

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT FOR DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
December 7, 2023

PROJECT TITLE

Heritage Commerce Center

ADDRESS/LOCATION

0 Northpoint Parkway

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER

035-530-016 & 035-530-055

APPLICATION DATES

March 7, 2023

PROJECT SITE ZONING

General Industrial (IG)

PROJECT PLANNER

Suzanne Hartman

APPLICANT

McNeill Real Estate Services Inc

PROPERTY OWNER

Optical Coating Laboratory, Inc.

FILE NUMBERS

DR23-008

APPLICATION COMPLETION DATES

October 24, 2023

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

General Industry

RECOMMENDATION

Approval

For Design Review Board Meeting of: December 7, 2023

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
FROM: SUSIE MURRAY, SUPERVISING PLANNER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
SUZANNE HARTMAN, CITY PLANNER

SUBJECT: HERITAGE COMMERCE CENTER

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Design Review Board, by resolution, approve the Design Review Permit application for the proposed development of the Heritage Commerce Center building, located at 0 Northpoint Parkway, Assessor's Parcel Nos. 035-530-016 & 035-530-055 (File No. DR23-008).

BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

Jose McNeill of McNeill Real Estate Services, Inc., proposes to develop an approximately 74,949-square-foot industrial building, Heritage Commerce Center, at Northpoint Parkway. The project site is 4.40 acres and is currently undeveloped. The building is proposed to be used as a commerce center and is expected to generate 364 daily trips by approximately 70 employees, as well as customers and delivery trucks. The applicant's project description is attached to this report.

2. Surrounding Land Uses

The project site is bounded by Northpoint Parkway to the north, Corporate Center Parkway to the west, Mariner Way to the east, and vacant land and vacant Open Space-Recreational land and a Low-Density Residential neighborhood to the south.

3. Existing Land Use – Project Site

The project site contains some grass and shrub vegetation in the northern and southern portions, and a strip of impervious pavement toward the center of the site, which served as an airport runway for the no longer active Santa Rosa Air Center. To the north, Northpoint Parkway contains no pedestrian walkways but provides two vehicle lanes and a bicycle lane in each direction, with a separator between travel directions. Mariner Way is a cul-de-sac with no pedestrian walkways adjacent to the site.

4. Project History

July 27, 2022	Neighborhood Meeting conducted by the applicant and planning staff.
February 3, 2022	The proposed project was presented to the Design Review Board for Concept Design Review.
April 4, 2023	Application submitted
May 12, 2023	Notice of Application distributed
May 25, 2023	The Planning & Economic Development Department requested that the Waterways Advisory Committee (WAC) advise the Design Review Board as to whether the proposed project is consistent with the applicable Citywide Creek Master Plan, General Plan goals and policies, and Design Guidelines for development near waterways.
November 8, 2023	Planning staff deemed the application complete.
November 21, 2023	Notice of Public Hearing Distributed

ANALYSIS

1. General Plan

The [General Plan](#) addresses issues related to the physical development and growth of Santa Rosa and guides the City's planning and zoning functions.

The General Plan land use designation for the site is General Industry which is intended primarily for industrial and manufacturing activities, warehousing, wholesaling and distribution uses. The total acreage of the development site is 4.40 acres, and the project proposes to construct an approximately 74,949-square-foot industrial/commercial building.

The most relevant applicable General Plan goals and policies with Staff's analysis are included in the table below.

Santa Rosa General Plan 2035

Land Use and Livability	
<p>LUL-A: Foster a compact rather than a scattered development pattern in order to reduce travel, energy, land, and materials consumption while promoting greenhouse gas emission reduction.</p>	<p>The proposed project would be located in an area with a mix of industrial and business park uses, and adjacent to a residential neighborhood for a compact development pattern, putting employment opportunities within walking distance of residents. The proposed project would provide 12 bicycle parking spaces and four electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. The proposed project would also provide convenient connections to bus stops for Routes 2 and 15 within 0.5-mile.</p>
<p>LUL-K: Protect industrial land supply and ensure compatibility between industrial development and surrounding neighborhoods.</p>	<p>The proposed warehouse design is compatible with other the surrounding industrial/commercial uses in the area.</p>
<p>LUL-S: Develop an attractive, safe, and extensive network for pedestrian and bicyclist movements.</p>	<p>The proposed project would include the construction of pedestrian sidewalks on adjacent streets, thus expanding the City’s pedestrian network. The proposed project would also provide 12 bicycle parking spaces and the proposed project would provide access to existing bicycle facilities, including bike lanes on Northpoint Parkway.</p>
Economic Vitality	
<p>EV-A-5: Maintain diversity in the types of jobs available in Santa Rosa to lessen the impact of economic cycles.</p>	<p>The proposed project would assist in maintaining the economic viability of the area; broaden the available positions for both full and part time employment within the City; while ensuring compatibility with the surrounding neighborhoods through proposed facility design. The project site is 0.5-mile from a bus transit stop at Bellevue and Mooreland Avenues.</p>

