



APPEAL OF CITY ENGINEER'S DENIAL OF VARIANCE ENGV25-018: RELIEF FROM PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT REQUIREMENTS

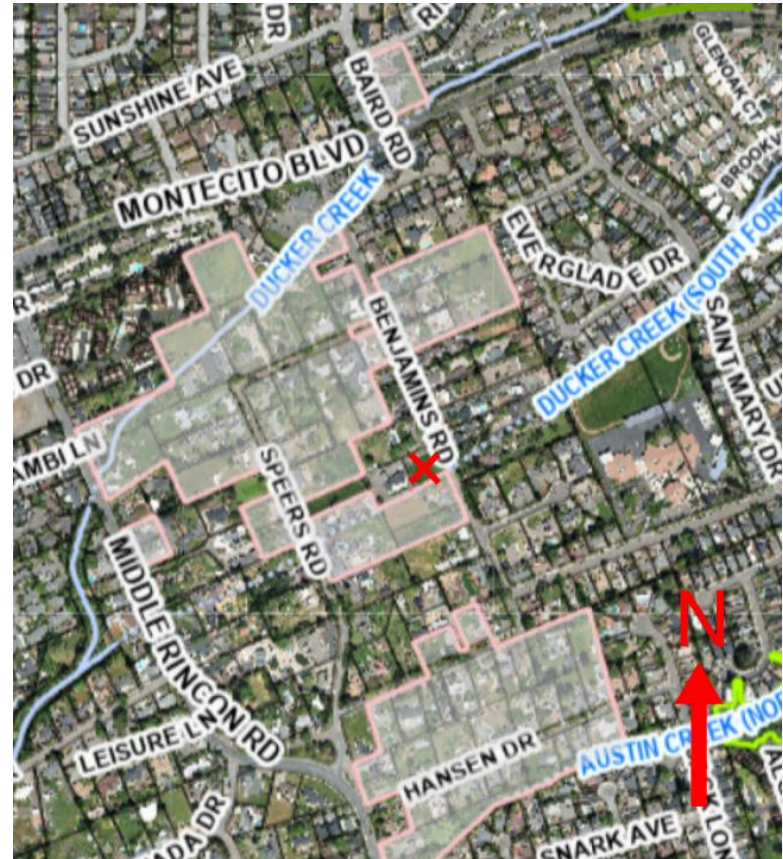
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City Council Meeting
November 18, 2025

Executive Summary

- Project: 15-bed Assisted Living Care Facility
- Project address: 635 Benjamins Road
- City Requirement:
 - construction of roadway pavement, curb, gutter, sidewalk, and a driveway apron
 - undergrounding of overhead distribution lines
 - placement of vacant conduit



Executive Summary

STREET
VIEW
SOUTH



STREET
VIEW
NORTH

Executive Summary (continued)

- Variance request: relief from undergrounding of distribution lines and construction of pavement, curb and gutter, sidewalk, and a driveway apron
- City Engineer decision: Partial Denial
 - Granted relief from undergrounding of overhead distribution lines
 - Still required to construct pavement, curb and gutter, sidewalk, and a driveway apron

Note: Variance request did not ask for a relief from placement of vacant conduit. This would still be required

Background (continued)

- 1953 – Single family residence constructed
- 1995 – county island annexed to City of Santa Rosa
- 2023 – SB9 Urban Lot Split submitted
 - Right of way and public easement dedications required for future buildout of Benjamins Rd
- October 15, 2024 – Parcel Map recorded
 - Dedications recorded on map
- June 9, 2025 – CUP submitted for assisted living care facility
- June 11, 2025 – Staff informed applicant team that the development would trigger public improvement requirements

Background (continued)

- June 18, 2025 – Onsite meeting, City staff and design engineer
- June 19, 2025 – Appellant submits Variance
- July 17, 2025 – City staff meets with appellant and design engineer
- July 28, 2025 – City staff presents recommendation to City Engineer
- August 12, 2025 – City Engineer partially denies Variance
- August 25, 2025 – Appeal submitted

Analysis

Grounds for Appeal	Explanation
Lack of Connectivity & Public Benefit	No improvements within 1,100 feet of project
Existing Pedestrian Infrastructure	AC path already along east side of Benjamins Rd
Storm Drain Conflict	Shallow existing storm drain along frontage
Utility Pole Safety Hazard	Existing pole would be located within parking lane
Provision for Future Improvements	The project does not prevent construction of frontage improvements in the future





Analysis (continued)

