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Environmental Evaluation

Farmers Lane Senior Housing Project

201 Farmer Lane, Santa Rosa

APN 014-071-093

Revised March 6, 2017

*Rec'd
March 8, 2017*

Introduction

The purpose of this evaluation is to analyze, document findings and determine that the proposed Farmers Lane Senior Housing Project is in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), that pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 is consistent with the Santa Rosa General Plan and complies with the Santa Rosa Zoning Code. In addition, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332, the proposed infill project is Categorical Exempt.

The evaluation contains the following sections:

Section 1: Project Description

Section 2: Applicable CEQA Guidelines

Section 3: CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 – Exceptions

Section 4: Summary and Conclusion

Section 1: Project Description

Project Name: Farmers Lane Senior Housing Project

Project Location: 201 Farmers Lane, Santa Rosa, CA

Assessor's Parcel Number: 014-071-093

Site Description and Surrounding Area: The vacant 1.22 acres site is located on the west side of Farmers Lane just south of the Farmers intersection with 4th St. The site fronts Farmers Lane and extends north to the centerline of Santa Creek and south behind and existing neighboring property. The site is mostly flat and contains a variety of tree species and riparian vegetation along Santa Rosa Creek. The site is bounded by Santa Rosa Creek to the north, Farmers Lane and a school to the east, a dentistry office and apartment complex to the south and single family homes to the west. All surrounding properties are developed.

Zoning on the site is Multi-Family Residential permitting 18 dwelling units per acre (R-3-18). This is consistent with "Medium Density Residential" land use designation in the Santa Rosa General Plan. Zoning and General Plan designations in the area reflect existing multi-family, school and office uses.

Project Description: the property owner is proposing to construct a 26 unit senior residential condominium on a 1.22 acre parcel located at 201 Farmers Lane. The project calls for the construction of 26 dwelling units in 2 buildings. The project will be for senior residents, 55 years and older.

Requested project planning entitlements include

- a. Rezoning from the R-3-18 District (Medium Density Residential) District to the R-3-18-SH District (Medium Density Residential Senior Housing);

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- b. Density Bonus to increase the maximum permitted density adding 5 residential units which will be restricted with a housing agreement. Concessions from Zoning Code requirements including parking and building height increase are requested;
- c. Subdivision Map to subdivide the parcel into 26 condominium lots with common area; and
- d. Design Review for design components of the project.

The Farmer Lane Senior Housing Project consists of the following major components

- 26 condominiums - 2 and 3 bedroom dwelling units in 2 buildings: 1) a 4 story building with 24 units and 2) a 2 story building with 2 units.
- The 4 story building includes ground level parking garages. The separate 2 story building has private garages.
- 5 units are restricted for sale to households with moderate incomes in compliance with the City's Density Bonus requirements.
- Living units ranging from 1069 sq. ft. to 1608 sq. ft. in size.
- A single driveway provides access to and from Farmers Lane. Ingress and egress movement will be southbound.
- 29 parking spaces are provided (26 resident spaces and 3 guest spaces) in compliance with City Senior Housing parking requirements. Owners will be restricted to one parking space per dwelling unit.
- 7 bike parking spaces are provided.
- Construction of a bicycle and pedestrian path located along the top of the bank of Santa Rosa Creek.
- Landscaping will incorporate native drought tolerant plants and provide for preservation and enhancement the natural landscape along Santa Rosa Creek. Several existing trees will be removed to accommodate new construction and new replacement trees will be planted in accordance with the City tree preservation regulations.

Section 2: Applicable CEQA Guidelines

Section 15183 - CEQA mandates that projects which are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan, or general plan policies for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was certified shall not require additional environmental review, except as might be necessary to examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site. This streamlines the review of such projects and reduces the need to prepare repetitive environmental studies.

Response: The General Plan Land Use Category of Medium Density Residential for the site was included in the environmental review for the Santa Rosa General Plan 2035. The Santa Rosa General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was adopted by the City County by Resolution No. 27509 on November 2009. Multi-family residential dwelling are permitted by the R-3-18-SH Zoning District. This zoning is consistent with the General Plan Medium Density Residential Land Use Designation.

Section 15332 In-Fill Development Projects - California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") Guidelines Class 32 Categorical Exemption consists of projects characterized as in-fill development meeting the conditions described in this section. These conditions include:

- a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.

- b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.
- c) The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.
- d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.
- e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

Response: This section is intended to promote in-fill development within urbanized areas. Class 32 consists of environmentally benign in-fill projects which are consistent with local general plan and zoning requirements. This class is not intended to be applied to projects which would result in any significant traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality effects. Application of this exemption, as all categorical exemptions, is limited by the factors described in section 15300.2 none of which are applicable to this project.

Section 15332 Infill Development Project Conditions

- a) *The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.*

The General Plan Land Use Designation on the site is Medium Density Residential which is intended for Multi-family residential development with densities from 8 to 18 units per acre. Zoning is R-3-18 which permits multi-family residential. The Zoning Code Density Bonus provisions allow a 20 per cent density increase for senior housing. Project dwellings consist of 21 units per the R-3-18 zoning and an additional 5 density bonus units. Total proposed dwelling units is 26. Overall project density is 21.3 dwelling units per acre.

The General Plan Open Space Element Policy OSC B-3 requires that development abutting creek corridors be designed to respect the creek and use the creek as an amenity with adequate setbacks to protect riparian habitat. The project provides the required setback along Santa Rosa Creek. Project design includes opportunities for enjoyment of the Santa Rosa Creek area with development of bike/pedestrian access, sitting areas and landscaping.

