

CUP23-0011 public input

P.C. 6/13/24
Item # 2
21 pages

Steve Ulrich <steveulrich@sbcglobal.net>

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To: Benjamin A. Koff <Benjamin.Koff@edcgov.us>; Aurora M. Osbual <Aurora.Osbual@edcgov.us>; Planning Department <planning@edcgov.us>

Cc: Katie Pierman <katiepierman@gmail.com>; Jeremy Pierman <jeremypierman@hotmail.com>; Suzanne Blake <appygri@gmail.com>; David Gersten <david.gersten@sbcglobal.net>; chadashleyoxford@gmail.com <chadashleyoxford@gmail.com>; Craig Barranti <cbarranti@msn.com>; Nanette Barranti <nbarranti@hotmail.com>; verndmiller@yahoo.com <verndmiller@yahoo.com>; Don Mette <dmmette@yahoo.com>; mettegirl60@yahoo.com <mettegirl60@yahoo.com>; sazzouni@yahoo.com <sazzouni@yahoo.com>; hunkeguy <hunkeguy@aol.com>

📎 1 attachments (3 MB)

Opposition letter from neighbors CUP23-011-merged-compressed.pdf;

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To whom it may concern:

Please download the attached file and add it to your file CUP23-0011 so that it will be considered by the Planning Commissioners.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to respond back to me so that we can clear up any discrepancies or omissions I may have made.

Respectfully yours,

Steve Ulrich
(916) 801-4824

**Opposition to Verizon cell tower project proposed for Malcolm Dixon Rd., El
Dorado Hills, CA
El Dorado County conditional use permit file # CUP23-0011**

We, the neighbors of the above entitled project, collectively oppose this project for the following reasons under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

- 1) **Aesthetics:** The proposed 108' Monopine tower interferes with the view of most homes nearby by interrupting the horizon seen over the tops of the local trees. (Oak Savanna, Oak Woodland and Blue Oaks) This will be a substantial degradation of the existing visual character quality of the site and the surrounding rural, quiet area. Per the El Dorado County Ordinance No. 5067, Section 9.02.040 this could be construed as a Public Nuisance due to the fact this tower would be offensive to the senses so as to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property including a condition of visual blight. Furthermore, there have been several studies done throughout the United States by the National Association of Realtors attesting to the fact that property values decline. Polls have been conducted showing upwards of 94% of potential home buyers have stated they would not purchase a home within sight of a cell tower and property values near these towers sell for upwards of 20% less than comparable homes with no cell towers in sight (per National Business Post 2022).
- 2) **Impact on Wildlife and Vegetation:** El Dorado County has diverse wildlife and vegetation that could be affected by the construction and presence of a cell phone tower. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife service has made mention that birds are regularly found dead around these large towers. They are currently investigating the reason behind this but evidence suggests night-migrating songbirds are either attracted to or disoriented by the towers. (Longcore et al. 2012a) Additionally, underground utility lines planned would possibly disrupt the fragile root system of nearby oak trees causing harm to the trees and the nesting grounds of the Kite bird (per Verizon report,) a fully protected species.
- 3) **Noise pollution:** This is an important environmental consideration under CEQA. At this point, all that has been submitted to the County are best guesses based upon computer models and manufacturer statements of noise emitted. This does not take into account the topography and open spaces between the project and nearby homes. This fact will amplify the noises emitted by the cooling equipment running non-stop and the large diesel generator when it's running. This issue has not been adequately mitigated. This would necessitate building a natural stone, or similar artificial stone, wall around the compound with additional sound suppressing insulation of the equipment.
- 4) **Health and Safety Concerns:** The Federal Communications Act of 1996 is used to set certain standards when it comes to cell towers. However, since that act was enacted prior to the advent of 5G cell radiation, which was only rolled out in 2018, it cannot be dismissed as no concern. Private studies both in the U.S. and other countries have shown a detrimental effect on people so, even though it's not definitive, it may be too late by the time a child develops a condition from too much exposure. Verizon's Radio Frequency (RF) report uses a 6' tall person standing on the ground near the tower but does not address persons who will be higher due to the topography of the area. Several neighboring homes will be at a much higher level and subject to more RF radiation due to that fact. Some of those homes will be near eye level with the proposed antennas attached to the tower. Additional RF studies should be supplied to address

these concerns. According to the Verizon RF map, radiation will spill over onto an adjacent property where children play. Fire danger is also a big concern for everyone and this location is in a high fire danger area. A fire proof wall should be installed around the project. Due to the fact this is an unmanned facility, one small manually operated fire extinguisher would be insufficient. Additional fire suppression equipment should be installed due to the fact that there will be a 211 gallon diesel tank, a generator and other electrical equipment on site. CEQA and defensible space is all about protecting people.

