

Planning Commission Hearing
Sept 17, 2013

I. CALL TO ORDER

Member's Present: Chairman Dwight Freeman, Gene Glover and Leonard Brown and Rose Vanderpool, Secretary.

Members absent: Vernon McCallister, Grover Hathorn and Mike Mitchell

Others Present: Geoff Squire AT&T Representative (See Attached List)

II. Chairman Freeman asked the pleasure of the Board to appoint someone else to chair the meeting since he was absent for the Aug Meeting and this meeting is a continuation of the requested conditional use for AT&T. The Board unanimously appointed Mr. Glover to chair the meeting (AT&T) since the Vice-Chair Vernon McCallister who chaired the last meeting is not present today.

Appointed Chair Gene Glover called the meeting to order at 1:45pm.

The Agenda was approved as amended (added a preliminary sketch plan/idea from Christy Larson) this was moved and seconded passed unanimously by the Board. Minutes from August will be reviewed and approved at the next meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Glover stated that he contacted four realtors locally and in the 4-corners area and Tim Walters (Appraiser) and the consensus is that there is absolutely no evidence that there is an effect of sales one way or another that towers decrease or increase sales. These people are not friends I pulled the phone book out and called.

Ms. Randi Young stated that the Realtor's she discussed this with and their immediate response was this is not good. The area in closest proximity would be impacted negatively. Ms. Young stated that her and her husband are retired they cannot afford or recoup any losses that they will suffer if their property values decreased. Ms. Young submitted a petition, it has 79 signatures of people who could not be here today. The petition represents them as being here and should be taken seriously. 135 notices were sent out, the petition has 79 signatures. The concerns are decrease in values, radio waves, danger -view scape vs. wants and needs. Ms. Young also pointed out that the application states that the total area is 600 Sq. ft. when in fact it is 927' as well as the electrical service provider is SLV REC not Excel. Mr. Squire stated that they have actually leased 1500' but are only going to use 600' and will correct the service provider as stated.

A deep discussion as to aesthetics, views, impact and the obtrusiveness this tower will cause.

Mr. Squire stated that this is going to help the majority of people. Current coverage does not go up the canyon. Mr. Squire referenced coverage maps that he obtained from their Engineers which show the line of sight and the need for this 95 foot tower to help coverage especially in times of distress.

Ms. Rose Vanderpool read letters into the record (see attached)

Mr. Sorenson is concerned with the location of his well. The well is right on the easement right-of-way. Mr. Squire (AT&T) will protect this well with pedestals to keep it protected. Mr. Sorenson is also concerned with devaluation of property. It has been ascertained at the last meeting that the Cooper's own the easement not Mr. Sorenson. The Coopers' have the right to lease or allow others to use the easement. Mr. Sorenson stated that if the agreement between AT&T and him is in writing to protect the well and the removal of any trees is kept to a minimum he has no problem with the tower.

The Tourism Board submitted a letter stating that this is a need. People who come to our area to visit expect services and this is a step in that direction.

Dwight Freeman asked the applicant to address the Board and not the audience.

Mr. Squire stated that they are not going to destroy the area, when they have completed the installation of the tower the easement will be graded and be in better condition than it is now. They will install the tower from Aspen Road; they will use a crane and a drilling machine that will punch holes like an auger type machine. We are not going to put something up there that will fall, we will concrete it, and the concrete truck will not drive up to the site everything will be done from Aspen Drive. If we can't do it logistically we won't encroach on private property. There will be monthly maintenance after the tower has been set.

An audience member asked what Rio Grande County had to gain by this request? It was explained that the county isn't the applicant, the applicant is Michael Cooper and is following the Conditional Use process as required by the county.

Appointed Vice-Chair Mr. Glover noted that he understands the public and understands AT&T the problem is, is the tower important enough that everyone benefits from it eventually. As stated earlier there are those who are present here today and 79 names on a petition who oppose but the South Fork area as a whole - this tower will benefit in the end.

The tower will not require lights, co-location on another tower; is not conducive to the 'line of sight' needed to enhance the current location of the AT&T tower.

Mr. Brown stated that there is a 200-foot tower right behind his house and he does not notice it. How many of you have noticed the tower behind the Movie Manor? There are no trees or landscape of any kind out there.

Mr. Dusty Hicks stated that there are a lot of emotions involved here; public service, public safety, is it a need or not a need. During the fire, quite a few people that were not notified because they did not have service (AT&T) some had reverse 911 but no coverage. AT&T is a need without communication you cannot succeed. This time next year 2 restaurants and 8 businesses won't be open next year. We need this service no matter what carrier. At the last meeting the general consensus was somewhere else; it has been researched – other areas will not provide the coverage that is needed for this specific area, it's not going to reach into the canyons either direction but it will serve the immediate South Fork Center. It has not been proven that

towers devalue property or health risks. The question is public gain vs. minimal aesthetic destruction.

Appointed Vice-Chair Glover entertains a motion; Mr. Dwight Freeman directs the Board to review the RGC Dev. Code; Pg. 76 and read each criteria one by one. Mr. Freeman stated that this request would not create additional traffic; there are some alleged reasons as to why we should deny but there are many benefits. I am speaking for the Board that we have our done our job and move to recommend approval to the Board of County Commissioners with contingencies; 1. Minimal impact to the forest; Mr. Leonard Brown seconds motion; motion carried unanimously.

V. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.

Secretary