

1 **DECISION AND ADOPTION OF FINDINGS**
2 **BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**
3 **OF THE CITY OF ALBANY, STATE OF CALIFORNIA,**
4 **DENYING DESIGN REVIEW APPROVAL AND A CONDITIONAL USE**
5 **PERMIT FOR APPLICATION # PA08-038**
6 **AT&T WIRELESS APPLICATION FOR A NEW FACILITY**
7 **AT 1035 SAN PABLO AVENUE**

8
9 **WHEREAS,** In 2005, the City Council of the City of Albany adopted
10 Ordinance #05-02 approving Planning and Zoning Code Section 20.20.100 (Wireless
11 Communications Facilities); and
12

13 **WHEREAS,** in summary, the purpose and intent of Planning and Zoning
14 Code Section 20.20.100 is to establish standards to regulate the placement and design
15 of wireless communications facilities in a manner consistent with Federal law; and
16

17 **WHEREAS,** Planning and Zoning Code Section 20.20.100 F. requires that
18 wireless communications facilities are subject to the approval of a Conditional Use
19 Permit and approval of Design Review pursuant to procedures and findings
20 established in Section 20.20.100 and Section 20.100; and
21

22 **WHEREAS,** AT&T Wireless (hereinafter referred to as Applicant) filed an
23 application on May 22, 2008 with the City of Albany (hereinafter referred to as City)
24 requesting a Conditional Use Permit and Design Review approval for the
25 construction, operation, and maintenance of new wireless equipment at 1035 San
26 Pablo Ave.; and
27

28 **WHEREAS,** the property at 1035 San Pablo Avenue is located in the “SPC”
29 (San Pablo Commercial) zoning district; and
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1 **WHEREAS**, abutting properties to the east located on Kains Avenue are
2 located in “R-3” (High Density Residential) zoning district; and

3
4 **WHEREAS**, the Planning and Zoning Commission initially reviewed the
5 application request at its May 26, 2009 hearing and continued the project to a date
6 uncertain pending further preparation of an alternatives analysis, verification of field
7 measurements, and a review by a third party consultant; and

8
9 **WHEREAS**, the applicant submitted revised plans on July 22, 2010; and

10
11 **WHEREAS**, the Planning and Zoning Commission subsequently reviewed
12 the application at its October 26, 2010 hearing and continued the project to a date
13 uncertain pending further revisions to the application; and

14
15 **WHEREAS**, on October 22, 2011 AT&T submitted a revised application
16 request including the additional information previously requested by the Planning &
17 Zoning Commission; and

18
19 **WHEREAS**, the application was deemed complete on December 15, 2011;
20 and

21
22 **WHEREAS**, the City retained the services of the consulting firm Kramer.
23 Firm Inc., who specializes in telecommunications review for municipalities, to
24 conduct a third-party review of the application;

25
26 **WHEREAS**, Kramer. Firm Inc. prepared a report on the application dated
27 January 4, 2012;

28
29 **WHEREAS**, a study session was held on January 10, 2012 to introduce the
30 revised project to the Planning & Zoning Commission and determine if additional
31 information was necessary to complete the review; and

1
2 **WHEREAS**, the Planning & Zoning Commission requested at the January 10,
3 2012 meeting that staff verify the building height, roof-top penthouse use, and
4 building measurements prior to scheduling the application for action; and

5
6 **WHEREAS**, the requested information was prepared by staff and presented
7 to the Planning & Zoning Commission on February 28, 2012 and the Commission
8 continued the project to a date uncertain pending further design changes; and

9
10 **WHEREAS**, the Planning & Zoning Commission identified the existing roof-
11 top penthouse as part of the roof-top coverage calculations at its February 28, 2012
12 hearing; and

13
14 **WHEREAS**, the inclusion of the roof-top penthouse as part of the roof-top
15 coverage results in an existing roof-top coverage of 14.5%, and exceeds the 10%
16 roof-top coverage maximum contained in Section 20.24.080 (B) of the Albany
17 Municipal Code; and

18
19 **WHEREAS**, Section 20.20.100 (2) (h) contained in the “Wireless Facilities
20 Ordinance” cross references Section 20.24.080 (B) for roof coverage compliance and
21 identifies a wireless facility as an ancillary building structure; and

22
23 **WHEREAS**, a “Wireless Communication Facility” is defined in Section
24 20.08.020 as follows:

25
26 *Wireless Communications Facility means any device or system for the*
27 *transmitting and/or receiving of electromagnetic signals, including but not*
28 *limited to radio waves and microwaves, for cellular technology, personal*
29 *communications services, mobile services, paging systems and related*
30 *technologies. Facilities include antennas, microwave dishes, parabolic*
31 *antennas and all other types of equipment used in the transmission and*

