

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT FOR DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
OCTOBER 18, 2018

PROJECT TITLE

Dutton Avenue Residences

APPLICANT

Mark Garay

ADDRESS/LOCATION

3150 Dutton Avenue

PROPERTY OWNER

Mark Garay

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER

043-133-013

FILE NUMBER

DR17-074

APPLICATION DATE

October 19, 2017

APPLICATION COMPLETION DATE

September 24, 2018

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

Preliminary and Final Design Review

FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

Building permits

PROJECT SITE ZONING

R-3-18 (Multi-family Residential)

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

Medium Density Residential
(8 - 18 units/acre)

PROJECT PLANNER

Patrick Streeter

RECOMMENDATION

Approval

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

TO: CHAIR BURCH AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

FROM: PATRICK STREETER, SENIOR PLANNER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: DUTTON AVENUE RESIDENCES

AGENDA ACTION: ADOPT RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Design Review Board, by resolution, adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and approve Preliminary and Final Design Review for the Dutton Avenue Residences project, a proposed 107-unit multi-family residential development located at 3150 Dutton Avenue.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dutton Avenue Residences project is a 107-unit multi-family residential project proposed for a 5.95-acre parcel in southwest Santa Rosa. The development is permitted by right in the R-3-18 zoning district, with Design Review being the only required entitlement. To address potential impacts associated with a new residential project on an undeveloped parcel, an Initial Study was prepared, resulting in a Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration. Because the project has been found consistent with the City's Design Guidelines and implements the residential density envisioned by the General Plan, staff is recommending approval.

BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

The Dutton Avenue Residences project, also identified as the Vibe Apartments, proposes construction and operation of 107 rental units distributed across five residential buildings on a 5.95-acre site. The residential buildings will consist of one 2-story, three 3-story, and one 4-story buildings and have a mix of 32 one-bedroom, 65 two-bedroom, and 10 three-bedroom units. All buildings will be

sprinklered and an elevator will be installed in the 4-story building, which will have bridge way connections to the upper floors of two of the 3-story buildings. Additionally, the site includes an amenities/leasing office building, a pool and spa, fitness center, children's play area, and passive and active outdoor recreation areas. All parking will be provided on site and consists of 237 parking spaces, 107 of which would be covered, as well as 104 bicycle storage lockers.

Existing utilities easements run the length of the project site's eastern boundary where a small wetland has also been identified. No structures are proposed within the easement areas and the wetland area will be completely avoided during and after construction. Off-site improvements include restriping of Dutton Avenue to include a left turn lane with space for a future bike lane as well as installation of an interim 4-way stop at the intersection of Todd Road and Standish Avenue to the south.

2. Surrounding Land Uses

North:	Light manufacturing and warehousing
South:	Light manufacturing and warehousing
East:	Rail corridor; multi-family residential beyond
West:	Vacant land

The project site is located in an area of Santa Rosa that is primarily characterized by light industrial uses, which include self-storage, food and beverage manufacturing, vehicles services, and warehousing. There are several parcels in the vicinity of the project site with potential for medium density residential development, though they are vacant and undeveloped at this time. The eastern boundary of the project site is defined by the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) corridor. A mix of multi-family development types, including fourplexes, triplexes, and duplexes exists to the east of the SMART corridor, but can only be accessed via Bellevue Avenue to the north or West Robles Avenue to the south. The nearest freeway is US 101, which can be accessed via onramps at Hearn Avenue and at Todd Road, each approximately 1.3 miles away to the north and south, respectively.

3. Existing Land Use – Project Site

The 5.95-acre project site is vacant and relatively flat, with less than 1% slope across much of the area. The soil is comprised of mostly fill materials and is vegetated predominately by non-native grasses. No natural drainage features remain on the site due to previous grading and fill activities. A small depression on the eastern portion of the site has been identified by the Army Corps of Engineers as a .037-acre seasonal wetland, though subsequent environmental assessments have found it isolated, largely dewatered, and virtually without

value as habitat for wetland plants or animals known to populate the region. There are no trees or woody shrubs on the site.

4. Project History

On January 11, 2017, a Neighborhood Meeting was held to introduce the project and gather feedback from the surrounding community.