The Heritage Commerce Center would assist in maintaining the economic viability of the area; broaden the available positions for both full and part time employment within the City while ensuring compatibility with the surrounding area through proposed facility design.

Staff finds that the proposed project is consistent with the applicable goals and policies of the General Plan

The following are policies and objectives shown in the Creek Master Plan that are applicable to the project:

Creek Master Plan

<p>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.</p>	<p>The project site is located within a predominantly industrial area, directly adjacent to Roseland Creek Reach 4 to the south. The proposed structure, parking and site improvements are all outside of the required 30-foot creek setback.</p>
<p>OSC-H: Conserve significant vegetation and trees and plant new trees. The proposed project would conserve significant vegetation and trees.</p>	<p>The proposed project will be landscaped, using plants that are appropriate for the site, and adjacent to all parking areas, buildings, and walkways in accordance with the City’s Design Guidelines. The proposed project will also include tree planting according to project design plans.</p>

Roseland Creek, Reach 4, Background:

The project site is adjacent to Roseland Creek (Reach 4), which is a part of the Southern Santa Rosa Creeks Watershed. Roseland Creek flows more than six miles westward across the Santa Rosa Plain, from its headwaters southwest of the Highway 101 and Highway 12 interchange to its confluence with the Laguna de Santa Rosa southeast of Sebastopol near the Laguna Treatment Plant. The creek runs through predominantly private property to Burbank Avenue.

This reach of Roseland Creek is characterized by a grass-lined flood control channel, consisting of long pools and glides, with very few riffles. Some trees and shrubs are present within a narrow riparian zone, but they do not provide shade to the channel. Dominant plant species include cattail, rice cut-grass, Himalayan blackberry, and nutsedge, with some plantings of live oak, valley oak, big leaf maple, and toyon at the top of bank. A few willow and cottonwood trees have come into the reach naturally. Invasive species present include Himalayan blackberry and pampas grass.

The Creek Master Plan recommends habitat restoration for this reach to allow for channel enlargement to accommodate a meandering low-flow channel, instream

habitat structures and replanting of native vegetation. The Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan 2010 proposes a Class 1 bike path along the creek from Stony Point Road to Ludwig Ave, which would also continue downstream to Llano Road.

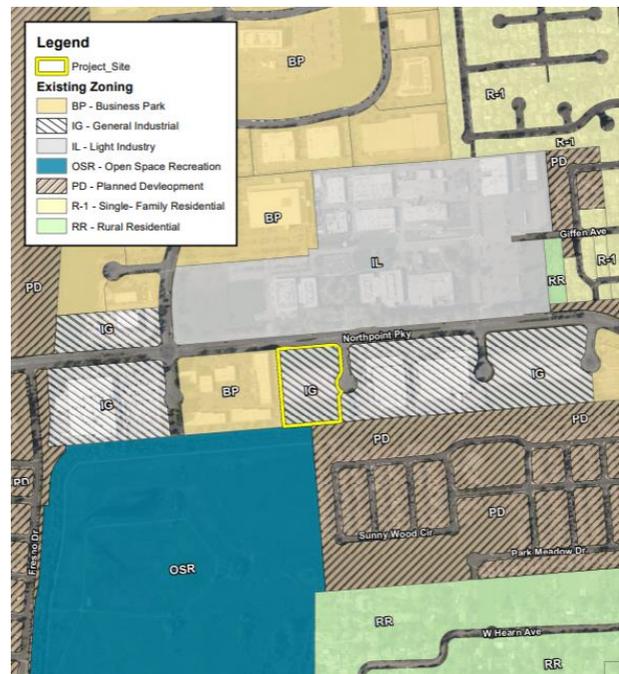
Staff finds that the proposed project is consistent with the applicable goals and policies of the Citywide Creek Master Plan.