1 *reception of such signals; structures for the support of such facilities,*
2 *associated buildings or cabinets to house support equipment, and other*
3 *accessory development; and*

4
5 **WHEREAS**, the building at 1035 San Pablo Ave. was constructed in 1984
6 when the subject site was zoned C-2 Highway Commercial and the maximum
7 building height for the District was 45 ft.; and

8
9 **WHEREAS**, the subject site was rezoned to San Pablo Commercial in 2005
10 and the new zoning classification also reduced the maximum permitted building
11 height in the San Pablo corridor from 45 ft. to 38 ft.; and

12
13 **WHEREAS**, the current building height of 40 ft. makes the subject site legal
14 non-conforming; and

15
16 **WHEREAS**, a public hearing notice mailed to property owners within 300 ft.
17 of the subject site and was posted in three public places on Friday, April 13, 2012
18 pursuant to Government Code Section 65090; and

19
20 **WHEREAS**, on April 24, 2012 the Planning & Zoning Commission has held
21 a public hearing, considered all public comments received, the presentation by City
22 staff, the staff report, and all other pertinent documents regarding the proposed
23 request; and

24
25 **WHEREAS**, the Planning & Zoning Commission continued the item to a date
26 certain of May 8, 2012 and directed City staff to craft draft findings of denial for
27 review and subsequent action;

28
29 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Planning & Zoning
30 Commission of the City of Albany denies application request PA08-083 based on the
31 following findings:

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1. CEQA

Finding: The project proposal is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines as it is being denied approval.

Evidence: The Planning & Zoning Commission hereby finds that this project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15270(a), which exempts projects that are denied by the public agency.

2. Design Review

Findings for Design Review approval (Per section 20.100.050.E of the AMC)

- 1. **Finding Required for Approval:** The project conforms to the General Plan, any applicable specific plan, applicable design guidelines adopted by the City of Albany, and all applicable provisions of this Chapter.

Evidence: The Commission is unable to make the required findings for approval because the project does not comply with Section 20.24.080 (B) where roof coverage cannot exceed 10%. Currently, the roof-top coverage exceeds the threshold and is 14.5%. This coverage includes existing Sprint equipment facilities and the roof-top penthouse.

The Commission is unable to make the required findings for approval because the project does not comply with Section 20.24.080 (C) as the installation on the south side of the site exceeds the height limit by more than 6’ and is within ten feet of the perimeter of the plate line of the top story.

1 2. **Finding Required for Approval:** Approval of project design is consistent
2 with the purpose and intent of this section, which states “designs of
3 projects...will result in improvements that are visually and functionally
4 appropriate to their site conditions and harmonious with their surroundings,
5 including natural landforms and vegetation. Additional purposes of design
6 review include (but are not limited to): that retention and maintenance of
7 existing buildings and landscape features are considered; and that site access
8 and vehicular parking are sufficient.”
9

10 **Evidence:** The Commission is unable to make the required findings
11 for approval because the project as proposed would make the legal
12 non-conforming subject site further non-conforming by increasing the
13 roof coverage area. Additionally, the existing building height is legal
14 non-conforming and is 40 ft. in height.
15

16 3. **Finding Required for Approval:** Approval of the project is in the interest of
17 public health, safety and general welfare.
18

19 **Evidence:** The Commission is unable to make the required findings
20 for approval because the Zoning Code is adopted in order to protect
21 and promote public health, safety, peace, comfort, convenience,
22 prosperity, and general welfare. The project as it is proposed fails to
23 comply with Section 20.24.080 (B) of the Albany Municipal Code. By
24 failing to comply with provisions contained in the Zoning Code, the
25 project as proposed does not protect the public health, safety and
26 general welfare of the community.
27

28 4. **Finding Required for Approval:** The project is in substantial compliance
29 with applicable general and specific Standards for Review stated in
30 Subsection 20.100.050.D.
31

1 **Evidence:** The Commission is unable to make the required findings
2 for approval because the proposed project is inconsistent with
3 provision (j) “Retention and Maintenance of Buildings.” The project
4 design fails to improve the existing building and would make the
5 building further non-compliant by increasing roof coverage.
6

7 **3. Conditional Use Permit**
8

- 9 1. **Finding Required for Approval:** The size, location and intensity of the
10 project are desirable and compatible with the neighborhood and community.
11

12 **Evidence:** The Commission is unable to make the required findings
13 for approval because the size of the project as proposed exceeds the
14 roof-top coverage requirements contained in Section 20.24.080 (B).
15 The project location is proposed to be a legal non-conforming building
16 and roof-top. The intensity of roof coverage would be further
17 increased if the use were to be approved and the project constructed.
18 Due to these inconsistencies, the project is not compatible with the
19 surrounding neighborhood and community.
20

- 21 2. **Finding Required for Approval:** The project will not be detrimental to the
22 health, safety, convenience or general welfare of people residing or working
23 in the vicinity, or injurious to property, improvements or potential
24 development in the vicinity, with respect to aspects including but not limited
25 to the following:

- 26 a. The nature of the proposed site, including its size and shape, and
27 the proposed size, shape and arrangement of structures
28 b. The accessibility and traffic patterns for persons and vehicles, the type
29 and volume of such traffic, and the adequacy of proposed off-street
30 parking and loading.