On March 16, 2017, the project went before the Design Review Board (the Board) as a concept item. The Board discussed placement and style of parking, building articulation, access to the SMART multi-use path, and project amenities.

On August 1, 2017, Planning and Economic Development Department staff met with the applicant regarding the Housing Allocation Plan and discussed on-site affordable units.

On October 19, 2017, an application for Design Review for the Dutton Avenue Residences was submitted to Planning and Economic Development.

On September 27, 2018, an Initial Study/Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared and posted for a 20-day public comment period starting on September 28 and ending on October 18, 2018.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

1. General Plan

The project site is designated for Medium Density (8–18 units per acre) Residential land use in the General Plan. This General Plan land use designation envisions single-family attached and multifamily development and is intended for areas of the City where higher density development is appropriate.

The following General Plan goals and policies are applicable to the Dutton Avenue Residences project:

LUL-F Maintain a diversity of neighborhoods and varied housing stock to satisfy a wide range of needs.

LUL-F-2 Require development at the mid-point or higher of the density range in the Medium and Medium High Density Residential categories. Allow exceptions where topography, parcel configuration, heritage

trees, historic preservation or utility constraints make the mid-point impossible.

- LUL-F-3 Maintain a balance of various housing types in each neighborhood and ensure that new development does not result in undue concentration of a single housing type in any one neighborhood.
- H-A-2 Pursue the goal of meeting Santa Rosa's housing needs when compatible with existing neighborhoods. Development of existing and new higher-density sites must be designed in context with existing, surrounding neighborhoods.
- H-A-5 Improve community acceptance of higher-density housing through community-based outreach, recognition of existing livable neighborhoods, and assurance of well-designed high-density projects.
- UD-E-2 Provide an open space network that is linked by pedestrian and bicycle paths, and that preserves and enhances Santa Rosa's significant visual and natural resources.
- UD-F-4 Provide visual interest in building, site, and landscape design that avoids the sense of a monotonous tract development.

The project implements many of the General Plan goals and policies in that it proposes a well-designed, multi-family use in an area identified by the City for higher density development. All of the required parking will be provided on site and improvements to Dutton Avenue, which include allocated space for a bike lane and construction of a 4-way controlled intersection, will improve circulation in the area. The project would add new multi-family housing to a neighborhood, connected to transit, that contains a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial development.

2. Zoning

North: IG (General Industrial)
 South: IG (General Industrial)
 East: SMART right-of-way; Sonoma County jurisdiction beyond
 West: R-3-18 (Multi-family residential)

The project site is zoned R-3-18, which the Zoning Code identifies as a Multi-Family Residential district applied to areas of the City appropriate for residential neighborhoods with medium and higher residential densities. The R-3 zoning district consistently implements the Medium Density Residential land use classification of the General Plan. Multi-family housing is a principally permitted land use in this zoning district. Parking requirements in the R-3-18 zoning district are 1 covered space plus 0.5 visitor spaces for studios and one-bedroom units

and 1 covered space plus 1.5 visitor spaces for two-bedroom or larger units. For the mix of units being proposed in this project, 236 parking spaces would be prescribed, and 237 are being installed. All parking will be on-site. The tallest building proposed is four stories, which conforms to the 45-foot height limit for the district.

3. Design Guidelines

The following is a summary of the most appropriate City of Santa Rosa Design Goals and Guidelines which apply to the proposed project.

Neighborhood Design

- 1.1 I D To promote neighborhoods that feature a variety of housing types (both single-family and multiple-family) as well as a variety of price ranges
- 1.1 II A 5 Incorporate a range of residential densities and price ranges within a neighborhood. *While remaining consistent with General Plan density requirements, providing a range of housing opportunities supports affordable housing goals as well as creating more interesting neighborhoods.*

