

DATE: July 22, 2008

TO: Design Review Board

FROM: Kraig Tambornini, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: File No's: PA08-007
Project: Conceptual Review of AT&T Roof-Mount Wireless Antenna Facility
Address: 280 Smith Ranch Road

SITE DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

	GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION	ZONING	LAND USE
Project Site	Neighborhood Commercial	PD1444	Movie Theater
North:	Retail Office/Open Space	PD1444/1604	Commercial
East:	Medium Density Residential	PD1399	Residential Condominiums
South:	Office	PD1676/1488	Office Building/Parking
West:	Office	PD1676/1488	Office Building

LOT SIZE

Minimum required: 6,000 sq. ft.

Project site: 8.95 acres

LANDSCAPING

Required: 0.9 acres (10%)

Proposed project: No Change

HEIGHT

Maximum allowed: 36' *equipment screens may extend above the height limit through design review approval

Proposed project: 31'6" total overall height

SETBACKS

	<u>Front</u>	<u>Rear</u>	<u>Side/Street Side</u>
Required:	NA	NA	NA
Proposed project:	154'9"	162'11"	115'10"

BACKGROUND

Site Description/Setting:

The site is an 8.95 acre commercial property in North San Rafael, east of US101 on the south side of Smith Ranch Road and developed with a 1.5 story theater building. The property up slopes slightly and is elevated up to 9 feet above the adjacent roadway to the north, and 14 feet above property to the east. The site is bordered by commercial structures on the north, south and west, and a high density residential condominium development on the east side.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Use: AT&T has submitted for conceptual design review for 12 4'-4" panel antennae and 5 equipment cabinets on the roof of the Regency Cinema commercial building located at 280 Smith Ranch Road.

Architecture: The existing commercial theater building is approximately 21-feet tall, and the rooftop is enclosed with a +/-3-foot parapet wall. The building is painted light brown and beige, with dark brown trim accents. The proposed equipment cabinets would extend approximately 4-feet higher than the top of the existing parapet wall, and would be setback 21 feet 5 inches from the east (interior) side of the roof.

Four new screen walls (e.g. RF transparent fiberglass antenna screening) are proposed to be placed at the four corners of the building. The 12 antenna panels would be placed behind the RF transparent screening, at the northeast and southeast corners. The new screen wall sections are approximately 14'-6" wide by 7-foot tall (above the roof parapet), with an overall height of 31'-6" above finish grade level. The photo-renderings show that the screens would be a dark brown color intended to match the building, and would tier down to the existing parapet wall.

ANALYSIS

Wireless facilities require Use Permit and Design Review Permit approvals, pursuant to Zoning Code Section 14.16.360 (Wireless Communication Facilities). Building mounted stealth facility designs are encouraged and may be approved by the Zoning Administrator. All new facilities are referred to the Design Review Board.

Review Criteria:

The applicant is requesting preliminary review, pursuant to Zoning Code Section 14.25.030.B, to determine if the conceptual design approach is appropriate. To help facilitate this review, the applicant has provided detailed plans along with photo-simulations of the facility.

Staff has identified the following as applicable zoning and design criteria that should be used in evaluating the concept:

- **Design facilities to appear as an integral part of the structure, or otherwise minimize their appearance.**
- **Newly-created architectural features are encouraged to screen equipment from view.**
- **Design screening to integrate architecturally, or otherwise made as unobtrusive as possible, with the style and character of the structure.**
- **Placement in direct line with significant view corridors shall be avoided.**
- **Facilities shall not be located on the front or most prominent façade, and shall be located above the pedestrian line-of-sight, the extent feasible.**
- **Whenever possible, associated equipment shall be placed within the existing building or underground. When not feasible, equipment shall be screened or integrated architecturally to minimize its appearance and visually blend with the surrounding built and natural environment.**
- **Backup generators shall be designed and located to comply with the noise ordinance, Chapter 8.13.**

- **Radio-frequency Radiation emissions at the site shall meet FCC standards.**

Staff Recommendation:

In concept, staff feels the design approach and concept is on the right track by proposing screening behind an architectural feature. However, staff feels the photo-simulations show that the screens may be out of scale with the building, and will require additional design work to integrate with the built environment. Staff recommends the following revisions should be considered:

- Lower the 7-foot height, step-back, and/or add detailing to the proposed screen walls to minimize height and scale concerns.
- Add detailing to integrate the screens with the existing architecture. Consider matching the scale and design of the existing building parapet walls with vertical siding and horizontal painted trim.
- Wrap/return the sides of the screen enclosure so that the screens appear to be fully enclosed and conceal the back side of the enclosure from public view.
- Provide a screening detail(s) for the equipment cabinets; in the event it is necessary to screen views.
- Discuss solutions for generator equipment noise and locations.
- Identify constraints/opportunities for relocating equipment inside.

The Board is asked to provide comments on the proposed design, and give direction to the applicant on the merits of this approach. The RFR analysis and additional application requirements will be required with a formal submittal.

EXHIBITS

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Photo-simulation
- C. Project Plans

cc: **Cortel LLC, Shannon McDougall, 1023 Eagle Ave, Alameda, CA 94501**
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Captains Cove HOA, Luann Scigliano, Hill & Co RE, 371 Bel Marin Keys Blvd, Suite 120, Novato CA 94949