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PLANNING DEPARTMENT

**RESOLUTION**  
**of the**  
**Basher Community Council**

Regarding Rezoning Property East of the Basher Community for an Antenna Farm

**Background:** An application has been submitted by Properties Divestment to rezone approximately 7 acres from R-10SL (Residential Alpine/Slope with Special limitations) to AF (Antenna Farm), Anchorage Planning Department Case Number 2003-030. The property proposed for rezone is located directly above and east of the Basher community and borders Chugach State Park.

**Resolution:**

**Whereas,** antennas and associated structures would be incompatible with the unique alpine environment that characterizes the front range of the Chugach Mountains above the Basher residential area and the greater Anchorage bowl;

**Whereas,** the proposed re-zone would allow as a "principal use" up to nine 200-foot antennas and associated structures, which would be silhouetted on the Near Point ridgeline and prominently visible on the skyline from most of the homes in the Basher community, many of which are oriented to capture views of the Chugach Mountains;

**Whereas,** the proposed re-zone would allow as "conditional uses" more than nine towers on the tract in question, and towers of over 200-feet, which would have an even greater negative impact on the Chugach skyline;

**Whereas,** the tall towers and flashing red and white strobe lights required on antennas of heights permitted in an "AF" zoning district would significantly detract from the viewshed of the Chugach mountains both day and night;

**Whereas,** as residents of the Basher community we have relied on the current residential zoning status of the Near Point parcel for many years, and have made decisions with respect to our land and residences based on our reasonable assumptions that the land would remain in its current status;

**Whereas,** the beauty of the natural setting of the Basher neighborhood, and the unobstructed views of the Chugach mountains, have been critical factors in our investments and our quiet use and enjoyment of our land and homes;

**Whereas,** the absence of tall trees on the ridgeline of the proposed rezone site makes mitigating visual impacts of an antenna farm difficult if not impossible;

**Whereas,** the proposed antenna farm would seriously detract from the beauty and views of the Basher community, diminishing both the quiet use and enjoyment and value of our properties;

**Whereas,** an antenna farm would lie directly on the Chugach State Park boundary and be highly visible to users of some of the most popular hiking areas in Chugach State Park, including

Wolverine Peak, Near Point, and the Dome; and to surrounding neighborhoods beyond Basher, in the Chugach Foothills, East Anchorage and Hillside areas;

**Whereas**, the proposed antenna farm would lie adjacent to the main hiking trail that residents of the Basher community use to access Near Point and the park;

**Whereas**, protecting our city's aesthetic values and visual landscape are very important to the quality of life of Anchorage residents, as expressed throughout the *Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan*;

**Whereas**, re-zoning to antenna farm would fail to conform to the *Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan*, by allowing the placement of antennas in an area reserved for rural residential development; and overlooks many of the goals, objectives and strategies essential for implementing the *Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan*;

**Whereas**, no "Hillside District Plan" or "Rural Service Boundary" plans are in place as contemplated by the *Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan* to guide future zoning decisions of the Hillside area, of which the Basher community is a part;

**Whereas**, no communications plan has been developed for the Anchorage area that would identify communications needs and guide the siting of antennas for the Anchorage Bowl, as contemplated in *Anchorage 2020*;

**Whereas**, there is no demonstrated need for an "Antenna Farm-AF" zoning district on Near Point;

**Whereas**, petitioner is required to remove the existing antenna tower in Near Point Knoll subdivision by Anchorage Municipal Ordinance (AO) 2002-153, and is not required to relocate it, therefore eliminating the main justification that both petitioner and municipal planning officials give for justifying the rezone;

**Whereas**, petitioner has already promised the municipality that the existing transmission towers, radio shack and cables in Near Point Knoll subdivision will be removed, and no re-zoning is necessary to accomplish this removal;

**Whereas**, the MOA's planning department analysis of the proposed rezone erroneously assumed that relocation of the existing antenna in Near Point Knoll subdivision was necessary, and recommended approval of the rezone based on this flawed assumption;

**Whereas**, the MOA's planning department gave only cursory analysis of the impacts of a re-zone on the Basher community, and none whatsoever on the impacts on Chugach State Park, Bicentennial Park, other parks, other neighborhoods or the greater Anchorage bowl;

**Whereas**, an antenna farm is incompatible with the existing uses and zoning in the surrounding area, which includes residential, watershed, park, recreation, and habitat;

**Whereas**, other facilities typically associated with antennas, such as buildings to house communication equipment, guy wires, generators, fuel storage and fencing would likely be required at to maintain an "AF" site, notwithstanding petitioner's representations to the contrary, since these are present at both other "AF" sites in Anchorage;

**Whereas**, it is highly unlikely that an antenna farm facility could be maintained exclusively by helicopter, as petitioner represents, because no other "AF" site in Anchorage is so maintained, and high winds and poor visibility common to Near Point often prevent helicopter access;

**Whereas**, an access road would likely be necessary for future maintenance of an antenna farm, notwithstanding petitioner's representations to the contrary, and such a road would require deep cuts into the steep terrain and leave permanent scars on the hillsides above Near Point Knoll subdivision and the Basher community;

**Whereas**, the access route to the antenna farm would create a prime remote site for trespassing, underage drinking, partying, bonfires, vandalism and other serious threats to the health and safety of the Basher community, similar to those that already plague certain existing isolated areas of the neighborhood;

**Whereas**, a remote antenna farm will increase the already very high danger of wildfires in the Basher community, since any fires at the antenna farm site would be difficult if not impossible for the MOA Fire Department to reach in a timely manner, and could quickly spread to nearby residential areas;

**Whereas**, additional high-powered antennas placed near the neighborhood may result in interference with radio and television reception by local residents;

**Whereas**, the potential health hazards of long term exposure to electromagnetic radiation from telecommunication and other antennas are unresolved;

**Whereas**, "AF" zoning is rare and should be allowed only after a thorough planning process that addresses the serious impacts on all concerned, which has not occurred;

**Whereas**, for these and many other reasons the re-zone is not in the best interests of the Basher neighborhood or the Anchorage community as a whole;

**Therefore be it Resolved**, that the Basher Community Council **strongly opposes** the rezone application in Case No. 2003-030, and urges the Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission, the Anchorage Assembly, and the Mayor of Anchorage, to reject it.

**Basher Community Council**



Matt Moore, President

3/5/03  
Date