Multi-Family Residential Design

- 3.2 II A 5 When existing public amenities such as parks or school playgrounds are in the immediate vicinity, provide pedestrian access to take advantage of these features.
- 3.2 II B 3 Integrate multiple-family projects with pedestrian and bicycle circulation systems that extend to neighborhood centers, along creek corridors, and to adjacent neighborhoods and shopping centers.
- 3.2 II E 1 Orient dwellings and windows of frequently used rooms (living and dining rooms) to overlook common open space and child play areas.
- 3.2 II F 1 Incorporate common open spaces into a site plan as a primary design feature. *The open spaces should not be remnant spaces or space left over after the buildings are placed on the site.*
- 3.2 II F 2 Provide common useable open space for all multiple-family projects with 10 or more units.
- 3.2 II F 5 Create a sense of enclosure for the common open space, for example with the dwellings that the space serves and/or with low

walls or fences, and/or with landscaping such as hedges or trees. The common space should have a parking area bordering no more than one side of the space. A common space should be visible by as many of the dwellings it serves as possible. *Residents are more likely to respect and protect a common space when the perception is that it “belongs” to them.*

- 3.2 II G 1 Provide each unit with a minimum of 40 square feet of semi-private open space directly adjacent to the unit. It is not intended for the space to have a privacy (6 foot) wall. The intent is to provide a balcony on units above the ground level and a small patio area on the ground level.
- 3.2 II G 2 These semi-private spaces should feature an open rail, low wall, or hedge or other element that defines the space but permits the resident to have a presence on the street or open space.

Building Design

- 3.2 III A 1 Break up the mass of larger structures with articulation of the form, use of color and the use of multiple materials, including: horizontal wood, cement fiber and composite siding, vertical wood siding, stucco, wood shingles, real and cultured masonry.
- 3.2 III A 4 Avoid dressing up fronts of building with higher quality materials and switching to less expensive siding material on the sides and back. Design all four sides of buildings.
- 3.2 III C 1 Incorporate features such as balconies, cantilevers, dormers, bay windows, patios, entries, accent materials, etc. to provide articulation and interest.
- 3.2 III E 2 Locate garages or carports so as to minimize their impact from the public street. The main buildings should be the dominant visual statement along the public streetscape.

Infill Development

- 4.3 I A To provide for continuity of design between existing and new development.
- 4.3 I B To ensure that projects are designed in such a way as to reduce to a minimum possible negative consequences, such as: loss of privacy, noise, increased traffic and lighting overspill that infill development may have on existing neighbors.

- 4.3 II 1 Integrate new development carefully into existing neighborhoods with respect to scale, level of detailing, use of materials, landscaping, and other characteristics of the neighborhood.
- 4.3 II 2 Where Santa Rosa's General Plan calls for a change or an intensification in land use, new development should consider the character of the surrounding neighborhood or district, particularly at the edges adjacent to existing development.
- 4.3 II 3 At edge conditions of infill avoid placing structures and elements which adversely affect adjacent residents. For example, avoid placing the following directly adjacent to residences:
 - a. trash enclosures, which are both smelly and noisy;
 - b. large structures which block sunlight; and
 - c. living spaces with second and third story windows that permit residents to look directly into neighbors' yards.
- 4.3 II 4 In addition to what is discussed in #3 above, design infill development at its edges to:
 - a. approximate the scale and mass of adjacent existing residences;
 - b. include buildings which are detailed and articulated on at least the side facing adjacent existing residences (and preferably on all four sides). Long blank back or side walls are undesirable; and
 - c. avoid blocking significant views.

The project, as proposed, will bring an undeveloped site into compliance with the densities and pattern of development envisioned by the City's General Plan. Instead of being consolidated into a single large structure, the units and amenities are spread across several buildings with varying heights and building footprints. The most intense development is located toward the center of the site, stepping down to landscaping, parking, and accessory structures toward the periphery.

4. Neighborhood Comments

A Neighborhood Meeting was held on January 11, 2017. As of the time of this writing, no comments have been received from neighbors of the proposed project.