Grounds for Appeal	City Response
Lack of Connectivity & Public Benefit	Future development will lack connectivity along this frontage if not constructed now
Existing Pedestrian Infrastructure	An AC path is a temporary improvement. Curb and gutter is City Standard
Storm Drain Conflict	Other design options (concrete cap, SD connection to public system, catch basins)
Utility Pole Safety Hazard	Over 4.5' from the curb and fully within the parking lane. Pole has existed in this location for over 50 years
Provision for Future Improvements	Future improvements along this frontage would need to be built as a Capital Improvement Project

Analysis (continued)

Necessary Finding	City Engineer Findings
Practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships.	Roadway, curb and gutter, sidewalk, and a driveway apron can be constructed
Improvements don't bear a reasonable relationship to the proposed use.	A 15-bed assisted living care facility maximizes the development potential of the lot. Public Improvements will never be required again here
Granting the variance won't be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property	Roadway and pedestrian connectivity will never be built to City Standards

Analysis (continued)

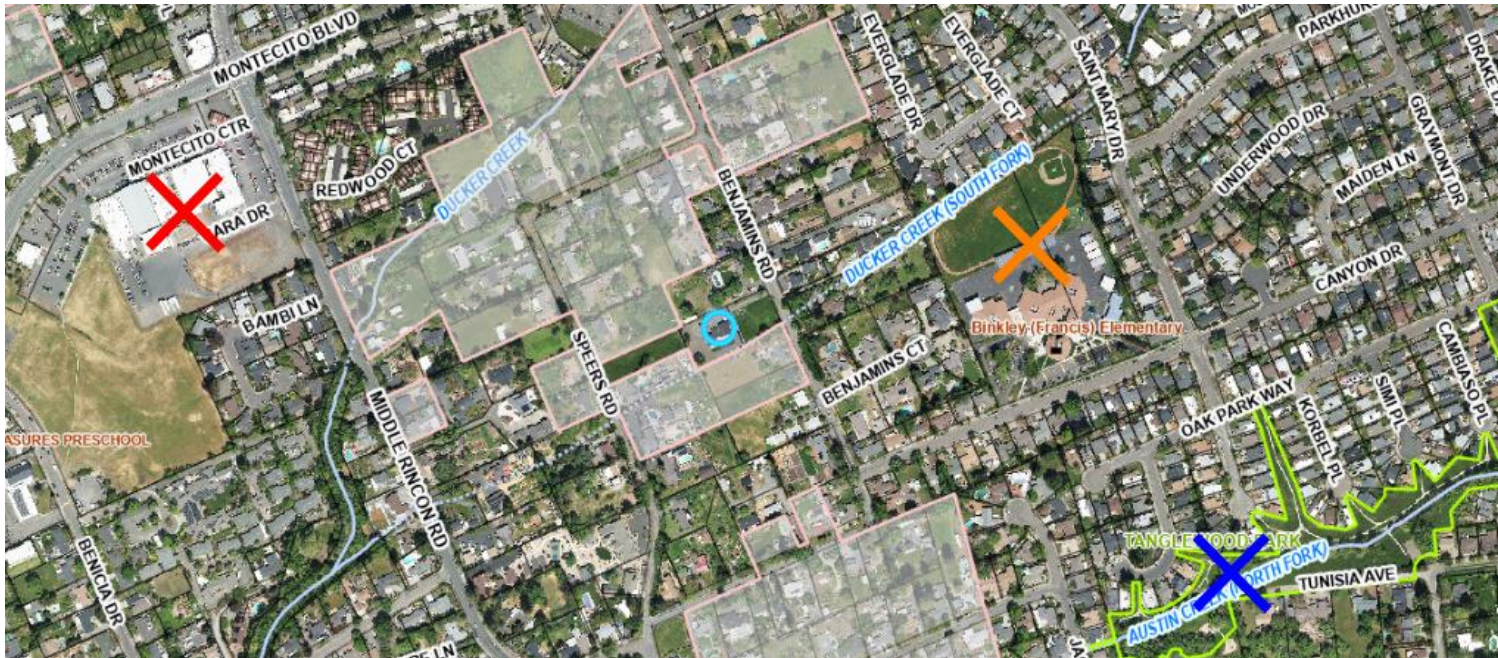


Development potential along Benjamins Road?

- 34 lots along this N-S stretch of Benjamins Rd
 - 6 lots – public improvements exist
 - 9 lots in County islands – have development potential
 - 6 lots could potentially subdivide
 - Remaining 13 lots could trigger public improvements through redevelopment

Analysis (continued)

- Benjamins Rd is not in the 2025-2026 Capital Improvement Program Budget. Likelihood of this being added to the CIP list is low
- Benjamins Road will only be built out with private development
- Need safe paths of travel to schools, parks, shopping centers



Recommendation

- Recommend City Council, by resolution:
 - Deny the appeal and uphold the City Engineer's determination to deny the variance for relief from public improvement requirements for the Project.

QUESTIONS?

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