- 5) **Alternatives Analysis:** There were allegedly 12 alternate sites considered by Verizon but two of those had no reasons given why they were rejected. When an out-of-state landowner was found and agreed to their plans, Verizon stopped looking. A project of this magnitude should have several backup locations without intruding on the natural ambiance of the area. A quick canvass of the area found an open minded owner located at 1350 Green Valley Road within Verizon's targeted area, approximately 1000' away from the proposed project, who stated they are interested in having the tower installed on their property. Another potential site that wasn't considered is 1401 Malcolm Dixon Rd. where a large area is being developed for homes. This site is adjacent to the proposed site. None of Verizon's potential alternate sites were within the low coverage, red zones on Verizon's maps that they are trying to fill. Therefore, we take issue with Verizon's use of the term "exhaustive search" for alternate sites on their application. The applicant wants to build one massive 108' cell tower as opposed to building smaller towers that wouldn't obstruct the horizon and local scenery by using Oak tree camouflage, allowable per County Ordinance 130.40.130, Section 2. There are other sites in the area that would have fewer environmental consequences than this site.
- 6) **Cumulative Impacts:** CEQA also considers the cumulative impacts of projects which could lead to significant environmental degradation as more of these towers are approved in tranquil residential areas instead of being built in more industrialized or remote areas.
- 7) **Public Participation and Transparency:** The importance of public participation is vital during the CEQA process. As members of the community, we ask that you listen to our concerns and assist us in keeping our beautiful county a great place to live and work. We urge you to deny this permit and instruct Verizon to look for a more congenial site to build this unsightly equipment farm.

Please review the attached exhibits so that you have a better understanding of the magnitude of the concerns we have. It does not appear that this project is exempt from CEQA as Verizon claims.

Respectfully,

Katie and Jeremy Pierman: katiepierman@gmail.com and jeremypierman@hotmail.com

Suzanne Blake and David Gersten: appygrl@gmail.com and david.gersten@sbcglobal.net

Chad and Ashley Oxford: chadashleyoxford@gmail.com

Craig and Nanette Barranti: cbarranti@msn.com and nbarranti@hotmail.com

Vern and Phyllis Miller: verndmiller@yahoo.com

Don and Maureen Mette: dmmette@yahoo.com and mettegirl60@yahoo.com

Steve and Teresa Ulrich: steveulrich@sbcglobal.net and knittingshopbybop@gmail.com

Sam Zazzouni: Sazzouni@yahoo.com

Michael Saint John/J. Scott Brown MD: Hunkeguy@aol.com

Jessica and Joe Mueller: jessica@sbnwellness.com

EXHIBIT A

Satellite view of project and surrounding area.



Opposition to Verizon cell tower project proposed for Malcolm Dixon Rd., El Dorado Hills

24-1001 Public Comment

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EXHIBIT B-1

View of project from 5150 Steves Way rear deck. Before/after.



