

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT FOR PLANNING COMMISSION
JULY 23, 2026

PROJECT TITLE

Highway 12 Massage- Massage
Establishment Certificate Appeal

ADDRESS/LOCATION

4908 Highway 12

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER

032-300-002

APPLICATION DATES

September 23, 2025

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

Massage Establishment Certificate

PROJECT SITE ZONING

General Commercial

CITY STAFF

Daniela DeBaca
Senior Code Enforcement Officer

APPLICANT

Hongyuan LLC, Weihong Hu

PROPERTY OWNER

Weihong Hu and Louis Lacabanne

FILE NUMBERS

CE24-1325

APPLICATION COMPLETION DATES

April 15, 2026

FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

Retail and Business Services

RECOMMENDATION

Deny Appeal

Agenda Item #11.1
For Planning Commission Meeting of: July 23, 2026

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
FROM: DANIELA DEBACA, SENIOR CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: HIGHWAY 12 MESSAGE, MESSAGE ESTABLISHMENT
CERTIFICATE DENIAL APPEAL

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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 the property located at 4908 Highway 12.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The requirement for all businesses providing massage services to apply and obtain a Massage Establishment Certificate began through the adoption of the Massage Ordinance that went into effect on April 18, 2026. As a result, a Massage Establishment Certificate application was submitted by business owner Weihong Hu on September 23, 2025, on behalf of Highway 12 Massage located at 4908 Hwy 12, Santa Rosa, CA 95409. Staff reviewed the application and through the course of the investigation found illicit advertisements online for the establishment which included the location and published phone number for the business.

The application was denied on April 15, 2026, based on violations of the following sections of the City's Massage Ordinance:

- SRCC 20-49.050(H)(4) No Massage Establishment shall place, publish, advertise, or distribute any sexually suggestive content relating to Massage services, or cause the same to occur, including but not limited to advertising that depicts any portion of the human body that reasonably suggests to prospective Patrons that any service is available other than those services listed as an available service pursuant to subsection (C) (*listing of services and costs*) of this section and the provisions of this chapter.

- SRCC 20-49.120(A)(2)(b) Findings. City Massage Establishment Certificates may be revoked upon a finding that procedural or gross violations have occurred upon or relative to the premises of a Massage Establishment, or have been committed by any Employee, Business Owner, Manager, Massage Therapist, Independent Therapist, Non-Therapist Employee, or other person in the following manners:
 - 2. Gross violations. Within any period of time, there is a single (1) instance of any of the following gross violations occurring:
 - b. Any violation by any Employee, Business Owner, Manager, sole proprietor, Massage Therapist, Independent Therapist, Non-Therapist Employee, or other person within a Massage Establishment of section 20-49.050(E)(1)&(2); (G)(1)(f); or (H)(1),(4)&(5).

BACKGROUND

February 21, 2023: Initial filing date to establish Hongyuan LLC. Weihong Hu was listed as the Authorized Agent with address of 8651 Sundridge Ave, Forestville, CA 95436. – *Attachment 4*

May 10, 2023: The property at 4908 Hwy 12 was purchased by Weihong Hu and Louis Lacabanne. – *Attachment 5*

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. – *Attachment 6*

September 19, 2023: Weihong Hu received CAMTC certification as a Certified Massage Technician (CMT). – *Attachment 7*

October 12, 2023: Louis Lacabanne applies for Zoning Clearance (ZC23-0243) and lists Weihong Hu as the CMT #94619. – *Attachment 8*

May 26, 2024: Ads begun to be posted with address 4908 Hwy 12 with phone number (707) 907-0819. – *Attachment 9*

May 27, 2024: Weihong Hu reported to CAMTC that she owned and operated Highway 12 Massage. – *Attachment 10*

July 10, 2024: Ads begun to be posted with address 4908 Sonoma Hwy with phone number (707) 907-0819. – *Attachment 11*

October 10, 2024: Code Enforcement received information from SRPD that illicit ads for Highway 12 Massage were found. This generated a new Code Enforcement case to be opened.

