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: vote against changing the ordinance!
Date:	Tuesday, March 13, 2018 7:21:19 AM

From: Liping Ding [mailto:ding.li@husky.neu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 12:12 AM
To: Council, City
Cc: Architectural Review Board
Subject: vote against changing the ordinance!

Dear Mayor Kniss,

Thank you for ensuring that United Neighbors was notified promptly that City Council will next be considering the proposed changes to the Wireless ordinance on Monday, March 19th. We look forward to seeing you and your colleagues at that meeting.

When you meet, I urge you, on behalf of United Neighbors, to vote against changing the Wireless ordinance. As the City Attorney wrote to City Council in her 4/29/15 report regarding what is now the existing ordinance, this ordinance requires—and "require" is her word—that no new or collocated cell towers may be installed in Palo Alto without both an architectural review and conditional use permit findings. Yet now Senior Staff are recommending you allow the Director of Planning, if she so chooses, to bypass ARB and PTC review of these cell towers.

The fact is, now more than ever, both an architectural review and conditional use permit findings are necessary to protect residents from the juggernaut that is the telecom industry as it seeks to install commercial facilities next to our homes. Now is not the time--when applications for new cell towers here are at 150 and counting--to make it easier for Verizon, AT&T et al. to come into Palo Alto's residential neighborhoods and do as they please. In fact, most other California cities are currently in the process of making their Wireless ordinances *tougher*, not weakening them.

Please consider, what sense does it make to dispense with the experience, professionalism and depth of knowledge of the Architectural Review Board when dealing with this critical issue? And what possible virtue can there be in changing the ordinance so that, at the Director's discretion, the *only way* residents would be able make their views heard in a public forum—or to go face-to-face with the telecom companies—would be to pay to appeal proposed cell towers?

Why, in short, should the power to review cell tower applications be taken out of the hands of experts, removed from public forums, and turned over to Senior City Staff? Why should these decisions be made behind closed doors? And where's the transparency Palo Alto residents are entitled to expect from the people running the City?

The fact that the proposed changes to the code do not dictate that the Director

bypass the ARB and the PTC cannot disguise the fact that these changes would permit the Director to do so—with no explanation to the public, to City Council or to anyone else..

The changes Staff want you to make to the existing code may be good for them by, for example, allowing them to avoid time-consuming preparations for ARB and PTC hearings. But these changes are bad for residents. And they fly in the face of good governance.

I am aware, of course, that you are generally sympathetic to the interests of developers in Palo Alto. And I am aware, as well, that developers always want more infrastructure, and cell towers are infrastructure. But I'm counting on you to also care about the residents of Palo Alto and to protect them against the invasion of unnecessarily ugly, noisy, bulky and hazardous cell towers that Verizon and others are currently proposing.

Thank you for your attention. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Li Ding