

# Antennas get city's approval

## PLANNING COMMISSION

### Opposition says panel ignored health issues

BY BILL EISELE

Despite a groundswell of resident protest, cellular-phone transceiver stations were approved for seven neighborhood sites by the city's Planning Commission last week.

At least six antennas and two refrigerator-size base transceivers will be located at each site — on rooftops in neighborhood commercial districts — as the first stage of Pacific Bell's plans to install transmitters citywide for

enhanced cellular-phone service.

During a highly emotional, five-hour hearing, dozens of neighborhood activists from across the city claimed there was insufficient evidence that radiation from the antennas was safe for human exposure.

Various cellular-phone companies will install hundreds of antennas throughout the city by year's end without sufficient regulation by city planners, residents say, adding that they will most likely appeal the commission's decision to the Board of Supervisors.

"I'm not against technology, but we do not want to be trampled by industry," said Sunset resident Philip Carleton.

"Rooftop real estate is the next frontier of land use," said Cow

Hollow resident Lori Brooke. "The degradation of our skyline and rooftops with this clutter will have long-term, detrimental effects."

Residents expressed fear that radiation exposure could cause cancer, along with concern that transmission waves from the antennas would disrupt hearing aids and 911 emergency communication systems.

Residents are alleging that Mayor Willie Brown dictated the commission's decision in an effort to appease Pacific Bell and the business community. Commissioners appeared visibly torn on the issue before voting in favor of the cellular-phone company's application.

A spokesman for the mayor said yesterday that he could not respond to residents' concerns but noted that the mayor was aware of the issue before the City Planning Department.

The commission voted, 5-1, to approve antenna sites at Haight and Cole streets, Geary Boulevard and 26th Avenue, Geary near Masonic Avenue, Lombard Street at Van Ness Avenue, Lombard at Divisadero Street, Portola Drive near Teresita Boulevard, and Market Street near 16th Street. Commissioner Esther Marks dissented, and commission president Susan Lowenberg abstained.

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HAIGHT ASHBURY VF



# City grants approval

The commission's vote to approve the cellular-phone equipment was "an insult" to residents who have spent the last several months lobbying for further health studies on the transmitters, said

## Lack of master plan

Noting that the city had insufficient, long-term guidelines for the installation of antennas throughout the neighborhoods, Commissioner Hector Chinchilla — who

City officials were under deadline to vote on Pac Bell's applications for antenna sites, which have been delayed for months, said Chinchilla.

Radiation levels from the antennas are well within safety standards approved by the city's Public Health Department, Chinchilla said.

"We are called upon at times to make decisions based upon what we know," he said.

Commissioners called on the staff of the City Planning Department to put together a master plan that would address the environmental implications of future installations of cellular-phone equipment.

"I hope in that plan that we consider all things discussed here by the public," said Chinchilla.

**'I'm not against technology, but we do not want to be trampled by industry.'**

— Philip Carleton, resident

local attorney Sue Hestor.

"They [the commissioners] did not deal with planning issues, and they punted on health issues," said Hestor.

oversaw the hearing — said, "I would have preferred to be ahead of the curve ... but for reasons beyond any of our control, this hasn't happened."