
Subject: Conditional Use Permit No. 14-01 Verizon Wireless proposes to erect a new 80 foot communications monopalm tower at the Best Western Hotel, located at 2352 S. 4th Street. The proposed monopalm tower will consist of 12 panel antennas and accessory tower-mounted and ground equipment. The monopalm tower will be located within an existing landscape planter north of the hotel.

These comments reflect the Building Department requirements.

1. A building permit shall be required for the proposed construction.
2. Three (3) sets of engineered plans, specifications and seismic and structural calculations shall be required and submitted along with the permit application.

RECEIVED

FEB 12 2014

**PLANNING DEPT.
CITY OF EL CENTRO**

El Centro Fire Department

Memorandum

TO: Michael Coyne, Assistant Planner

FROM: Kenneth Herbert, Fire Chief

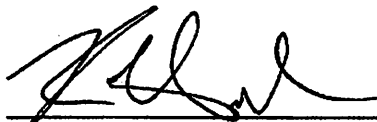
DATE: February 18, 2014

SUBJ: Conditional Use Permit No. 14-01 – Verizon Wireless proposes to erect a new 80-foot communication monopalm tower at the Best Western Hotel, located at 2352 S. 4th Street. The proposed monopalm tower will consist of 12 panel antennas and accessory tower-mounted and ground equipment. The monopalm tower will be located within an existing landscape planter north of the hotel.

I have reviewed the conditional use permit application and have concerns.

- There is not sufficient detail to determine if firefighting operations will be impaired by the equipment placement or construction of a 2 story structure adjacent to the existing building.
 - The placement of aerial devices (ladder truck) for rescue operations could be obstructed by the equipment.
- Please provide more detailed information regarding the exact location and dimensions of the tower.

Thank you,



Kenneth Herbert, Fire Chief
El Centro Fire Department

KH:tmh

RECEIVED
FEB 18 2014
PLANNING DEPT.
CITY OF EL CENTRO

EXHIBIT B

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION

**PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 14-
FOR
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 14-01**

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on Conditional Use Permit No. 14-01, at a regular Planning Commission meeting on May 13, 2014 at the Old Post Office Pavilion, 230 S. 5th Street El Centro, California; and

WHEREAS, the public hearing was advertised according to law; and

WHEREAS, the petitioner was present and heard; and

WHEREAS, no one was present to object to the petition nor were any objections filed with the Commission; and

WHEREAS, the proposed use is permitted pursuant to Section 29-263 of the City Code; and

WHEREAS, the facility complies with all applicable provisions of Section 29-255 of the City Code; and

WHEREAS, the facility blends in with its existing environment and will not have significant adverse visual impacts; and

WHEREAS, the proposed use is necessary or desirable for the development of the community, is consistent with the objectives of the City's General Plan, and is not detrimental to the existing uses or the uses specifically permitted in the zone in which the proposed use is to be located; and

WHEREAS, the proposed site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate said use; and

WHEREAS, the site for proposed use relates properly to streets which are designed to carry the type and quantity of traffic to be generated by the proposed use; and

WHEREAS, the proposal is categorically exempt from environmental review as per Article 19, Section 15303, Class 3 of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended, pertaining to the construction and location of limited numbers of new, small, facilities or structures; and

WHEREAS, the proposed use will have no significant deleterious effect on the environment; and

WHEREAS, the conditions as stipulated by the City are necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare of the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Planning Commission recommends approval of Conditional Use Permit No. 14-01, to allow construction of an 80' wireless telecommunications monopole tower designed as an artificial palm tree (monopalm) that will be mounted with 12 antennas and will include the construction of an equipment shelter wherein all incidental communications equipment will be housed, on property located at 2352 S. 4th Street, further identified by APN 053-810-002, subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. The project shall consist of a 80' wireless telecommunications monopole tower designed as an artificial palm tree (monopalm) that will be mounted with 12 antennas and will include the construction of an equipment shelter architecturally blended with the existing onsite hotel wherein all incidental communications equipment will be housed.
2. The proposed tower shall mimic a palm tree.
3. The project shall be developed to comply with the Commercial Zone Development Standards, including setbacks and height restrictions, as outlined in Section 29-62 of the City Code.
4. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall provide final architectural elevations, and proposed colors and materials to the City for review and approval. The proposed equipment shelter shall match the existing color and architectural style of the hotel.
5. Landscaping shall be maintained along within the planter area of the proposed monopalm tower. Any landscaping that is removed shall be replaced and any deficient landscaping shall be enhanced. All landscaping shall comply with Section 29-142 of the Zoning Ordinance and shall include a mixture of ground cover, shrubbery and trees.
6. The Conditional Use Permit shall be renewed in ten (10) years in accordance with Section 29-269(a) of the City Code and Section 65964(b) of the Government Code.
7. Prior to final inspection of the facility, applicant shall provide proof of compliance with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations.
8. If the tower is abandoned and/or not maintained it shall be removed and the tower site shall be returned to its pre-project condition within 60 days of receiving notice from the City that it has been found to be abandoned and/or not maintained.
9. Project construction operations must adhere to Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) Rules and Regulations.
10. The project site shall be maintained in a good, clean, orderly manner, free of any debris or junk materials.
11. The project shall be developed in accordance with the site plan as approved by the Planning Commission. Project shall begin within 180 days from the Planning Commission date of approval. Except as noted above, all conditions shall be met prior to the issuance of a building permit.
12. Project shall comply with applicable Federal, State and local codes, ordinances and resolutions.

BUILDING & SAFETY CONDITIONS

13. A building permit shall be required for the proposed construction.

14. Three (3) sets of engineered plans, specifications and seismic and structural calculations shall be required and submitted along with the building permit application.

FIRE DEPARTMENT CONDITION

15. Prior to issuance of a building permit for the proposed monopole tower, clearance shall be obtained from the Fire Department. The Fire Department may require the location of the tower to be moved farther away from the building within another planter area of the hotel.

PASSED AND ADOPTED on May 13, 2014 by the following vote:

ROLL CALL: Ayes:
 Noes:
 Absent:
 Abstaining:

CITY OF EL CENTRO
PLANNING COMMISSION

By _____
Harold M. Walk, Chairperson

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

By _____
Norma M. Villicaña, AICP, Secretary
Director of Community Development

By _____
Kris M. Becker
City Attorney