2. Zoning

The [Zoning Code](#) implements the goals and policies of the General Plan by classifying and regulating the use of land and structure development within the City. The project is within the General Industrial (IG) zoning district and is consistent with the General Industry land use classification of the General Plan. The IG zoning district is applied to areas appropriate for industrial and manufacturing activities, warehousing, wholesaling and distribution uses.

Pursuant to Zoning Code [Section 20-52.030](#) the Design Review Board must make the following findings before granting approval of a Design Review Permit:

1. The design and layout of the proposed development is of superior quality, and is consistent with the General Plan, any applicable specific plan, applicable Zoning Code standards and requirements, the City's Design Guidelines, architectural criteria for special areas, and other applicable City requirements (e.g., City policy statements and development plans).
2. The design is appropriate for the use and location of the proposed development and achieves the goals, review criteria and findings for approval as set forth in the framework of Design Review (Design Guidelines, Introduction, subsection C).
3. The design and layout of the proposed development will not interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring existing or future developments.
4. The architectural design of the proposed development is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
5. The design of the proposed development will provide a



desirable environment for its occupants, visiting public, and its neighbors through the appropriate use of materials, texture, and color, and would remain aesthetically appealing and be appropriately maintained.

6. The proposed development will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare or materially injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity.
7. The proposed project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Staff analysis along with the required findings are included in the Resolution, attached to this Staff Report.

- Warehousing, Wholesaling and Distribution - Per [Table 2-10 Allowed Land Uses and Permit Requirements for Industrial Districts](#), the warehousing, wholesaling and distribution use is permitted by right in the General Industrial (IG) Zoning District.
- Building Height - The maximum allowable building height in the IG zoning district is 55 feet. The proposed facility has an approximate height of 35 feet.
- Setbacks - Per [Section 20-24.040](#), the required front setback and side setback for IG zoning district is 7.5 and 5 feet when adjacent to a residential zone or residential use, and set by Conditional Use Permit approval elsewhere. The parcels are not adjacent to a residential use. The site plan shows the front setback being approximately 26 feet and the side setback being a minimum of 26 feet, measured from the property lines.

Additionally, [Section 20-30.040](#) of the Zoning Code requires a 30-foot setback from waterways for new development that is surrounded by existing structures that were developed in compliance with applicable setback requirements in effect prior to September 3, 2004. The setbacks provide reasonable protection to owners of riparian property and the public from the hazards of stream bank failures and flooding, while allowing owners of property near waterways reasonable use of and the opportunity to improve their properties consistent with general safety. The plans show that the proposed building is more than 30 feet from Roseland Creek.

- Parking - Vehicular access for the proposed project would occur from three driveways: two entrances along Mariner Way and one entrance along Northpoint Parkway. The entrance from Northpoint Parkway would provide access along the western, southern and eastern sides of the building, connecting to the Mariner Way cul-de-sac. The northern entrance from Mariner Way would serve a small parking lot.

- Pursuant to Zoning Code [Section 20-36.040](#), Table 3-4, “warehousing, wholesaling and distribution” requires one space for each 1,000 sf., or as determined by Conditional Use Permit approval. The proposed project will provide 75 parking spaces, including four electric vehicle (EV) charging locations. The proposed project will also include 12 bicycle parking spaces and would connect to existing bicycle paths along Northpoint Parkway.
- Outdoor Lighting - All proposed light fixtures will be directed downward and away from adjoining properties and public rights-of-way, so that no on-site light fixture directly illuminates an area off the project site.

