



Massage Establishment Certificate Appeal

File No. MEC26-0003

Address: 4908 Highway 12

July 23, 2026

Project Description

- Appeal of Planning Economic Department denial of application for Massage Establishment Certification
- Per SRCC 20-49, all Massage Establishments are required to obtain a Massage Establishment Certification
- Per SRCC 20-49.120(A)(2), a single instance of advertising on an illicit website that reasonably suggests the availability of services other than lawful massage services constitutes a gross violation.
- Per SRCC 20-49.040(B), a finding of a gross violation is grounds for denial of a Massage Establishment Certificate (MEC).
- Denial of a Massage Establishment Certificate for gross violations may result in significant consequences under the ordinance, including but not limited to:
 - **Cease-and-Desist Order:** The business must cease operations and close.
 - **Two-Year Property Restriction:** The property cannot be used for massage-related purposes for a period of two years.
 - **Prohibition on Future Operations:** The business owner found responsible for gross violations is prohibited from operating or providing massage services within the City of Santa Rosa in the future.



Massage Establishment Certificate Appeal

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Background

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April 18, 2025: Massage Ordinance went into effect requiring all businesses providing massage services to apply for a Massage Establishment Certificate

City Council Goal:

- Protects public health, safety, and welfare.
- Regulates massage establishments through clear operational standards.
- Prevents prostitution and other unlawful activities associated with massage businesses.
- Establishes sanitation, health, and business operation requirements.
- Reduces neighborhood blight and protects community character.
- Strengthens enforcement against illegal conduct by massage establishments and employees.

Background

- **February 21, 2023:** Initial filing date to establish Hongyuan LLC. Weihong Hu was listed as the Authorized Agent.
- **May 10, 2023:** The property at 4908 Hwy 12 was purchased by Weihong Hu and Louis Lacabanne.
- **August 1, 2023:** A Lease Agreement was signed by Louis Lacabanne as the landlord and Hongyuan LLC as the tenant. Weihong Hu signed the document on behalf of Hongyuan LLC. This document was included in the Massage Establishment Certificate Application submitted by Weihong Hu.
- **September 19, 2023:** Weihong Hu received CAMTC certification as a Certified Massage Technician (CMT).
- **October 12, 2023:** Louis Lacabanne applies for Zoning Clearance and lists Weihong Hu as the CMT.
- **May 26, 2024:** Ads begun to be posted with address 4908 Hwy 12 with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- **May 27, 2024:** Weihong Hu reported to CAMTC that she owned and operated Highway 12 Massage.
- **July 10, 2024:** Ads begun to be posted with address 4908 Sonoma Hwy with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- **October 10, 2024:** Code Enforcement received information from SRPD that illicit ads for Highway 12 Massage were found.
- **December 3, 2024:** Ads began to be posted with address 4908 Highway 12 and 4908 Sonoma Highway with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- **September 2, 2025:** A complaint is received reporting new Massage Ordinance violations including neon signage, covered windows, and business hours posted until 10pm.
- **September 19, 2025:** Weihong Hu renews CAMTC Certificate.
- **September 22, 2025:** Weihong Hu applies for a new Zoning Clearance.
- **September 23, 2025:** Weihong Hu applies for Massage Establishment Certificate under Hongyuan LLC as the sole CMT; no other employees.

Background

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- **October 10, 2025:** Ads begun to be posted with phone number (707) 714-4499. Ads were posted until 4/15/26.
- **March 18, 2026:** While reviewing the Massage Establishment Certificate application, staff found advertisements on illicit websites last posted on March 6, 2026.
- **April 15, 2026:** While conducting further investigation, staff found advertisements on illicit websites last posted March 14, 2026.
- **April 15, 2026:** Based on the findings of illicit advertising, a letter denying the Massage Establishment Certificate application was issued to the applicant; Hongyuan LLC, Weihong Hu. The letter was sent to the applicant via regular mail, email, and hand delivered the same day during an inspection.

Background

The Reviewing Officer's determination is based on the following documented history of non-compliance for Highway 12 Massage located at 4908 Highway 12, was included in the Denial Letter, and is the basis for the Appellants appeal:

- **October 10, 2024:** Our office was notified by SRPD that the business, Highway 12 Massage was found to be advertising on illicit websites.
- **September 2, 2025:** Complaint from community member was received regarding operational violations including neon signage and business hours beyond the allowed time.
- **March 18, 2026:** While reviewing the MEC application, staff found advertisements on illicit websites last posted March 6, 2026.
- **April 15, 2026:** While conducting further investigation, staff found advertisements on illicit websites last posted March 14, 2026.

Grounds for Appeal

#1 - The Appellant denies the October 10, 2024 allegation, asserting that neither Weihong Hu nor Hongyuan LLC owned or operated Highway 12 Massage at that time. The Appellant states that Weihong Hu's involvement was limited to co-owning the building and leasing the premises to the business operator, Meiying Tang, and that neither Weihong Hu nor Hongyuan LLC participated in the business's operations or advertising.

Staff Response:

Based upon the following facts and documents, Hongyuan LLC has been the primary business owner of Highway 12 Massage since 2023:

- **August 1, 2023:** A Lease Agreement was signed by Louis Lacabanne as the landlord and Hongyuan LLC as the tenant. Weihong Hu signed the signed the document on behalf of Hongyuan LLC. This document was included in the Massage Establishment Certificate Application submitted by Weihong Hu.
- **September 19, 2023:** Weihong Hu received CAMTC certification as a Certified Massage Technician (CMT).
- **October 12, 2023:** Louis Lacabanne applies for Zoning Clearance and lists Weihong Hu as the CMT.
- **May 27, 2024:** Weihong Hu reported to CAMTC that she owned and operated Highway 12 Massage.
- The City has no record of a business owner for this establishment under the name of Meiying Tang.

