

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT FOR WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
November 29, 2018

PROJECT TITLE

Tubbs-Adobe Fire 2017 – Hopper Avenue
Apartments Design Review

APPLICANT

Hopper Lane Apartments

ADDRESS/LOCATION

1163 Hopper Avenue

PROPERTY OWNER

Hopper Lane Apartments

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER

015-360-055

FILE NUMBER

DR18-066

APPLICATION DATE

October 8th, 2018

APPLICATION COMPLETION DATE

TBD

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

Major Design Review

FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

PROJECT SITE ZONING

R-3-15-RC

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

Medium Density Residential

PROJECT PLANNER

Adam Ross

RECOMMENDATION

Provide comments

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO: CHAIR RABINOWITSH AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS
FROM: ADAM ROSS, CITY PLANNER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: TUBBS-ADOBE FIRE 2017 – HOPPER AVENUE APARTMENTS
DESIGN REVIEW

AGENDA ACTION: PROVIDE COMMENTS

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Economic Development Department recommends that the Waterways Advisory Committee provide comments on the proposed Hopper Lane Apartments Major Design Review, located adjacent to Piner Creek, as it relates to the Citywide Creek Master Plan, applicable General Plan goals and policies, and Design Guidelines for development near waterways.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project proposes to rebuild 78 of 120 apartments located on Hopper Lane. The 78 apartments being rebuilt were burned in the Tubbs-Adobe Fire in 2017. The project site totals approximately 7.94 acres, and is located adjacent to Piner Creek, which runs along the eastern boundary of the site. The proposed project involves a redesign the 78 apartments being rebuilt, as well as a reconfiguration of the affected area for circulation, and will add garages to accommodate the rebuilt units. Some of the proposed garages, and drive paths are located where the previous apartments stood, prior to the fires, which are within the required 30-foot creek setback. The project requires a Major Design Review with Director approval because the project was affected by the 2017 fires.

BACKGROUND

1. Project History

On October 9, 2017, 78 of the 120 unit Hopper Avenue Apartment complex were destroyed in the Tubbs-Adobe Fire.

On October 8, 2018, a Major Design Review application was submitted to rebuild

and redesign the units that were lost.

On November 1, 2018, the project was referred to applicable City departments and outside agencies for review.

On November 2, 2018, a Notice of Application was distributed to property owners within 400 feet of the proposed project.

On November 13, 2018, an Incomplete with Issues Letter was sent to the applicant and their design team.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

1. General Plan

The General Plan land use designation for the site is Medium Density Residential, which is intended for attached single family and multiple family units. City geographic information system (GIS) records show that the Hopper Lane Apartments were built as early as 1977, prior to the development of the City's creek setback standards. The following General Plan goals and policies relate to development of creek side properties.

OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION

OSC-D-9 Ensure that construction adjacent to creek channels is sensitive to the natural environment. Ensure that natural topography and vegetation is preserved along the creek, and that construction activities do not disrupt or pollute the waterway.

OSC-D-10 Orient development and buildings toward creeks while providing privacy, security, and an open transition between public and private open spaces.

OSC-D-11 New development along channelized waterways should allow for an ecological buffer zone between the waterway and development. This buffer zone should also provide opportunities for multi-use trails and recreation.

OSC-D-12 New development should maintain an adequate setback from channelized waterways to recognize the 100-year flood elevation and allow for stream corridor restoration. Setbacks identified in the

Zoning Code should serve as minimum setbacks. Larger setbacks are encouraged in accordance with Restoration Concept Plans to meet restoration and enhancement goals.

The project requires a landscaping plan to be submitted with the building permit, following approval of the Design Review application. The landscaping plans will include the addition of new trees throughout the property that will comply with City standards. While the project proposes structures within the creekside setback, it would not encroach further into the setback than what was previously existing. Further, the project does not include any removal of vegetation within Piner Creek. However, the project can be conditioned to remove invasive vegetative species and replace with native vegetation in the creek.

2. Other Applicable Plans – Santa Rosa Citywide Creek Master Plan

The site is located adjacent to Piner Creek Reach 2, which extends from Highway 101 to the Northwestern Pacific Railroad tracks. This northern area of the creek is classified as a modified-natural creek, modified creek, and culvert. The creek is in a culvert under Highway 101, and extending to Airway Drive, where it daylights as a modified type channel to a junction from the north. From that point on, the creek is a modified-natural type.

There is a private access road on the east side of the channel abutting the project site, that is not proposed to remain open, and an unpaved trail south of the site across Hopper Avenue. This reach is recommended for habitat enhancement including invasive species removal and replacement with native vegetation is recommended. The culvert at Hopper Avenue may present a barrier to fish movement.

3. Zoning

The project is located within R-3-15-RC (Multi-Family Residential – Resilient City) zoning district.

Zoning Code Section 20-30.040(D)(4)(a) establishes creek setbacks of 30 feet for existing properties, or for properties adjacent to areas within the City that were developed in compliance with applicable setback requirements in effect prior to September 3, 2004. The proposed redesign of the damaged apartments and new garages will be located within the required 30-foot creek setback.

Portions of the previous apartments were located within the creek setback, but were developed before the creekside development standards were established. The -RC (Resilient City) combining district states that a legal non-conforming structure may be rebuilt if the building is reconstructed in the same configuration, square-footage, height, and use of the original structure. However, this project

reconfigures the site, therefore, a Major Design Review is required, as well as recommendations and comments from the Waterways Advisory Committee.

The project proposes to rebuild five (5) new multi-family apartments outside of the required setback. Two (2) multi-garage structures, portions of the drive aisles, and a dog park are within the required setback. Further, the project does not intensify the encroachment into the creek setback beyond what was previously on site. The Design Review application does not propose a fence within this project.

4. Design Guidelines

SECTION 4.4 – CREEKS, RIPARIAN CORRIDORS AND STORM DRAINAGE

I.A Preserve existing creeks and riparian vegetation along creek corridors.

I.B Prevent contamination and sedimentation of creeks.

I.E Encourage development along creek corridors by treating the corridors as open space amenities rather than undesirable elements with back-on treatment.

II.A.1 Preserve waterways in the natural state.

II.A.7 Where riparian growth extends outside of the Creek Setback Line, preserve and protect this important part of the creek corridor.

II.B.2 Incorporate filtering recharge techniques such as detention basins, natural swales and rock filtering to clean pollutants out of storm water collected on a site before the water enters the City's waterway system.

The proposed relocation of the multi-family units are outside of the 30-foot creek setback. Two (2) proposed garages, portions of the uncovered parking and drive aisles, and a proposed dog park are within the creek setback. However, the location of the apartments before the Tubbs-Adobe fire were closer to the creek and larger than what is proposed now. The project as proposed is less intrusive on the creek setback and does not intensify the encroachment into the creek as to what was previously on the site. This project does not propose changes to the vegetation in the Piner Creek but can be conditioned to provide more native vegetation to the creek if deemed necessary.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ISSUES

There are no unresolved issues, however, this project set is still out for referral.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Disclosure Form

Attachment 2: Project Plans

Attachment 3: Pre-Fire Overlay Site Plan

Attachment 4: Planning Watershed Area Map

Attachment 5: Creek Setback Pre Tubbs-Adobe Fire

Attachment 6: Creek Setback Proposed Rebuild

CONTACT

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