- 1 c. The safeguards afforded to prevent noxious or offensive emissions
2 such as noise, glare, dust and odor.
3 d. Treatment given, as appropriate, to such aspects as landscaping,
4 screening, open spaces, parking and loading areas, service areas,
5 lighting and signs.

6
7 **Evidence:**

- 8 a. The Commission is unable to make the required findings for
9 approval because the proposed equipment and arrangement of
10 structures would increase the roof-top coverage, which is
11 already fails to comply with provision 20.24.080 (B) where
12 there is a maximum of 10% roof-top coverage.
13 b. N/A
14 c. N/A
15 d. N/A

- 16
17 3. **Finding Required for Approval:** That such use or feature as proposed will
18 comply with the applicable provisions of this Chapter and will be consistent
19 with the policies and standards of the General Plan.

20
21 **Evidence:** The Commission is unable to make the required findings
22 for approval because the project as proposed fails to comply with
23 Section 20.24.080 (B) where roof coverage cannot exceed 10%.
24 Currently, the roof-top coverage exceeds the threshold and is 14.5%.
25 This coverage includes existing Sprint equipment facilities and the
26 roof-top penthouse.

27
28 **4. Section 20.20.100F.5 of the Albany Municipal Code**

- 29
30 1. **Finding Required for Approval:** The establishment or expansion of the
31 facility demonstrates a reasonable attempt to minimize stand-alone facilities,

1 is designed to protect the visual quality of the City, and will not have an undue
2 adverse impact on historic resources, scenic views, or other natural or man-
3 made resources.

4
5 **Evidence:** The Commission is unable to make the required findings
6 for approval because the establishment of the facility would adversely
7 impact an existing non-conforming building. As proposed, the project
8 would increase the roof-top coverage and fails to comply with the
9 Albany Municipal Code.

- 10
11 2. **Finding Required for Approval:** All applicable Development Standards in
12 subsection 20.20.100.E. above have been met; or: Finding for an exception to
13 the Development Standards: Strict compliance would not provide for adequate
14 radio-frequency signal reception and that no other alternative solutions which
15 would meet the Development Standards are feasible.

16
17 **Evidence:** The Commission is unable to make the required findings
18 for approval because the Section 20.20.100 (E) (2) (h) specifically
19 cross references compliance with Section 20.24.080 (B) and classifies
20 wireless facilities as ancillary roof-top structures which cannot exceed
21 10% roof-top coverage.

- 22
23 3. **Finding Required for Approval:** The placement, construction, or
24 modification of a wireless telecommunications facility in the proposed
25 location is necessary for the provision of wireless communication services to
26 Albany residents and businesses, or their owners, customers, guests, or
27 invitees, or other persons traveling in or about the City.

28
29 **Evidence:** The Commission is unable to make the required findings
30 for approval because the proposed location is not suitable for the

1 installation of wireless facility as the building and roof top coverage
2 are legal-nonconforming.

- 3
- 4 **Finding Required for Approval:** Finding for establishment of a satellite dish
5 or parabolic antenna exceeding thirty-nine (39) inches in diameter: A smaller
6 or different antenna cannot feasibly accomplish the provider's technical
7 objectives and that the facility will not be readily visible.

8

9 **Evidence:** N/A

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- 11 **Finding Required for Approval:** Findings for the establishment of a wireless
12 communications facility that is not co-located with other existing or proposed
13 facilities or a new freestanding pole or tower (at least one (1) finding
14 required):

- 15
- 16 a) Co-location is not feasible;
- 17
- 18 b) Co-location would have more significant adverse effects on
19 views or other environmental consideration;
- 20
- 21 c) Co-location is not permitted by the property owner;
- 22
- 23 d) Co-location would impair the quality of service to the existing
24 facility;
- 25
- 26 e) Co-location would require existing facilities at the same
27 location to go off-line for a significant period of time; or

28

29 **Evidence:** The project as proposed would be considered a co-location.
30 These provisions are not applicable to the application request.

31

1 **PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Planning & Zoning Commission of the City of
2 Albany on the 8th day of May 2012.

3
4 AYES: Panian, Maass, Eisenmann


5
6 NOES: Moss

7
8 ABSENT:

9
10 ABSTAIN:



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13
14 LEO PANIAN, PLANNING AND ZONING
15 COMMISSION VICE CHAIR

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19 ATTEST: 

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21 Jeff Bond
22 Community Development Director

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