- b) *The proposed development occurs within city limits on a site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.*

The site is located in the City of Santa Rosa and contains 1.22 acres. All surrounding properties are developed. The site is bounded by Santa Rosa Creek to the north, Farmer Lane and a school to the east, a dentistry office and apartment complex to the south and single family homes to the west.

- c) *The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.*

Figure 7-2 in the Santa Rosa General Plan does not identify the project site and the surrounding area as being known to sensitive species or potential for high quality vernal pool habitat. Santa Rosa Creek runs across the northern portion of the project site. Project design includes the creek as an amenity with required setbacks and development of a bike/pedestrian trail. The trail can be accessed by residents as well as the public as part of the Santa Rosa Creek Trail system.

Several existing trees will be removed to accommodate new construction and new replacement trees will be planted in accordance with the City tree preservation regulations.

Charles A. Patterson, Plant Ecologist prepared a biological resource survey of the site. The survey and 2017 update are attached. He conducted a series of investigations in the winter and spring of 2008 and again in February 2017 and survey site conditions and potential effects of the proposed project on biotic resources. As a result of his surveys of the site Mr. Patterson found that the site contains neither unusual habitats, nor vegetation and it does not support any wetlands or other sensitive habitats. In addition he found no uncommon species or soil present and all vegetation was typical of the region. No rare or endangered species were identified. He also determined that effects from the proposed project would be insignificant.

- d) *Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.*

Traffic – In May 2016 W-Trans, traffic consultants prepared a trip generation analysis determining that project will generate an average of 96 trips per day. This includes 6 trips during a.m. peak hours and 7 trips during p.m. peak hours. All traffic ingress and egress to the site would be limited to southbound one way vehicular movement. Because the project will add fewer than 10 peak hour trips to Farmer any traffic related impacts would be imperceptible and insignificant. CalTrans and the City may be pursuing a future project to add capacity to Farmer Lane which would lessen the project's impacts even more.

Noise – In June 2016 Illingworth and Rodkin prepared an environmental noise assessment for the project. The noise impacts associated with traffic on Farmers Lane will be attenuated to acceptable level by incorporating standard building technologies for insulation, windows, doors and heating venting and air conditioning. Specific recommendations contained in the assessment will be including in construction plans.

Air Quality – Project generated air quality impacts will be insignificant. The project as well as construction of the project is not anticipated generate or create air pollution that will cause exceeds of standard air quality thresholds.

The following aspects of the project would lessen to the potential for Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG).

1. The project is within the City of Santa Rosa Urban Growth Boundary.
2. The project incorporates design elements and other measures to reduce GHG emissions as required by the City of Santa Rosa Green Building Ordinance.
3. The project site is pedestrian oriented as it is in close proximity to commercial centers, medical facilities and public transportation service.
4. The project will generate minimal traffic as it is restricted to senior households.

Water Quality – The project abuts Santa Rosa Creek to the north. No water quality impacts to the creek are anticipated due to compliance with City of Santa Rosa requirements for creek side setbacks, drainage and erosions control requirements which are incorporated into the project. The project is required to comply with all requirements of the City's Standard Storm Water Mitigation Plan Guidelines using Low Impact Development (LID) Best Management Practices (BMPs). Any project impacts will be less than significant

- e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

Response: The site can be adequately served for water, wastewater and solid waste. Due to the minimal increase in service demand, the project can be adequately served by the City's police and fire services.

SECTION 3: CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 - Exceptions

Application of this exemption, as all categorical exemptions, is limited by the factors described in section 15300.2. None of these factors are applicable to this project.

These exceptions are as follows:

- a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all in all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.
- b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.
- c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.
- d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.
- e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.
- f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Response: The subject site is surrounded on all sides with urban level development including residences, offices, commercial and a school. The project is consistent with the General Plan and with zoning. There are no pending developments in the vicinity that would contribute to additional impacts. Therefore, the project would not have any significant cumulative impacts.

There are no State-designated scenic highways within or near the site, according to the California Department of Transportation.

The site does not contain any known contamination. Verified by aerial photographs, topographic maps and City records, the site is undeveloped. It is not listed on the Cortese List, which identifies locations with known contamination, nor are there any other sites within 1,000 feet of the project listed on the Cortese List.

A Cultural Resource Evaluation was prepared by Archaeological Resources Services, dated June 13, 2008 (Appendix C). The evaluation consisted of literature check, Native American consultation, historic references check and surface evaluation. No qualifying cultural resources were found on the site. As a result, the project will not result in a substantive adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. It is recommended that initial grubbing and grading work on the site be monitored by a

professional monitor. If prehistoric artifacts are encountered additional analysis of these artifacts may be required.

A biological investigation of the site was conducted by Charles A. Patterson, Plant Ecologist in spring 2008 and February 2017. This investigation found that the site is highly disturbed by past land uses and contains no unusual habitats or vegetation, nor does it support any wetlands or other sensitive habitats. There are no uncommon soils, vegetation, rare or endangered species nor is the site suitable for such habitats. With adequate protection of the creek, development of the site will not impact biological resources.

SECTION 4: Conclusion and Determination

The Farmers Lane Senior Housing project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183, it is consistent with the City of Santa Rosa General Plan and complies with Zoning Code requirements. None of the factors described in Section 15300.2 are applicable to this project. Pursuant to Section 15332, the proposed in-fill development is categorically exempt from CEQA.

Appendices

- A. Traffic Analysis
- B. Noise Analysis
- C. Archaeological and Historic Resources Analysis
- D. Biological Investigation 2008 and Update 2017
- E. SR Climate Action Plan Checklist