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City of Santa Rosa
Planning & Economic
Development Department
07/31/2024
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Design Concept Narrative

PROJECT:

Stonehouse Renovation and Hotel
3555 Sonoma Highway, Santa Rosa
APN: 181-120-033 & 181-120-034

The two project parcels, located on the northwest side of Sonoma Highway (Highway 12) approximately 0.6 miles northeast of the intersection of Farmers Lane and Fourth Street, are designated Retail and Business Services in the General Plan and have a Planned Development Zoning (PD 0441, approved in 1998 and revised in 2005) which allows, among other uses, “Hotels, Motels and Related Uses” with a Conditional Use Permit.

The northerly portion of the project site slopes relatively gently from east to west and is currently occupied by the historic Stonehouse building and the existing parking lot west of the Stonehouse. The central portion of the site has a large level pad that is the remnant of a long-demolished warehouse building. The remaining southerly area of the site slopes steeply from east to west and has a grove of primarily oak trees in the southwesterly corner. The adjacent properties are to the south, west and north are single family residential homes on relatively large parcels.

This project proposes to renovate the existing Stonehouse building, which was last used as a 14-room treatment center for women, into a small boutique hotel. In addition, four 1-bedroom freestanding bungalows and a 59 room hotel with a rooftop courtyard would be constructed on the central portion of the site. The existing Stonehouse would eventually use its existing ground floor lobby, reception area, lounges and kitchen to serve the Stonehouse’s guest rooms, the bungalows and the new hotel building.

The architecture of the new hotel building is conceptual at this stage of the design process, but is intended to reflect selected architectural elements of the Stonehouse building: rhythmic upper floor windows with Juliet balconies over larger ground floor openings, stonework on some façades and a corner “tower” element. The building will include a parking garage at the approximate level of the warehouse building pad. Much of the garage will also be below grade. The roof top of this garage level will create a podium roof-top outdoor courtyard with trees surrounded on four sides by the wings of the new hotel. Four single story one-bedroom bungalows will be located at the southerly - and steepest -

portion of the site. These bungalows will be placed around a small courtyard which provides views to the south and southwest of an existing grove of oak trees on the steep hillside.

The site design is intended to reduce the visual impact of parking and the new hotel building and preserve the existing trees located at the northerly and southerly property lines as much as possible. The site design also creates an expansive courtyard and entry treatment at the western main entry to the existing Stonehouse building – this façade currently opens onto the site’s existing parking lot. This existing parking area to the west of the Stonehouse will be reconfigured into a large garden and hardscape courtyard area for the hotel guests. The western portion of the new courtyard space will include a swimming pool & spa area adjacent to new single story exercise and conference room buildings. The new hotel building is proposed to be built in two to three levels (including the parking level) which both step up and cut into the hillside to reduce the visual impact of the building.

Surface parking will be provided west of the new hotel in addition to a single level parking garage located below the upper two floors of the new hotel. Much of the parking garage will be below grade and tucked into the hillside. This will provide a total of 75 parking spaces for the 75 guest rooms. The parking areas will include standard, compact, accessible and electric vehicle charging spaces. The primary site entrance will be the existing driveway location south of the existing Stonehouse building. A gated emergency vehicle access is proposed to connect to Sunridge Avenue at the southerly corner of the project site.

The design intent for the landscaping of the project would be to preserve the majority of the substantive trees on the site and supplement the natural landscape with additional attractive, low maintenance and durable landscape. New planting will include a mixture of native California and horticulturally appropriate trees, shrubs and groundcover. The intent of the landscape and irrigation water delivery systems is to meet all aspects of the City of Santa Rosa’s Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

July 29, 2024