

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT FOR WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
December 27, 2018

PROJECT TITLE

Storage Pro 2

ADDRESS/LOCATION

4332 - 4374 Sonoma Hwy

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER

032-140-001, 032-010-009, 043, 044

APPLICATION DATE

November 7, 2018

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

Minor Use Permit, Design Review

PROJECT SITE ZONING

General Commercial (CG)

PROJECT PLANNER

Emmanuel Ursu

APPLICANT

Storage Pro - Steve Mirabito

PROPERTY OWNER

Storage Pro 2

FILE NUMBER

DR 18-051

APPLICATION COMPLETION DATE

Not applicable. Pre-application filing only.

FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

Minor Use Permit, Design Review approval, and Building Permit

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

Retail and Business Service

RECOMMENDATION

Provide Comments

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO: CHAIR RABINOWITSH AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

FROM: EMMANUEL URSU, PLANNING CONSULTANT
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: STORAGE PRO 2

AGENDA ACTION: PROVIDE COMMENTS

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Economic Development Department recommends that the Waterways Advisory Committee provide comments on the conceptual proposal for Storage Pro 2 as it relates to the Citywide Creek Master Plan, applicable General Plan goals and policies, and Design Guidelines for development near waterways.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Storage Pro 2 is the second phase of a mixed-use project consisting of a three-story, 30-unit apartment building and a three-story, 148,225 square-foot self-storage facility. Phase 1 was recently constructed on adjacent property east of the project site. Project plans and a detailed project description are included as attachments to this Staff Report.

The project will include a Minor Use Permit for a self-storage facility and residential component of a mixed-use project, and a major Design Review for attached housing and construction of a commercial building greater than 10,000 square feet.

BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

Storage Pro 2 is proposed on a 2.66-acre site consisting of four separate parcels fronting on the south side of Sonoma Highway. The four parcels will be reconfigured into two parcels with a one-acre parcel (Parcel 2) at the front of the

site on which the apartments and residential parking spaces are proposed and a 1.66-acre parcel (Parcel 1) at the back of the site on which the self-storage facility will be located.

Vehicular access to the residential component of the site is via a driveway on the west side of the property and vehicular access to the self-storage facility is through the Storage Pro 1 facility on the adjacent property to the east. The manager's office for the storage facility is located on the adjacent site in Storage Pro 1. An exit driveway controlled with a sliding gate will provide a secondary point of egress from the storage facility along the west side of the project site and through the residential parking lot.

Santa Rosa Creek Trail runs behind the project site and traverses a portion of the southwest corner of the property. Riparian vegetation and Santa Rosa Creek are located on the south side of the trail, and the project site and all existing and proposed development are on the north side of the trail. All existing buildings on the site will be removed, including the four buildings along Sonoma Highway and the ancillary structures located behind the main buildings. Four trees are proposed for removal and the conceptual landscape plan shows trees and shrubs around much of the site's perimeter and around the parking lot. A 3,181 square-foot bio-retention basin is proposed at the rear of the site between the creek trail and the driveway at the rear of the storage facility.

2. Project History

A pre-application meeting was held for the Project at which time the applicant received input from staff of several City departments/divisions including Building, Fire, Engineering, and Planning.

On October 4, 2018, the Design Review Board (DRB) reviewed the conceptual project plans. The DRB expressed support for the overall site plan and initial design concept. In its discussions, the DRB inquired about the possibility of a pedestrian connection from the Project site to the Santa Rosa Creek Trail. The applicant cited the grade change between the Project site and the trail as an obstacle to providing a connection.

ANALYSIS

1. General Plan

The General Plan Retail and Business Service land use designation allows retail, service, office and restaurant uses and the corresponding zoning (General Commercial) allows Storage-Personal storage facility (mini-storage) and multi-family housing at a maximum density of 30 units per acre.

The following General Plan goals and policies are relevant to the Waterways

Advisory Committee's review of the proposed project:

Open Space

- OSC-B Conserve the city's opens spaces and significant natural features.
- OSC-B-3 Require that new subdivisions, multifamily, and non-residential development abutting creek corridors are appropriately designed with respect to the creek. Development may orient toward the creek as an amenity, but adequate setbacks shall be used to ensure riparian habitat is protected.
- 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.
- OSC-H Conserve significant vegetation and trees and plant new trees.
- OSC-H-2 Preserve and regenerate native oak trees.
- OSC-H-2 Require incorporation of native plants into landscape plans for new developments, where appropriate and feasible, especially in areas adjacent to open space areas and along waterways.