Grounds for Appeal

#2 - The Appellant denies the September 2, 2025 allegation, asserting that neither Weihong Hu nor Hongyuan LLC owned or operated Highway 12 Massage when the advertisements were posted. The Appellant states that Weihong Hu had no involvement in the advertising, did not provide any content or photographs, and did not assume operation of the business until September 15, 2025, after the previous owner vacated the premises.

Staff response

Based upon the following facts and documents, illicit advertisements began prior to September 2025. The ads were posted utilizing varying forms of spelling of the address and utilizing the primary, published phone number to the business:

- **May 26, 2024:** Ads begun to be posted with address 4908 Hwy 12 with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- **July 10, 2024:** Ads begun to be posted with address 4908 Sonoma Hwy with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- **October 10, 2024:** Code Enforcement received information from SRPD that illicit ads for Highway 12 Massage were found.
- **December 3, 2024:** Ads begun to be posted with address 4908 Highway 12 and 4908 Sonoma Highway with phone number (707) 907-0819.

Grounds for Appeal

#3 - The Appellant denies the March 18 and April 15, 2026, allegations, acknowledging that Weihong Hu and Hongyuan LLC were operating Highway 12 Massage at the time and had hired and paid a third-party marketer to provide advertising services for the business. The Appellant asserts that Weihong Hu relied entirely on the marketer, "Anne", who managed the advertising content, selected the websites, and added photographs without Weihong Hu's involvement or knowledge. The Appellant states that Weihong Hu did not provide any advertising materials, did not know which websites were being used, and was unaware the advertisements were posted on websites later identified as illicit. After receiving the City's April 15, 2026 notice, Weihong Hu immediately contacted the marketer to stop all advertising and changed the business phone number on April 20, 2026. Based on these circumstances, the Appellant contends that the actions do not constitute a gross violation under SRCC 20-49.120(A)(2).

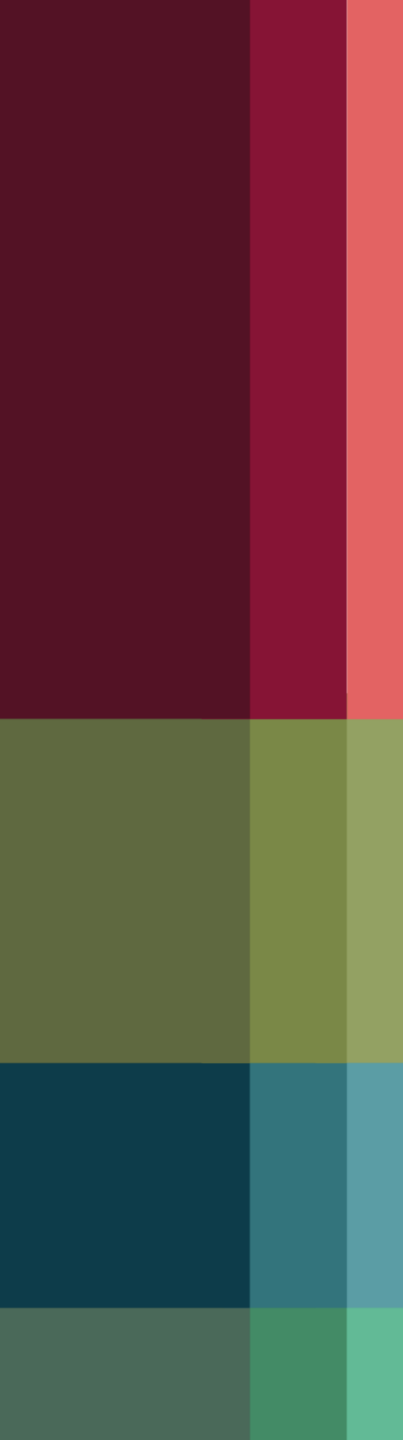
Staff response

Based upon the following facts and documents, illicit advertisements began prior to September 2025 and continued through April 16, 2026 :

- **May 26, 2024:** Ads begun to post with address 4908 Hwy 12 with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- **July 10, 2024:** Ads begun to post with address 4908 Sonoma Hwy with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- **December 3, 2024:** Ads begun to post with address 4908 Highway 12 and 4908 Sonoma Highway with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- **October 10, 2025:** Ads begun to post with phone number (707) 714-4499. These ads were posted until 4/15/26.
- **March 18, 2026:** While reviewing the Massage Establishment Certificate application, staff found advertisements on illicit websites last posted on March 6, 2026.
- **April 15, 2026:** While conducting further investigation, staff found advertisements on illicit websites last posted March 14, 2026.
- **March 1, 2026 to March 14, 2026:** Staff found ads posted under the address of 4908 Sonoma Hwy with phone number (707) 907-0819 between these dates.
- **March 1, 2026 to April 16, 2026:** Staff found ads posted under the address of 4908 Sonoma Hwy with phone number (707) 714-4499 between these dates.
- A new phone number for the business has not been provided to the City nor has one been found to be posted online.

Recommendation

The Planning and Economic Development Department recommends that the Planning Commission, by resolution, deny the Appeal and uphold the decision of the Planning and Economic Development Director to deny the Massage Establishment Certificate for Highway 12 Massage located at 4908 Highway 12.

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Questions?