

**Siskiyou County Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
July 17, 2024**

The Siskiyou County Planning Commission meeting of July 17, 2024, was called to order by Chair Fowle at approximately 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, 311 Fourth Street, 2nd Floor, Yreka, California.

Present: Commissioners Hart, Melo, Lindler, Veale, and Fowle

Absent:

Also Present: Rick Dean, Community Development Department Director; Hailey Lang, Deputy Director of Planning; Rachel Jereb, Senior Planner; William Carroll, Assistant County Counsel; Janine Rowe, Commission Clerk

Minutes: It was moved by Commissioner Melo, seconded by Commissioner Veale, to approve the Minutes from the June 26, 2024, Planning Commission meeting.

Voted upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present, with Commissioner Lindler abstaining because she was absent from the June meeting.

Unscheduled Appearances: None

Conflict of Interest Declaration: None

Presentation of Documents, Availability of Public Records, and Public Hearing

Protocol: The Chair noted that these items are detailed on the Agenda.

Right of Appeal Statement: The Chair read the Right of Appeal Statement.

Changes to the Agenda:

A. Brunner Use Permit (UP-21-27)

It was moved by Commissioner Lindler, seconded by Commissioner Melo, to continue the project to a date uncertain.

Voted upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present.

New Business:

Agenda Item 1: Towers LLC Use Permit (UP-24-07) / Categorically Exempt

The project site is located at 14705 Highway A-12, Montague, CA 96064; APN: 019-010-140; Township 43N, Range 4W, Section 10, MDBM; Latitude 41.582°, Longitude -122.288°. The applicant is requesting approval of a use permit to develop the project site with the installation of a new unmanned telecommunications facility within a fenced 40-foot by 40-foot lease area. The telecommunication facility would include a 125-foot lattice tower with nine antennas, six remote radio units, and two microwave dishes. At the base of the tower, equipment cabinets and a generator are proposed. Space on the tower and on the ground is intended for co-location by other telecommunication providers in the future.

**Categorically Exempt
Use Permit**

**Adopted
Approved**

Staff Report:

The previously circulated Staff Report was reviewed by the Commission, and a presentation of the project was provided by Ms. Jereb.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that the project proponents want to develop the project site with a 125-foot lattice wireless communications facility within a 40-by-40 lease area. The property is currently developed with a single family dwelling, detached garage, and multiple small agricultural buildings that support the intensive livestock farming use of the property. She said the property is zoned for prime agricultural, and wireless communication facilities are a conditionally permitted use in that district.

Ms. Jereb said the facility is proposed to be constructed with space for two tenants with Verizon being the first carrier, and the facility would provide 700 MHz and 2100 MHz coverage to an area that is deficient. There are no existing cell sites available for co-location in this area.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that the project is consistent with the General Plan and zoning for its area and that the project is proposed to be exempt from CEQA pursuant to Sections 15303 and 15304, as the project proposes a limited number of small structures and minor alterations to the land where no trees are proposed to be removed. Additionally, there are no unusual circumstances or future activities which might reasonably result in this project having a significant effect on the environment.

Ms. Jereb said one adjacent property owner requested more information but did not submit a comment. Environmental Health, CAL FIRE, and Air Pollution Control commented on this project and because of those comments, conditions were added regarding hazardous materials business plan requirements, 4290 requirements, and Air Pollution Control requirements.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that staff recommends adopting the categorical exemption and approving the use permit for this project.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that Steve Proo of Towers LLC was present to give a presentation.

Agency Input: None**Commission Questions: None**

The Chair opened the Public Hearing.

Public Comments:

Mr. Steve Proo of Towers LLC, representing the project proponent, spoke in favor of the project. He provided the Commission with a presentation detailing the project plans.

There being no further comments, the Chair closed the Public Hearing.

Commission Questions/Discussion:

Commission Lindler asked about fire safe clearance around the cement pad on which the diesel generator would be placed, and Mr. Proo said that the pad would be surrounded by bare ground.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hart about security, Mr. Proo said that the 40-by-40 lease area would be surrounded by a six-foot chain link fence.

Chair Fowle asked why the tower was not going to be taller to allow for more co-locations. Ms. Jereb said County Code only requires that there is the ability to co-locate but does not stipulate a certain number as long as there are at least two. Chair Fowle said the size should be proportionate to be able to handle up to a minimum of four carriers to reduce the number of towers popping up all over the place. Mr. Proo explained that Verizon doesn't want to go over 200 feet because of airline clearance. He added that FCC Code 6409, Eligible Facilities Request, allows for any carrier to add height to an existing tower up to 20 feet, but if the height were raised to 150 feet, another carrier could come in the future and raise it an

additional 20 feet. Verizon feels that the proposed height of 125 feet is at a minimal functioning height to get sufficient service for Verizon customers. He added that Verizon could definitely go higher if the Commission would like that.

