

Dusty Duley
Planner II
Mendocino County Planning and Building Services
860 N. Bush St.
Ukiah, CA 95482
Phone: (707) 463-4281
FAX: (707) 463-5709
email: duleyd@co.mendocino.ca.us
Web site: www.co.mendocino.ca.us/planning

Hi Folks,

Wanted to let you know that you are all invited to meet with fellow stakeholders and staff to discuss the current draft version of the County Wireless Guidelines. The meeting will be at the County complex at 860 North Bush Street on December 5th to begin at 10am.

The placement of new cell towers within our County continues to be a contentious issue, with requests often taking up considerable time and energy from all parties involved including the public. Three of the main goals behind directing staff to rewrite the guidelines are to try and craft language that will (1) help minimize the number of new towers, (2) mitigate aesthetic impacts (i.e. stealth design/faux structure, located in vegetated/forested areas), and (3) avoid conflicts with sensitive receptors (i.e. residences).

Number 3 might be the biggest challenge as, in my experience, the majority of County residences that oppose cell towers do so out of concern that RF emissions emitted from cell towers may cause ill health effects. However the Federal Government does not allow local governments to make decisions for the placement of cell towers, based on health concerns from RF emissions. The second most common issue brought forward is that of aesthetics which local governments can use in determining appropriate siting and design features cellular towers.

Staff is looking forward to learning more about the site selection process that a cellular carrier goes through before making application. To that goal, it would be helpful to have folks that could represent individual roles in the selection process. (real estate, RF engineer, permit agent, etc...)

I have provided the web link to the current version of the Wireless Guidelines below and attached staff's draft version with changes marked in bold. This is the same version that was previously circulated some time ago. I'm aware that some folks have submitted legal opinions on new cell tower legislation, to be reviewed by our County Counsel, and are still awaiting a response. Please know that Staff has received direction to move forward with this meeting regardless of whether Counsel has time to respond to legal opinions/questions or not and this may be your only chance to sit down with stakeholders before taking Guidelines back to the Planning Commission in January.

Please RSVP with me at your earliest convenience. If you feel that it would be beneficial to invite someone not included in this email, please check with me first. Feel free to call me if you have any questions. Hope to see you all there. Thanks

Dusty