Planning Commission
Agenda Item

June 16, 2014

TO: **Chair Steiner and**
Members of the Planning Commission

THRU: **Leslie Aranda Roseberry**
Planning Manager

FROM: **Marissa Moshier**
Associate Planner – Historic Preservation

SUBJECT

PUBLIC HEARING: Conditional Use Permit No. 2908-13, Design Review Committee No. 4695-13, and Minor Site Plan Review No. 0741-13 – AT&T Wireless Site, 520 W. Walnut Avenue

SUMMARY

The applicant proposes to construct a 45' tall by 12' wide by 12' deep tower to house equipment and antennas for a wireless communication facility in the Old Towne Historic District. The proposed tower will be integrated with an existing 28' tall structure, which is one of four non-contributing structures to the Historic District on the property. Although the tower is integrated with an existing structure, it requires separate structural supports and is considered to be a ground-mounted stealth installation, which requires a Conditional Use Permit in the Old Towne Historic District.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 07-14 entitled:

> **A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ORANGE APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 2908-13, DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE NO. 4695-13, AND MINOR SITE PLAN REVIEW NO. 0741-13 FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A TOWER TO HOUSE ANTENNAS AND EQUIPMENT FOR A WIRELESS COMMUNICATION FACILITY IN THE OLD TOWNE HISTORIC DISTRICT ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 520 WEST WALNUT AVENUE**

AUTHORIZATION/GUIDELINES

Orange Municipal Code (OMC) Sections 17.08.020 and 17.10.030C authorize the Planning Commission to review and take action on Conditional Use Permit requests for ground-mounted stealth wireless facilities in the Old Towne Historic District.

PUBLIC NOTICE

On June 5, 2014, the City sent a Public Hearing Notice to a total of 208 property owners/tenants within a 300-foot radius of the project site and persons specifically requesting notice. The project site was also posted in two locations with notification on that same date.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Categorical Exemption: The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 (Class 3 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), because the project involves construction of a small structure. There is no environmental public review required for a Categorical Exemption.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Applicant:	Core Development Services for AT&T Wireless
Property Owner:	Raymond Family Partnership, LP
Property Location:	520 W. Walnut Avenue
Existing General Plan Land Use Element designation:	Industrial
Existing Zoning Classification:	M-2
Old Towne:	Yes, non-contributing buildings
Specific Plan/PC:	Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan
Site Size:	179,903 SF
Circulation:	W. Walnut Avenue is a collector street
Existing conditions:	Four buildings with 29,177 SF of industrial/administrative office use. All buildings are non-contributors to the Historic District
Surrounding land uses and Zoning:	R-3 to the west, P-I (SP) to the south and east, M-2 to the north
Previous Applications/Entitlements:	None

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to construct a 45' tall by 12' wide by 12' deep tower to house 12 antennas, 24 remote radio heads, 4 DC surge suppressors, 8 stacked radio equipment cabinets, 1 power plant cabinet, and 3 GPS antennas for a wireless communications facility. The proposed tower will be integrated with a 28' tall existing structure on the property. The existing structure is a standing seam metal clad canopy/shed used for storage of building materials. Because the tower requires separate structural elements to support the installation, it is considered to be a ground-mounted stealth facility. The tower will extend 17' above the ridge of the existing structure. The new tower will be clad in painted standing seam metal to match the existing structure. The upper 10' of the tower will be clad in fiber-reinforced plastic (FRP) to match the standing seam metal cladding and to screen the antennas. The mass of the tower is broken up by a 12 inch painted stainless steel reveal in the cladding at 35' in height.

Development Standards

	Required	**Proposed**	**Code Section**
Building Height	45' in M-2 zone, if more than 50' from a residential district	45' tower integrated with 28' existing structure	OMC 17.20.080
Landscaping (non-residential)	Existing landscaping. Proposal does not include landscape changes.	N/A	N/A
Parking	Existing parking. Proposal does not include changes to parking.	N/A	N/A
Setback, Front	20'-0"	Approximately 470'	OMC 17.20.090
Setback, Rear	0'-0"	124'-3"	OMC 17.20.090
Setback, Side East	20'-0"	100'-5"	OMC 17.20.090
Setback, Side West	20'-0"	162'	OMC 17.20.090

APPLICATION(S) REQUESTED / REQUIRED FINDINGS

Wireless Communications Facility Conditional Use Permit: The applicant is requesting a Conditional Use Permit to construct a tower to enclose antennas and equipment for a new wireless communications facility at 520 W. Walnut Avenue in the Old Towne Historic District.

Required Findings:

1. A conditional use permit shall be granted only if the wireless communication facility can be installed and operated in a manner that preserves the aesthetic character of the portion of the community in which it is located;
2. A conditional use permit shall not be granted if it will cause deterioration of aesthetics for the area in which it is located;
3. A conditional use permit shall be granted if it can be found that the distance separation standards between ground-mounted wireless communication facilities precludes the wireless supplier from providing service.

Design Review Committee: The applicant is requesting approval of a Design Review Committee application to construct a tower to enclose antennas and equipment for a new wireless communications facility at 520 W. Walnut Avenue in the Old Towne Historic District.

Required Findings:

1. In the Old Towne Historic District, the proposed work conforms to the prescriptive standards and design criteria referenced and/or recommended by the Design Review Committee or other reviewing body for the project.
2. In any National Register Historic District, the proposed work complies with the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines.
3. The project design upholds community aesthetics through the use of an internally consistent, integrated design theme and is consistent with all adopted specific plans, applicable design standards and their required findings.
4. For infill residential development, as specified in the City of Orange infill residential design guidelines, the new structure(s) or addition are compatible with the scale, massing, orientation, and articulation of the surrounding development and will preserve or enhance existing neighborhood character.