Chair Fowle asked Assistant County Counsel William Carroll whether or not the Commission could deny a use permit from another carrier who applied in the future to build another tower near the one being proposed today. Mr. Carroll said the Commission would not have the authority to do that.

Mr. Proo suggested that what a future carrier could do is when they submit their application, because Siskiyou County has a co-location requirement, the County could ask them to provide data and coverage maps documenting why they could not use the existing Verizon tower. It would then be up to the Commission to approve the use permit if their tower were in close proximity.

Commissioner Lindler asked about the minimal functioning height and why they weren't going to make it taller. Mr. Proo said minimum functioning height doesn't mean that it is the lowest it will work, but this would be the optimum coverage that Verizon would be happy with in order to get coverage out to its customers and emergency services. He added that they would need to get approval to go higher from the property owner.

Mr. Carroll said he reviewed County code which states that co-location is required when feasible and when it minimizes certain effects.

Discussion was held regarding the distance allowed between antennas. Ms. Jereb pointed out that the proposed project site has limited ground space and would likely not be able to accommodate more than two additional co-locations. More than two co-locations would require approval from the property owner to expand the footprint, and the project proponent would have to apply for modification of the use permit to expand the lease area.

Discussion was held that the service would be 4G and 5G.

Chair Fowle asked Mr. Proo about the towers in Scott Valley and why they weren't being maintained. He said the coverage is overloaded due to the Shelly Fire and all the personnel utilizing the services. Mr. Proo said he would look into it.

Motion: Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Melo, seconded by Commissioner Lindler, to Adopt Resolution PC 2024-013, A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the County of Siskiyou, State of California, Determining the Project Exempt from CEQA and Approving the Towers LLC Use Permit (UP-24-07).

Voted upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present.

Items for Discussion/Direction:

Ongoing Staff Update Regarding the General Plan Update

This is an ongoing agenda item pertaining to the Siskiyou County 2050 General Plan Update. Staff will be providing an update on the project schedule, deliverables, and any other updates relating to this project.

Staff Report: Ms. Lang told the Commission that the consultants were still going through the comments relating to updating the chapters of the Existing Conditions Background report as well as adding the surveys and exercises from the six in-person workshops. The surveys and exercises are on the Siskiyou 2050 General Plan website and will run through end of July. Ms. Lang said the surveys went live last week and about 37 people participated in the online version of the exercises.

Commission Questions/Discussion:

Discussion was held regarding including a section in the General Plan regarding the importance of creating and maintaining fuel hazard reduction zones in the areas between wilderness, private timber and

habitation as well as the creation and maintenance of access roads for first responders in times of natural disasters.

Discussion was held regarding CAL FIRE's 4290 and 4291 requirements and that they do not have the personnel to conduct inspections on every property in the county.

Discussion was held regarding the Right to Farm in the county's ordinance that requires property owners to acknowledge farming and agricultural activities are taking place surrounding their property.

Miscellaneous:

- 1. Future Meetings:** The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, August 21, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.
- 2. Correspondence:** Ms. Jereb advised the Commission that the countywide fire protection district Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence update is available for public review on the LAFCo webpage located on the County's website.
- 3. Staff Comments: None**
- 4. Commission Comments:** A discussion was held between the Commission and County Counsel regarding the recent Chevron Doctrine decision and how it would affect future County projects requiring CEQA review.

Discussion was held regarding the Star Camp Shasta music festival. The proponents met with staff and the requisite agencies listed in their Conditions of Approval prior to holding the festival.

A discussion was held regarding the Shelly Fire and its size compared to the McKinney Fire. The Commission thanked CAL FIRE and the US Forest Service for their resources.

Chair Fowle said there were unnecessary challenges and a lack of communication during the Shelly fire because out of area law enforcement officers were not familiar with residents in Scott Valley who were trying to tend to their livestock. Discussion was held that in the case of disasters, language needs to be included in the General Plan that livestock owners are able to provide identification showing their address so they can enter their property to feed, water, and take care of their livestock.

Adjournment: The meeting was concluded at approximately 10:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Hailey Lang, Secretary