Staff Analysis

As designed, the Project is consistent with the policies of the General Plan intended to preserve and avoid impacts to the creek environment. Specifically, the project would not encroach into the creek setback, all alterations to the site

are proposed on the north side of the existing Santa Rosa Creek trail away from the creek, and appropriate storm water quality features are proposed including a bio-retention basin and erosion control at storm drain outlets. In addition, the Project includes a landscaped buffer that is approximately 20-feet to 40-feet wide along the rear property line.

A mix of native and non-native plant species are proposed in the landscape buffer. The applicant will be directed to plant native vegetation consistent with Policy OSC-H-2.

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

The site is located adjacent to the Santa Rosa Creek trail which runs along the north side of Santa Rosa Creek. The channel type of this segment of Santa Rosa Creek, as described by the Santa Rosa Citywide Creek Master Plan, is “Natural.” Natural creek channel types are *“creeks that remain relatively unaltered...”* and *“...can be characterized by the presence of native riparian vegetation, a natural meander stream pattern, pools and riffles, and shelter for fish such as overhanging banks, tree roots, or boulders.”* Preservation through an adequate setback and proper treatment and discharge of storm water is the appropriate action for development along natural creek channels.

Objectives and policies of the Santa Rosa Citywide Creek Master Plan applicable to the project are as follows:

Policy SW-2-1	New development and redevelopment projects shall comply with the City NPDES storm water permit and with the Storm Water Low Impact Development Technical Design Manual.
Policy SW-2-2	Storm water treatment measures that involve small scale landscape based Low Impact Development Best Management Practices (BMPs) that treat storm water as close to the source as possible shall be prioritized over other BMPs.
Policy EC-1-1	Where discretionary approval for new development is sought adjacent to the creek, that development shall, to the extent possible, be consistent with and support the Master Plan. Planners and decision-makers will look for consistency between proposed projects and the Master Plan. The overall intent of this policy is to incorporate the creek into the project design.
Objective RT-2	Provide public, neighborhood, and private access to creek side trails as appropriate.

Policy RT-2-2 Support private access to the creek trail system as allowed by the Sonoma County Water Agency.

Other than Objective RT-2, as designed the project is consistent with the objectives and policies of the Santa Rosa Citywide Creek Master Plan. Access from the project site to the existing creek side trail appears feasible. While there is an existing steep transition slope from the site to the trail, according to the Preliminary Grading, Drainage, and Utility Plan (See Plan Sheet C-3), the grade of the site will be altered to accommodate the proposed storage facility and the finish grade at the rear southwesterly corner will be within one foot of the grade of the existing creek side trail. The top of the curb near the southwest corner of the site is shown at elevation 226.6 and the creek side trail is at approximately elevation 225.

3. Zoning

The project is in the Commercial General Zoning District and adjacent to Santa Rosa Creek. Zoning Code Section 20-30.040(B) prohibits structures, including buildings, driveways, parking areas, retaining walls and earth fill to be placed within the creek side setback. Storm drainage and erosion control improvements are exempt from the setback requirement. A setback of 50 feet from the top of the creek bank applies.

The proposed buildings and driveway do not encroach into the 50-foot creek setback. As allowed by the Zoning Code, the bio-retention basin and storm drainage and erosion control devices are within the 50-foot setback.

4. Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines apply to development adjacent to creeks:

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.

Design Guideline I.E encourages development along creeks to treat the creek corridor as an open space amenity rather than an undesirable element with back-on treatment. In its review of the project, the Waterways Advisory Committee may wish to consider whether or not the project, as designed, is consistent with this guideline and, if not, to direct the applicant to consider design changes that treat the creek corridor as an open space amenity for the project.

The project design is consistent with the other design guidelines pertaining to creeks, riparian corridors and storm drainage.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ISSUES

As discussed in this report, the project's design in relation to the creek corridor requires improvement to achieve consistency with the City's objectives, policies and guidelines pertaining to creek side development. Other issues may be identified after a formal application is received and referred for review and input by other City Departments and public agencies.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Disclosure Form

Attachment 2: Project Plans

Attachment 3: Civil and Landscape Plans with Creek Setback

Attachment 4: Applicant's Project Narrative

Attachment 5: Planning Watershed Area Map

CONTACT

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