Minor Site Plan Review: The applicant is requesting approval of a Minor Site Plan Review application to construct a tower to enclose antennas and equipment for a new wireless communications facility at 520 W. Walnut Avenue in the Old Towne Historic District.

Required Findings:

1. The project design is compatible with surrounding development and neighborhoods.
2. The project conforms to City development standards and any applicable special design guidelines or specific plan requirements.
3. The project provides for safe and adequate vehicular and pedestrian circulation, both on- and off-site.
4. City services are available and adequate to serve the project.
5. The project has been designed to fully mitigate or substantially minimize adverse environmental effects.

ANALYSIS/STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

Issue 1: Location of Tower

AT&T has determined that a wireless coverage gap exists in the area extending approximately from Walnut Avenue to Almond Avenue and from Main Street to Waverly Street. To address the coverage gap, the applicant conducted a search for potential antenna locations in the area bounded by Sycamore Avenue, Chapman Avenue, Citrus Street and Cypress Street. No existing wireless communication facilities are available in this area for co-locating new antennas with existing antennas. The applicant studied potential locations for the new facility on Batavia Street and Walnut Avenue, including locations outside of the boundaries of the Historic District. None of these potential locations had sufficient area to meet the setback requirements or the AT&T leasing requirements for a tower of adequate height to address the coverage gap. Property owners with adequately sized properties also declined to lease space to AT&T. The property at 520 West Walnut Avenue has sufficient area and distance from adjacent residential development to meet the setback requirements for a 45' tall tower.

The applicant also studied several options for tower locations on the property at 520 West Walnut Avenue. Staff recommended that the new antennas be stealth mounted to the existing tower element of the building on the north side of the property. At 48' 6" tall, the existing tower element has sufficient height to provide adequate coverage for mounted antennas, but this location is at the center of an existing building and does not have adequate access for AT&T's service equipment. The applicant also proposed a 50' tall tower on top of the existing building immediately adjacent to the railroad tracks. This tower location was incorporated into the remnant of a 25' tall, wood-clad cooling tower. This proposal had an industrial character in keeping with the property, but was set back only 20' from the railroad tracks. This proposed location had greater visibility from West Walnut Avenue and from North Cypress Street and had a greater visual impact on the Historic District.

In the proposed location, the tower is more than 100' from the west, east and south property lines to reduce the impact of the tower on surrounding properties. The proposed tower will be minimally visible from West Walnut Avenue. The tower will be most visible from immediately to the east on North Cypress Street due to the surface parking lot and undeveloped parcels on the east side of North Cypress Street. Staff recommends that the visibility of the tower is reasonable for this location, given the industrial character of the properties adjacent to the railroad tracks and given the existing 48' 6" tower element on the property.

Issue 2: Height of Tower

The proposed 45' tall tower is the maximum height allowed in the M-2 zone for structures that are not within 50 feet of a residential district. Although the property is adjacent to a residential zone, the proposed tower location is approximately 150' from the residential district, allowing a height of 45'. Additional height in M-2 zones may be allowed if the building is set back from the nearest property line by a distance equal to the height of the building. The applicant initially proposed a 65' tall by 15' wide by 15' deep tower and worked extensively with staff to reduce the height of the tower by 20' and the width and depth by 3'. This substantial reduction in height brings the proposed tower within the allowable height limit and within the range of the other buildings on site.

The reduction in width and depth also reduces the mass of the tower in relation to the canopy structure with which it is integrated.

The building on the north side of the property has a 48' 6" tall tower element, the tallest structure on the property. The proposed tower will be 3' 6" shorter than this tower element. The proposed tower is also set back from the east and south property lines by approximately 100' and 124' respectively. Placing the tower toward the center of the site further reduces the impact of the height on the Historic District, particularly on the contributing residential properties on North Cypress Street. Integrating the tower with the existing 28' tall canopy structure, so that is extends 17' above the existing structure, also reduces the appearance of the mass and height of the tower.

Issue 3: Compatibility of Tower

Although the property is within the Old Towne Historic District, it is located on the northern edge of the Historic District within the band of industrial development surrounding the railroad tracks. The utilitarian design of the tower is in keeping with the industrial buildings in this corridor. Tower elements on canopy/shed structures of this type are not unusual in industrial corridors similar to those found in the Historic District, and the proposed tower is compatible with the design and materials of similar industrial buildings. The proposed standing seam metal cladding material is compatible with the industrial character of properties adjacent to the railroad tracks in the Historic District and is consistent with the existing development on the property. The FRP cladding on the upper 10 feet of the tower is required for antenna reception; metal cladding in this location would interfere with the transmission of wireless signals. The FRP cladding with be fabricated and painted to match the standing seam metal cladding of the existing structure and the lower section of the new tower. Staff recommends that this alternate material is appropriate for the wireless facility use and is compatible with the existing buildings. All equipment will be screened from view, so that only the standing seam cladding will be visible from the street and surrounding properties.

ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The Staff Review Committee reviewed the proposed project on April 30, 2014 and recommended that the project proceed to the Design Review Committee (DRC).

The Design Review Committee reviewed the project on May 7, 2014 and recommended approval to the Planning Commission subject to the Conditions of Approval contained in the Planning Commission Resolution No. PC 07-14. The May 7, 2014 DRC meeting minutes are included as Attachment 7.

ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS

Attachments to Report:

1. Planning Commission Resolution
2. Vicinity Map
3. Plans, date stamp received June 5, 2014

4. Photo Simulations, date stamp received June 5, 2014
5. Site Photographs
6. DPR Form 523 for 520 W. Walnut Avenue
7. Design Review Committee Staff Report dated May 7, 2014
8. Design Review Committee Meeting Minutes dated May 7, 2014

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