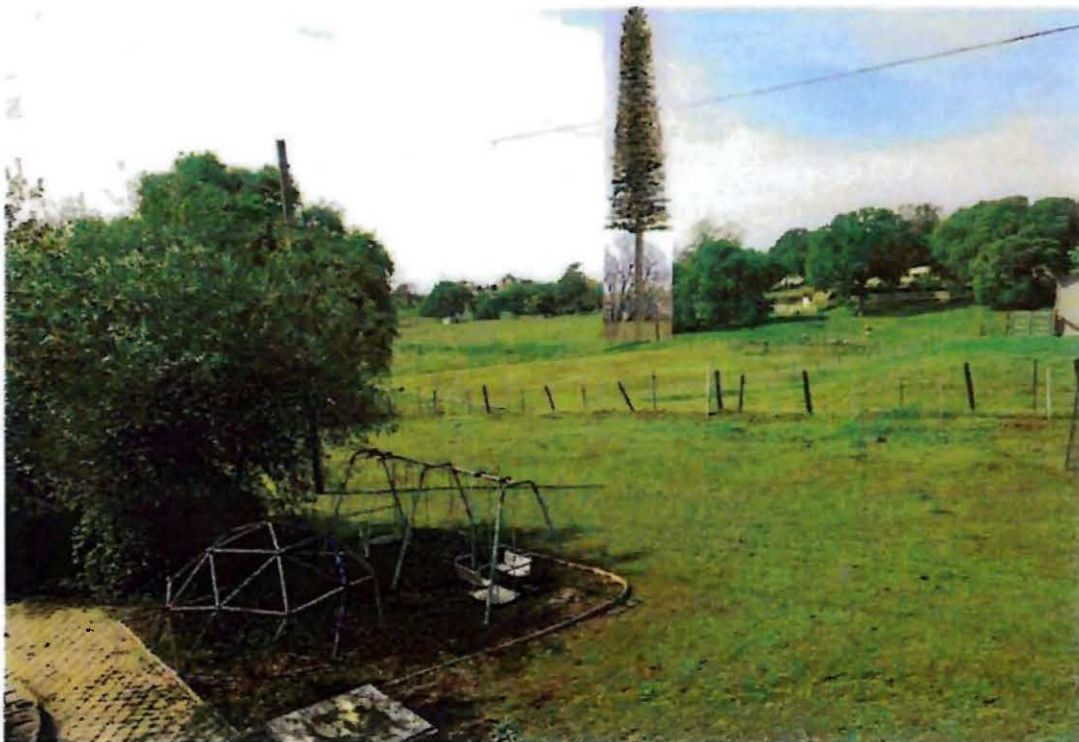
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EXHIBIT B-2

View of project from 5150 Steves Way rear deck. Before/after.



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EXHIBIT B-3

View of project from 5150 Steves Way living room. Before/after.



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Exhibit C-1

View of project from 1519 Malcolm Dixon Rd.



Exhibit C-2

View of project from 1519 Malcolm Dixon Rd.



Exhibit C-3

View of project from 1519 Malcolm Dixon Rd. (second house opposite side of street)



Exhibit C-4

View of project from 1519 Malcolm Dixon Rd. (second house opposite side of street)