December 3, 2024: Ads began to be posted with address 4908 Highway 12 and 4908 Sonoma Highway with phone number (707) 907-0819. – *Attachment 12*

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 #94619. – *Attachment 13*

September 22, 2025: Weihong Hu applies for a new Zoning Clearance (PLN25-0449). – *Attachment 14*

September 23, 2025: Weihong Hu applies for Massage Establishment Certificate under Hongyuan LLC as the sole CMT; no other employees. – *Attachment 15*

October 10, 2025: Ads begun to be posted with phone number (707) 714-4499. Ads were posted until 4/15/26. – *Attachment 16*

March 18, 2026: While reviewing the Massage Establishment Certificate application, staff found advertisements on illicit websites last posted on March 6, 2026. – *Attachment 17*

April 15, 2026: While conducting further investigation, staff found advertisements on illicit websites last posted March 14, 2026. – *Attachment 18*

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. – *Attachment 19*

ANALYSIS

Pursuant to Zoning Code Chapter 20-62, appeals of decisions made by the Director of Planning and Economic Development shall be evaluated by the Planning Commission. The Commission may consider any issue involving the matter that is the subject of the appeal, in addition to the specific grounds for appeal.

The appellant is appealing the denial of the Massage Establishment Certificate. As a

result of the denial, the business is required to cease operations. The Appellant set forth the following grounds for appeal in the appeal statement filed on April 26, 2026 which is provided as Attachment 3.

1. **Grounds for Appeal:**

“Appellant denies the allegations related to October 10, 2024, as neither Hongyuan LLC or Weihong Hu had any involvement with the Highway 12 Massage operation at that time. Ms. Hu was an owner of the Building at 4908 Sonoma Highway with her Husband, Louis Lacabanne and as the owners leased the premises to Meiyang Tang to operate her Highway 12 Massage business. Neither the LLC nor Ms. Hu had any involvement with the operation of the business at that time. They lived in Forestville and were not at the premises except periodically.”

Response:

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

- 1) **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.
- 2) **September 19, 2023:** Weihong Hu received CAMTC certification as a Certified Massage Technician (CMT).
- 3) **October 12, 2023:** Louis Lacabanne applies for Zoning Clearance (ZC23-0243) and lists Weihong Hu as the CMT #94619.
- 4) **May 27, 2024:** Weihong Hu reported to CAMTC that she owned and operated Highway 12 Massage.
- 5) The City has no record of a business owner for this establishment under the name of Meiyang Tang.

2. **Grounds for Appeal:**

“Appellant denies the allegations related to September 2, 2025, relating to advertising on illicit websites. Neither Hongyuan LLC or Weihong Hu had any involvement with the Highway 12 Massage operation at that time or any advertising. Ms. Hu was not aware of nor did she participate in advertising done at that time. She never saw any such advertising, nor did she submit any content or photos for advertising. Ms. Hu did not take over the actual operation of the business until September 15, 2025, after the former business owner had moved out and left. She continued with the use of the name only.”

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:

- 1) **May 26, 2024:** Ads begun to be posted with address 4908 Hwy12 with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- 2) **July 10, 2024:** Ads begun to be posted with address 4908 Sonoma Hwy with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- 3) **October 10, 2024:** Code Enforcement received information from SRPD that illicit ads for Highway 12 Massage were found. This prompted a new Code Enforcement case to be opened.
- 4) **December 3, 2024:** Ads begun to be posted with address 4908 Highway 12 and 4908 Sonoma Highway with phone number (707) 907-0819.

3. **Grounds for Appeal:**

1. “Appellant denies the allegations related to March 18, 2026 (advertising on March 6, 2026) and April 15, 2026 (advertising on March 14, 2026). At those times Hongyuan LLC and Weihong Hu were leasing the premises and operating Highway 12 Massage. The business had applied for MEC Certification and Ms. Hu had been Certified as a Massage Therapist. She was working on the premises.

