

September 14, 2017

NOTICE OF DECISION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on September 12, 2017, the Planning Commission of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes adopted P.C. Resolution No. 2017-28, denying, without prejudice, Major Wireless Telecommunications Facility ASG No. 53 for the installation of two 21.4” panel antennas encased in a 2’ tall canister shroud on an existing 52’ tall wood utility streetlight pole with related vaulted mechanical equipment at:

LOCATION: Northwest corner of Monero Drive and Granvia Altamira
APPLICANT: Crown Castle
PROPERTY OWNER: City of Rancho Palos Verdes

Said decision is subject to P.C. Resolution No. 2017-28 in the attached Exhibit ‘A.’

This decision may be appealed, in writing, to the City Council. The appeal shall set forth the grounds for appeal and any specific action being requested by the appellant. Any appeal letter must be filed within fifteen (15) calendar days of the approval date, or by 5:30 PM on Wednesday, September 27, 2017. A \$2,275 appeal fee for non-residents or a \$1,275.00 appeal fee for Rancho Palos Verdes residents must accompany any appeal letter. If no appeal is filed in a timely manner, the Planning Commission’s decision will be final at 5:30 PM on Wednesday, September 27, 2017.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss the project further in detail, please contact Art Bashmakian at (310) 544-5228 or via email at WirelessTF@rpvca.gov.



Ara Mihranian, AICP
Director of Community Development

Enclosure

cc: Crown Castle
Project File

P.C. RESOLUTION NO. 2017-28

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES DENYING, WITHOUT PREJUDICE, WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY ASG NO. 53 FOR THE INSTALLATION OF TWO 21.4" PANEL ANTENNAS ENCASED IN A 2' TALL CANISTER SHROUD ON AN EXISTING 52' TALL WOOD UTILITY STREETLIGHT POLE WITH RELATED VAULTED MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AT THE NORTHWEST INTERSECTION OF MONERO DRIVE AND GRANVIA ALTAMIRA.

WHEREAS, Chapter 12.18 of the Rancho Palo Verde Municipal Code (RPVMC or Municipal Code) governs the permitting, development, siting, installation, design, operation and maintenance of wireless telecommunications facilities ("WTFs") in the City's public right-of-way ("PROW") (RPVMC § 12.18.010);

WHEREAS, beginning in May of 2016, Crown Castle (the "Applicant") applied to the City for an Wireless Telecommunications Facility Permit ("WTFP"), pursuant to Section 12.18.040(A) of the Municipal Code, to install 26 antennas in the public right-of-way (PROW) to service AT&T customers throughout the City (the "Project") including ASG No. 53 at the intersection of Monero Drive and Granvia Altamira;

WHEREAS, the original proposal called for the installation of two 21.4" panel antennas mounted on a 4' mast arm, extending from the existing 52' tall wood utility streetlight pole. The radio equipment and power meter were to be placed on the ground adjacent to the streetlight pole, consisting of 9.7 cubic feet of equipment boxes in the PROW;

WHEREAS, the revised project calls for the installation of two 21.4" panel antennas, encased in a 24" tall canister shroud on an existing 52' tall utility streetlight pole;

WHEREAS, the Project also includes vaulted mechanical equipment including the radio and auxiliary equipment, as well as the SCE meter box in a secondary vault. The Project consists of a total of three vaults measuring approximately 43 square feet;

WHEREAS, because the Project's location is within a residential zone and within the PROW of local streets as identified in the General Plan, approval of a WTFP also requires an Exception under Section 12.18.190 of the Municipal Code;

WHEREAS, the Project is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") because the Project constitutes a small scale installation of a new facility (14 CCR § 15303(d)).

WHEREAS, on August 22, 2017, the Planning Commission continued the public hearing, without discussion, to September 12, 2017; and

WHEREAS, on September 12, 2017, the Planning Commission considered testimony and evidence presented at the public hearings, the information and findings included in the Staff Report, and other records of proceedings.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES DOES HEREBY FIND, DETERMINE AND RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: The proposed Project is a request to:

- A. Install a WTF at the northwest intersection of Monero Drive and Granvia Altamira,
- B. Install two 21.4" panel antennas, encased in a 2' tall canister shroud measuring 2' in diameter that will be mounted on a 4' mast arm, extending from an existing 52' tall wood utility streetlight pole approximately 20.6' from the ground level, and
- C. Install vaulted mechanical equipment including the radio and auxiliary equipment, as well as the SCE meter box in a secondary vault for a total of three vaults measuring approximately 43 square feet in surface area.

Section 2: The findings required to be made by the Planning Commission for the approval of a WTF permit, as set forth in Chapter 12.18 of the RPVMC, have not been made as follows:

- A. The Project does not meet the Findings required by Section 12.18.090, Subsection B, of the Municipal Code, which particularly requires that "[t]he proposed facility has been designed and located in compliance with all applicable provisions of this chapter," as follows:**

12.18.080(A)(1)(a): The applicant shall employ screening, undergrounding and camouflage design techniques in the design and placement of wireless telecommunications facilities in order to ensure that the facility is as visually screened as possible, to prevent the facility from dominating the surrounding area and to minimize significant view impacts from surrounding properties all in a manner that achieves compatibility with the community and in compliance with Section 17.02.040 (View Preservation and Restoration) of this code.

The proposed installation of panel antennas encased in a 2' tall canister shroud, at a height of 20.6' from the ground level, that would be affixed to a 52' tall wood utility streetlight pole, does not blend with the surrounding environment and would visually impact the character of the neighborhood as experienced from the PROW.