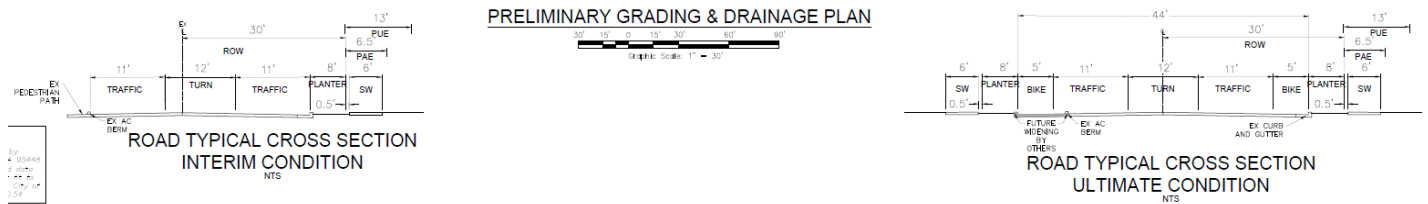
5. Public Improvements/On-Site Improvements

The project includes land dedication and restriping of Dutton Avenue to accommodate interim traffic flow while also providing space for the ultimate build-

DUTTON AVENUE RESIDENCES

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out of Dutton Avenue at such time that other properties on the street develop. The cross sections below illustrate the interim plan as well as the ultimate street design:



Additionally, a four-way stop is proposed at the intersection of Todd Road and Standish Avenue to accommodate traffic flow to and from the project site. The four-way stop will be installed as an interim measure as it is anticipated that the intersection will be signalized in the near future.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

An Initial Study was prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) on September 27, 2018. A Notice of Intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration was posted with the Sonoma County Clerk's Office initiating a 20-day public comment period beginning September 28, 2018, and ending October 18, 2018.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project went before the Design Review Board as a concept item on March 16, 2017. At the meeting, members of the Board expressed appreciation for the maintenance of the east-facing viewshed but had concerns about lack of articulation on buildings. The size and location of the parking areas were discussed, with several Board members requesting that the applicant consider tuck-under parking or landscaping features to soften the parking lots. The applicant was asked to consider additional amenities for residents, lengthening of the swimming pool, and incorporation of permeable paving.

NOTIFICATION

The project was noticed as a Public Hearing per the requirements of Chapter 20-66 of the City Code. Notification of this public hearing was provided by posting an on-site sign, publishing notice in a newspaper of general circulation, mailed notice to surrounding property owners, electronic notice to parties that had expressed interest in projects taking place in this geographic area of Santa Rosa, and bulletin board postings at City Hall and on the City website.

ISSUES

The primary issues identified during the course of review of this project were related to Fire Department access, stormwater, traffic, and the wetland on the eastern portion of

the site. To resolve the issues, an Emergency Vehicle Access (EVA) gate was added south of the main entrance, the design of the entry median was revised to meet fire code, the applicant team worked with the City's Engineering Development Services division to refine the utility, grading, and drainage plans, the scope and analysis of the traffic impact study was revised, and the site plan was amended to completely avoid the wetland. Additionally, while the original approach to environmental review was through pursuit of a statutory CEQA exemption, the Initial Study that was prepared identified a Mitigated Negative Declaration as the appropriate form of environmental review.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 -	Disclosure Form
Attachment 2 -	Location Map
Attachment 3 -	Zoning and General Plan Map
Attachment 4 -	Design Concept Narrative, dated received October 19, 2017
Attachment 5 -	Project Plan Set, dated received September 24, 2018
Attachment 6 -	Preliminary Grading and Drainage Plan, dated received September 27, 2018
Attachment 7 -	Initial Study/Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration, September 27, 2018
Attachment 8 -	Biological Baseline Summary and Impact Evaluation, Charles A. Peterson, April 27, 2017
Attachment 9 -	Environmental Noise Assessment, Illingworth & Rodkin, April 4, 2017
Attachment 10 -	Final Biological Resource Assessment, Ted Winfield, August 14, 2017
Attachment 11 -	Final Traffic Impact Study, W-Trans, July 20, 2018
Attachment 12 -	Initial Stormwater Lot Impact Development Submittal, Adobe Engineers, September 9, 2018
Attachment 13 -	Response to Issues Letter from Charles A. Peterson, February 26, 2018
Attachment 14 -	Letter from California Department of Transportation, December 6, 2017
Attachment 15 -	Response to Caltrans, prepared by W-Trans, January 22, 2018
Attachment 16 -	Design Review Board Minutes, March 16, 2017
Attachment 17 -	Fire Department Acceptance of Alternate Materials or Methods, dated April 26, 2018
Resolution 1 -	Adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration
Resolution 2 -	Approving Preliminary and Final Design Review

CONTACT

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