However, beginning in Mid-September 2025 advertising was done on behalf of Highway12 Massage. Ms. Hu, who is limited in her English had been contacted on the “We Chat” phone app at her business number by a Chinese woman, Anne, who solicited her to handle her advertising to improve business. Ms. Hu never met her in person, never spoke to her, and never provided any content or photos regarding the business.

In the “We Chat” communications (via text) through the phone in Chinese, Anne promised to improve her business through advertising at a cost of \$1200 per month. Anne directed her where to send Zelle payments, to two different contact sites, neither of which reflected any particular website on which the ads were posted. Ms. Hu’s payments to Anne through Zelle began in September 2025. The payment details did not indicate website details.

Anne handled all the details on content using the Google ad with which she was familiar and adding pictures. Weihong furnished no content or pictures and relied entirely on Anne. Weihong did not even know what website was utilized and saw no ads or content. It was only after receiving the Denial that Weihong was aware

that the website Anne used was claimed to be “illicit”. At one point, Anne may have shifted the posting to a different website.

After receiving the City’s Letter of April 15, 2026, Ms. Hu immediately contacted Anne to stop all ads and then on April 20, 2026, changed the Phone Number for the Spa. Under such circumstances, the LLC and Ms. Hu deny a violation of any violation of Section 20-49.120 (A) (2) of any gross violations.

Response:

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

- 1) **May 26, 2024:** Ads begun to post with address 4908 Hwy 12 with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- 2) **July 10, 2024:** Ads begun to post with address 4908 Sonoma Hwy with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- 3) **December 3, 2024:** Ads begun to post with address 4908 Highway 12 and 4908 Sonoma Highway with phone number (707) 907-0819.
- 4) **October 10, 2025:** Ads begun to post with phone number (707) 714-4499. These ads were posted until 4/15/26.
- 5) **March 18, 2026:** While reviewing the Massage Establishment Certificate application, staff found advertisements on illicit websites last posted on March 6, 2026.
- 6) **April 15, 2026:** While conducting further investigation, staff found advertisements on illicit websites last posted March 14, 2026.
- 7) **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.
- 8) **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.
- 9) A new phone number for the business has not been provided to the City nor has one been found to be posted online.

FISCAL IMPACT

Denial of the Massage Establishment Certificate will not have an effect on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Massage Establishment Certificate for Highway 12 Massage was reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Pursuant to CEQA

Section 15270, CEQA does not apply to projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves.

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.

LEVINE ACT

This project is subject to the Levine Act (Gov. Code Section 84308) which prohibits city officials from participating in certain decisions regarding licenses, permits, and other entitlements for use if the official has received a campaign contribution of more than \$500 from a party, participant, or agent of a party or participant in the previous 12 months. The Levine Act is intended to prevent financial influence on decisions that affect specific, identifiable persons or participants.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Disclosure Form
Attachment 2 – Location Map
Attachment 3 – Appeal Application
Attachment 4 – Hongyuan LLC
Attachment 5 – Property Detail Record - 4908 Hwy 12
Attachment 6 – Lease Agreement – 4908 Hwy 12
Attachment 7 – CAMTC verification of Weihong Hu certification
Attachment 8 – Zoning Clearance ZC23-0243
Attachment 9 – Ads May 26-28, 2024
Attachment 10 – CAMTC Recertification Report – Weihong Hu
Attachment 11 – Ads July 10, 2024 – 4908 Sonoma Hwy
Attachment 12 – Ads December 3, 2024
Attachment 13 – CAMTC Weihong Hu 2025 Renewal
Attachment 14 – Zoning Clearance PLN25-0449
Attachment 15 – Massage Establishment Certification Application
Attachment 16 – Ads October 10, 2025 (707) 714-4499
Attachment 17 – Ads March 2026
Attachment 18 – Ads April 15, 2026

HIGHWAY 12 MESSAGE – 4908 HWY 12, SANTA ROSA, CA 95409
MESSAGE ESTABLISHMENT CERTIFICATE DENIAL APPEAL
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Attachment 19 – Massage Establishment Certificate Denial Letter

Resolution

CONTACT

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