The proposed installation and support equipment does not meet the “non-dominant design” standard requiring a facility to be compatible with the surrounding environment. The overall size of the proposed antenna and canister shroud that is attached to a 4’ arm of a wood utility streetlight pole, in its proposed location, is a feature that is out-of-character to the surrounding neighborhood as there are no other structures or natural features in the immediate area that would lend themselves to screening or blending the facility into the built environment. A more compliant design would present equipment that is seamlessly integrated into the utility streetlight pole or a “slim-line” design that does not present the antenna nodes as the dominate feature on this wood utility streetlight pole.

12.18.080(A)(1)(b): *Screening shall be designed to be architecturally compatible with surrounding structures using appropriate techniques to camouflage, disguise, and/or blend into the environment, including landscaping, color, and other techniques to minimize the facility's visual impact as well as be compatible with the architectural character of the surrounding buildings or structures in terms of color, size, proportion, style, and quality.*

The area in which this Project is proposed consists of non-dense, upscale residential structures with well-maintained manicured landscaping and parkways. The proposed panel antennas encased in a canister shroud that would be affixed by a 4’ arm to a wood utility streetlight pole exacerbates the visual clutter in the surrounding environment and would be visually intrusive as there are no similar vertical elements with similar facilities in the neighborhood.

The City of Rancho Palos Verdes’ streets, parkway- and median- landscaping, and public utilities within the rights-of-way have been planned and constructed to achieve an attractive appearance which includes minimizing the number and appearance of utilities and related equipment, particularly in residential areas. Consequently, the proposed facility is not sufficiently compatible with matters of urban design and the long-term maturation of this residential neighborhood—especially in light of the fact that the Applicant did not establish the presence of a significant gap in coverage that would necessitate the proposed facility.

12.18.080(A)(5): *Equipment. The applicant shall use the least visible equipment possible. Antenna elements shall be flush mounted, to the extent feasible. All antenna mounts shall be designed so as not to preclude possible future collocation by the same or other operators or carriers. Unless otherwise provided in this section, antennas shall be situated as close to the ground as possible.*

The record presented no evidence of the proposed antennas being situated as close to the ground as possible. The panel proposed panel antennas encased in a canister shroud measuring approximately 2’ tall that would be affixed to a wood utility streetlight pole on a 4’ arm and as such has not been designed to be flush

mounted that maximally blends with the verticality of the pole, and is not the least intrusive design based on industry standards found for other antenna poles.

12.18.080(A)(7): *Space. Each facility shall be designed to occupy the least amount of space in the right-of-way that is technically feasible.*

The proposed WTF will be mounted to the 4' arm of an existing wood utility street light pole and would take up more right-of-way space compared to the existing utility streetlight pole and does not use other feasible "slim-line" or pole-integrated designs found in the industry.

- B. The Project does not meet the Findings required by Section 12.18.190, Subsection B.2, of the Municipal Code, which particularly requires that "[t]he applicant has provided the city with a clearly defined technical service objective and a clearly defined potential site search area," as follows:**

The "technical service objective" identified by the Applicant in all application documents is the coverage of a "significant gap" in coverage. The wireless service area to be served by the proposed facility only encompasses approximately 20 homes in City of Rancho Palos Verdes and is not located upon a major highway or thoroughfare serving many in-vehicle users. Notably, and according to the Applicant's testimony, the proposed installation will only serve an area within 1000 feet. The evidence provided did not support a finding of a significant gap. The Applicant is not entitled to seamless or perfect coverage in every area it serves, and the existence of a small "dead spot" in coverage is hereby found to be an insignificant deficiency in Applicant's existing coverage in the area. Moreover, the record established that the service area covered by the proposed installation mostly covers property located in another jurisdiction. The Planning Commission's preference is to see collaboration amongst adjacent jurisdiction such that the communities can share the burden of these installations.

- C. The Project does not meet the Findings required by Section 12.18.090, Subsection E, of the Municipal Code, which particularly requires that "[t]he applicant has provided the city with a meaningful comparative analysis that includes the factual reasons why the proposed location and design is the least noncompliant location and design necessary to reasonably achieve the applicant's reasonable technical service objectives," as follows:**

The Applicant has not provided a meaningful alternative comparative analysis and the proposed project is not found to be the preferred design. The Applicant should have explored locating the proposed facility along Hawthorne Blvd. outside the immediate residential neighborhood to minimize adverse impacts to residents, to the commercial building located at 28041 Hawthorne Blvd, or the monopole in

Palos Verdes Estates. See above discussions in regards to RPVMC §12.18.080 for further detail, which discussions are incorporated here.

Section 3: Pursuant to Section 12.18.060 of the Municipal Code (referencing Chapter 17.80 of the Municipal Code), any interested person aggrieved by this decision or any portion of this decision may appeal to the City Council. The appeal shall set forth the grounds for appeal and any specific action being requested by the appellant. Any appeal letter must be filed within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of this decision, or by 5:30 PM on Wednesday, September 27, 2017. The Council-approved appeal fee must accompany any appeal letter. If no appeal is filed timely, the Planning Commission's decision will be final at 5:30 PM on Wednesday, September 27, 2017.

Section 4: For the foregoing reasons and based on testimony and evidence presented at the public hearings, the information and findings included in the Staff Report, Minutes and other records of proceedings, the Planning Commission of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes hereby denies, without prejudice, ASG No. 53 for the proposed wireless telecommunication facility installation at the northwest intersection of Monero Drive and Granvia Altamira.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 12th day of SEPTEMBER 2017, by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioners Emenhiser, Tomblin, Bradley, Vice-Chairman James, and Chairman Cruikshank

NOES: Commissioner Nelson

ABSTENTIONS: None

RECUSALS: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Leon



Ara Mihranian, AICP
Community Development Director; and,
Secretary of the Planning Commission



John M. Cruikshank
Chairman