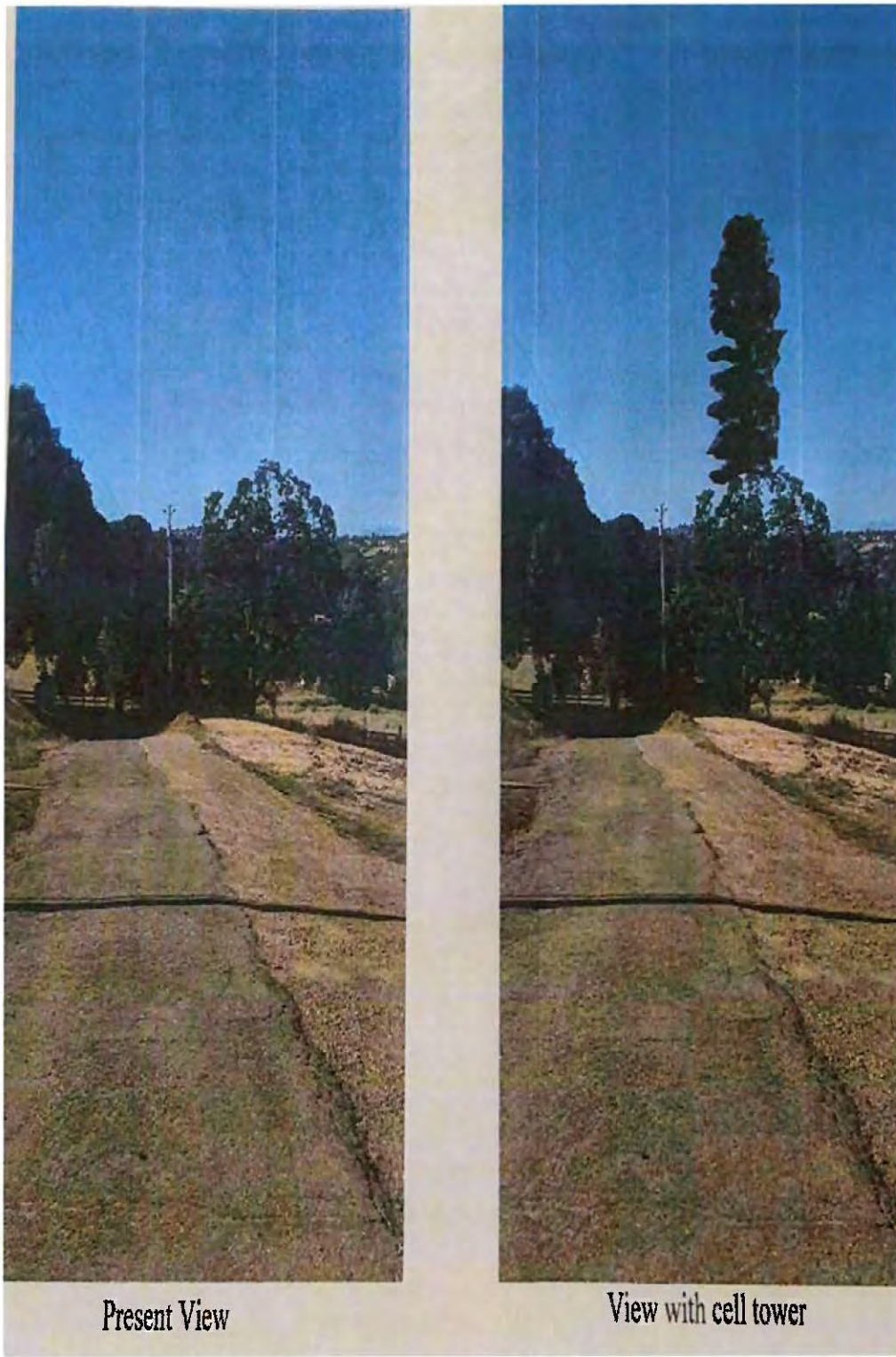
Exhibit C-5

View of project from 1519 Malcolm Dixon Rd. (second house opposite side of street)



EXHIBIT D

View of project from 2040 Casa Robles Rd. Before/after.



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EXHIBIT E-1

View of project from 2030 Casa Robles Rd. Before/after.



Opposition to Verizon cell tower project proposed for Malcolm Dixon Rd., El Dorado Hills

EXHIBIT E-2

View of project from 2030 Casa Robles Rd. Before/after.



Opposition to Verizon cell tower project proposed for Malcolm Dixon Rd., El Dorado Hills

EXHIBIT F

View from 5120 Steves Way. Before/After.



Opposition to Verizon cell tower project proposed for Malcolm Dixon Rd., El Dorado Hills

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EXHIBIT F-1

View from 5120 Steves Way. Before/after.

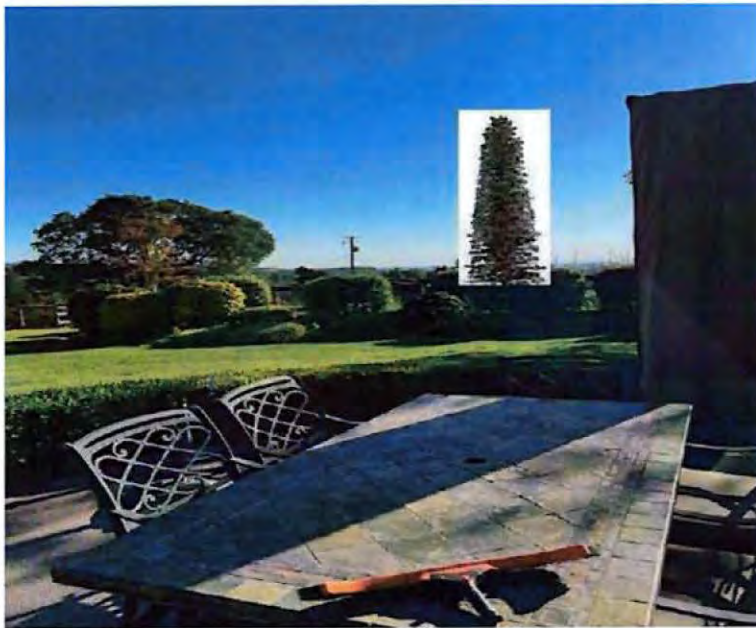


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EXHIBIT G-1

View of project from 2080 Arroyo Vista Rd. Before/after.



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EXHIBIT G-2

View of project from 2080 Arroyo Vista. Before/after.



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EXHIBIT G-3
CBS report on cell tower fire.



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