



**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

MEMORANDUM

TO: County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Glenn Russell Ph.D., Director, 568-2085
Planning & Development, Development Review

CONTACT: Alice McCurdy, Deputy Director, Development Review
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MEMO DATE: December 23, 2014

HEARING DATE: January 6, 2015

RE: **Hanrahan Appeal (Case No. 14APL-00000-00025) of the County Planning Commission's Approval of an AT&T's Telecommunications Facility on Hollister Avenue at the Christ the King Episcopal Church (Case No. 13CUP-00000-00014)**

1.0 BACKGROUND:

On December 2, 2014 the Board of Supervisors considered the Hanrahan appeal of the County Planning Commission's September 24, 2014 approval of the AT&T new telecommunication facility proposed at the Christ the King Episcopal Church along Hollister Avenue in Goleta. At the December 2nd hearing your Board received public testimony and directed staff to return on January 6th with findings to uphold the appeal and to deny the CUP based on policy inconsistencies raised by the aesthetics of the telecom project. The telecom project proposed a fifty foot tall faux bell tower structure on the church property (APN 065-110-004) on the south side of Hollister Avenue.

2.0 ISSUES OF CONCERN RAISED BY THE PROPOSED CUP

The following discussion reflects the issues of concern raised by your Board regarding the proposed project's inconsistency with County policies and development standards.

2.1 Inconsistency with the Comprehensive Plan

REQUIREMENT	DISCUSSION
LAND USE ELEMENT	
Visual Resource Policies	
<p><i>Visual Resource Policy 3: In areas designated as urban on the land use plan maps and in designated rural neighborhoods, new structures shall be in conformance with the scale and character of the existing community. Clustered development, varied circulation patterns, and diverse housing types shall be encouraged.</i></p>	<p>Inconsistent: The subject parcel is located in the inland urban area of the County. The telecommunication facility consists of a 50 ft. tall antenna support structure designed to resemble a church bell tower, and a 288 sq. ft. equipment enclosure placed on a concrete slab foundation. The antenna support structure would support twelve (12) 6 ft. panel antennas in three sectors with four (4) antennas per sector.</p> <p>The proposed bell tower would be located approximately 55 feet south of Hollister Avenue, and would be highly visible both to passing motorists on Hollister Avenue and from residences located in the surrounding area. Although the proposed antenna structure is intended to resemble a church bell tower at a height of 50 feet, the size and appearance of the structure is out of scale and character with the existing 1-2 story residential neighborhood and the existing Episcopal Church, as well as with other church towers in the area. The proposed structure would be out of character with the low profile development along the pertinent section of Hollister Avenue. Visual simulations of the proposed bell tower structure indicate that the project is not designed to blend or be compatible with the surrounding environment. Therefore, the project is inconsistent with this policy.</p>
GOLETA COMMUNITY PLAN	
<p>Visual/Aesthetics/Open Space, DevStd VIS-GV-1.1. <i>Setbacks, landscaping, and structural treatments shall be emphasized along major roadways to help preserve viewsheds and create an aesthetic visual</i></p>	<p>Inconsistent. The subject parcel is located within the urban area of Goleta. The proposed AT&T parking area would be located on the south side of the proposed church storage and AT&T equipment enclosures, and would not</p>

REQUIREMENT	DISCUSSION
<p><i>corridor. Parking lots and other impervious surfaces should be placed in side and rear, rather than frontage, areas in all development along roadways.</i></p>	<p>be visible from Hollister Avenue. However, the proposed antenna structure would be highly visible to passing motorists on Hollister Avenue, and from residences located in the surrounding area. Although the proposed antenna structure is intended to resemble a church bell tower at 50 feet in height, the size and appearance of the structure is out of scale and character with the existing residential development and other church towers in the Goleta area. The proposed structure would be out of character with the low profile development along the pertinent section of Hollister Avenue. Further, while the proposed landscaping would partially screen the proposed church storage building and AT&T equipment enclosure, the landscaping at maturity would not reach the height of the proposed antenna structure. As a result, the landscaping will neither minimize the visibility of the structure from public view nor provide a setting that would allow it to blend with the existing development. Therefore, the project is inconsistent with this development standard.</p>

2.2 Zoning: Land Use and Development Code Compliance

REQUIREMENT	DISCUSSION
<p><i>Section 35.44.010.D.3 Development Standards</i></p>	
<p><i>Standard 3.c.</i> A facility that is substantially visible from a public viewing area shall not be installed closer than two miles from another substantially visible facility unless it is an existing collocated facility situated on a multiple user site.</p>	<p>Inconsistent. The proposed bell tower would be located approximately 55 feet south of Hollister Avenue, and would be substantially visible both to passing motorists on Hollister Avenue and from other neighborhood public viewing areas in the surrounding area. Although the proposed antenna structure is intended to resemble a church bell tower, the size and appearance of the structure is out of scale and character with the existing Episcopal</p>

REQUIREMENT	DISCUSSION
	<p>Church as well as with other church towers in the area. The proposed structure would be out of character with the low profile development along the pertinent section of Hollister Avenue. Visual simulations of the proposed bell tower structure indicate that the project is not designed to blend or be compatible with the surrounding environment. Therefore, the project is inconsistent with this policy.</p>
<p><i>Standard 3.d. Telecommunication facilities that are substantially visible from public viewing areas shall be sited below the ridgeline, depressed or located behind earth berms in order to minimize their profile and minimize any intrusion into the skyline. In addition, where feasible, and where visual impacts would be reduced, the facility shall be designed to look like the natural or manmade environment (e.g., designed to look like a tree, rock outcropping, or streetlight) or designed to integrate into the natural environment (e.g., imbedded in a hillside). These facilities shall be compatible with the existing surrounding environment.</i></p>	<p>Inconsistent. The proposed bell tower would be located approximately 55 feet south of Hollister Avenue, and would be substantially visible both to passing motorists on Hollister Avenue and from other neighborhood public view areas in the surrounding area. As discussed above under the Visual Resource Policy #3 analysis, the size and appearance of the antenna support structure is out of scale and character with the existing Episcopal Church as well as with other church towers in the area. The proposed structure would be out of character with the low profile development along the pertinent section of Hollister Avenue. Visual simulations of the proposed bell tower structure indicate that the project is not designed to blend or be compatible with the surrounding environment. Therefore, the project is inconsistent with this policy.</p>

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

Subsequent to the December 2nd Board hearing, P&D received written notification from the agent, Mr. Robert McCormick, requesting that the application for the proposed telecom facility (13CUP-00000-00014) be withdrawn. The appeal of the telecom project is therefore moot. Accordingly, P&D recommends that 14APL-00000-00025 be dropped from the January 6, 2015 Board agenda.