From:	Architectural Review Board
To:	Lew, Alex; Osma Thompson (osma.thompson@gmail.com); Baltay, Peter; Gooyer, Robert; Furth, Wynne
Cc:	Atkinson, Rebecca; French, Amy
Subject:	FW: Calling your attention to a conflict of interest
Date:	Monday, March 12, 2018 9:59:35 AM

From: Jyotsna Nimkar [mailto:jnimkar@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 10, 2018 7:51 PM
To: Council, City
Cc: Architectural Review Board; Clerk, City
Subject: Calling your attention to a conflict of interest

Dear Mayor Kniss, Vice-Mayor Filseth and Members of City Council:

I am writing to more formally bring to your attention something I believe you will be as troubled by as I am, and it is this: When a local property owner called the City because he was concerned about the level of radiation being emitted by a cell phone tower adjacent to his property, the City hired Verizon's engineering firm—the same firm Verizon has hired to persuade residents they have nothing to be concerned about when it comes to cell tower radiation—to conduct what was supposed to be an "independent" evaluation of whether the cell tower was in compliance with FCC guidelines.

Here's what occurred: In April of last year, the owner of the office building at 635 Bryant Street in Palo Alto contacted the City because he was concerned about the level of radiation being emitted by a nearby Verizon/Crown Castle cell tower. Specifically, he wrote to the Planning Department to request that the City obtain an "independent" (I am quoting from his email to the City) evaluation of radiation levels at the site. The Planning Department agreed to do so, and the work was carried out in May. But instead of getting an independent evaluation, the Planning Department hired Hammett & Edison—the same firm to whom Verizon is paying millions of dollars to support its applications to install over 100 new cell towers in Palo Alto. (By the way, Crown Castle is also a Hammett & Edison client.)

Of course I'm not qualified to evaluate Hammett & Edison's work. But what I do know is that Hammett & Edison had a massive conflict of interest in accepting this project, and one has to question the ethics of a company that would accept such an assignment. In addition, one also has to question the judgment of Hillary Gitelman and her staff, who commissioned Hammett & Edison to do the job.

I realize that Hammett & Edison has government clients and, in particular, it has, I believe, worked for Palo Alto in the past. But there is no gray area here: Hammett & Edison is being well paid by Verizon—as it was in May, 2017—to support Verizon's applications to install dozens and dozens of cell towers here. Moreover, its mission for Verizon includes assuaging any concerns Palo Altans may have that cell towers represent a health risk. *How could the City possibly justify hiring this firm to look into whether any cell tower is emitting more radiation than the FCC permits?*

I know you, as individuals, care a great deal about our city and its residents. I trust

that you will be as appalled as I was to learn that a standard bearer for the telecom industry was hired to determine whether a Verizon cell tower is in compliance with FCC radiation standards.

Sincerely,

Jyotsna Nimkar

Jyotsna Nimkar
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650-3419711