3. Design Guidelines

The [Design Guidelines](#) are the primary design criteria under which discretionary review is conducted. The most relevant applicable Design Guidelines goals and policies include:

<i>Design Guidelines Goal or Policy</i>	
Residential, Commercial & Industrial Beyond the Core Area	
<p>3.4.I.B: To encourage business and light industrial parks to respect the existing natural features of a site</p> <p>3.4.11.A.1: Incorporate existing natural features such as trees, topography, creeks, and riparian vegetation into the site plan. These and similar natural elements should be considered when developing a site plan. Every effort should be made to preserve dominant elements, such as mature trees, for example. When trees must be removed mitigation may be required</p>	<p>The proposed project would provide landscaping adjacent to all parking areas, buildings, and walkways. The project preserves the site’s natural features, vegetation, and trees by incorporating landscape design and revegetation with plants that are appropriate for both driveway zones and stormwater retention areas. The project site is relatively flat necessitating minimal overall grading.</p>
<p>4.4.I.G: To design projects and storm drainage systems that comply with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) standards.</p>	<p>The project site complies with the goal of managing, maintaining, and improving stormwater drainage and capacity by constructing several stormwater retention areas on the project site that would treat all stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces, covering the cost of drainage facilities needed for new developments, implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) to</p>

reduce pollutants discharge, and complying with the Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) in order to reduce pollutants and runoffs flows from the project site.

The architectural design for the industrial building would be of Type VB construction, site cast, tilted concrete panels with a variety of enhancements. The typical wall panels would be enhanced with reveals and a textured elastomeric, multicolored coating system. The areas around the building entries would also be enhanced with tinted glazing in aluminum frames with overhead steel-framed painted canopies. The placement of these enhancements would be locations most visible from the public roadways. The proposed project would assist in maintaining the economic viability of the area while ensuring compatibility with the surrounding area.

4. Summary of Public Comments

There have been no neighborhood comments received at the time of writing this staff report. Any new comments received will be shared with the Design Review Board at the Design Review Board meeting.

5. Public Improvements

For a comprehensive list of on- and off-site improvements, please refer to the attached Exhibit A, provided by Engineering Development Services, dated November 8, 2023.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of the Project will not have an effect on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The proposed project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and qualifies for a streamlining measure pursuant to CEQA Section 15183 (Projects Consistent with a Community Plan or Zoning). Section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines mandates that projects which are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan or general plan policies for which a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) was certified (in this case, the Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 FEIR) shall not require additional environmental review, except as might be necessary to examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site. A General Plan consistency analysis, prepared by First Carbon Solutions, FCS International, Inc.,

dated December 23, 2022, concluded that “the proposed project falls within the scope of the project evaluated in the General Plan FEIR and, therefore, no further environmental review is required.” The analysis further explained that California tiger salamander (CTS) has the potential to occur at the project site (See the Biological Resources Report, included as Appendix B),” for which mitigation credits have already been purchased.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the February 3, 2022, Concept Design Review meeting, the Design Review Board provided the following nonbinding comments, recommendations, and considerations:

- The proposed color, form and massing of the building are appreciated.
- Provide a more detailed landscape plan; more robust planting at the south property line that is adjacent to the creek is recommended.
- The site layout and building orientation are appreciated.
- Consider proposing additional materials around the entrances and/or corners of the building.

On May 25, 2023, the Planning & Economic Development Department requested that the Waterways Advisory Committee (WAC) advise the Design Review Board as to whether the project is consistent with the applicable Citywide Creek Master Plan, General Plan goals and policies and Design Guidelines for development near waterways. The WAC had the following recommendations for the proposed design and layout of the project:

- Consider a more transparent fence design to encourage site lines between the proposed development and the creek trail.

PUBLIC 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 and occupants, 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. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65091, where necessary, the City has incorporated notice procedures to the blind, aged, and disabled communities. These procedures include audio amplifier/assistive listening device support at public meetings, closed captioning, and optical character recognition conversion of electronic notices.

ISSUES

There are no unresolved issues remaining with the project.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Disclosure Form
- Attachment 2 - Project Description
- Attachment 3 - Location Map
- Attachment 4 - Neighborhood Context Map
- Attachment 5 - CEQA Documents
- Attachment 6 - Plan Set
- Attachment 7 - Creek Section
- Attachment 8 - Site Photos
- Attachment 9 - Color and Materials Board
- Attachment 10 - Concept Design Review Plan Set

Resolution
Exhibit A

CONTACT

Suzanne Hartman, City Planner
707-543-4299, SHartman@srcity.org