

July 6, 2009
#08-16

BARTELT
engineering

Mr. Erich Kroll
Napa County Department of Public Works
1195 Third Street, Room 201
Napa, CA 94559

Re: Wheeler Winery Road Exception Request, 588 Zinfandel Lane, Napa County, California, APN 030-260-016

Dear Mr. Kroll:

Wheeler Winery is applying for a Use Permit to build and operate a 50,000 gallon per year winery on a portion of the above mentioned parcel. The parcel is currently served by two rural residential / agricultural driveways. Section 12 of the Napa County Road and Street Standards requires wineries to be served by a common driveway having a minimum width of 18 feet with a 2 foot shoulder and a minimum structural section of 5 inches of Class 2 aggregate base with a double chip seal coat. The purpose of this letter is to request an exception from the Napa County Road and Street Standards for the width of a portion of the secondary access road that will serve the proposed winery.

Project Description

The proposed winery will be a full production facility and will have an annual production level of 50,000 gallons of wine per year. Wine production will take place in two proposed winery buildings as shown on the attached conceptual site plan prepared by Bartelt Engineering. A new tasting room will be constructed westerly of the proposed winery buildings. The winery staff will consist of four (4) full-time employees and four (4) seasonal (harvest) employees. Tours and tastings will be allowed by appointment only with a maximum of 32 visitors on a peak day. Private promotional tastings and marketing events will be scheduled several times per year with a maximum of 150 guests in attendance. Daily tours and tastings will not be scheduled on the same day as marketing events.

The two access roads that serve the parcel are private roads that serve the agricultural and residential uses on several parcels in the area. The existing primary access road is gravel that appears to have been chip sealed at some time in the past and varies in width from approximately sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) feet over its 150 foot length between Zinfandel Lane and the proposed winery. A secondary access road is located along the easterly property line of the subject parcel and serves three adjacent parcels as well as the subject parcel. The existing secondary access road is dirt and gravel and varies in width from ten (10) to twelve (12) feet along its length.

RECEIVED

JUL 07 2009

NAPA CO. CONSERVATION
DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING DEPT.

civil engineering
land planning

1303 jefferson street, 200 B
napa, california 94559

(707) 258-1301
(707) 258-2926 fax

Exception Request and Justification

This letter requests an exception from Section 12 of the Napa County Road and Street Standards adopted on August 2, 1999. The exception is being requested to allow portions of the existing secondary access road, with proposed improvements, to be used to serve as the secondary access road for the proposed winery even though some sections will not meet the standard width criteria outlined in Section 12 of the Napa County Road and Street Standards.

The existing secondary access road has served this parcel and three adjacent parcels for many years. The portions of the roadway for which this exception request applies is characterized as very flat with an existing mature vineyard to the west and four very old oak trees ranging in size from 48 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) to 60 inches DBH. The property owners have routinely maintained the roadway to ensure adequate horizontal and vertical clearance for emergency vehicles and other vehicles that must access the residences and the vineyards on the parcels served by the road.

The road has always provided adequate access for the existing residences as well as for farming and hauling grapes grown on the subject parcel. The proposed winery will process some of the fruit grown on the parcel and thus will reduce the amount of traffic generated by hauling grapes off of the parcel.

Attached is a reproduction of a portion of the USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle "Rutherford" showing the subject parcel and the location of the proposed winery in relation to the property lines and Zinfandel Lane. Additionally, we are providing a copy of the "Wheeler Winery Conceptual Site Improvement Plan" prepared by Bartelt Engineering, dated July 2009. The existing and proposed roadway conditions are illustrated on the Wheeler Winery Conceptual Site Improvement Plan. The proposed access road configuration will achieve the same result as Napa County's Road and Street Standards, namely to allow unimpeded access for emergency vehicles and egress for vehicles leaving the site.

The Napa County Road and Street Standards allow for such exceptions when the following summarized criteria are met.

- (1) The exception is necessary to protect and ensure the preservation of unique features of the natural environment.

The area that is relevant to this exception request contains flat to gentle slopes with four (4) very large mature oak trees adjacent to the road. Widening of the roadway would be impossible without significant disturbance to the existing root system of the trees. Periodic horizontal and vertical trimming of roadside tree limbs will allow for adequate passage for vehicles and emergency vehicles.

- (2) The exception allows a situation that provides the same overall practical effect as the standard does in providing defensible space and does not adversely effect the life, safety and welfare of the public or the persons coming to the property.

All proposed development at the winery site will comply with Napa County and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection requirements for defensible space, fire department access and public safety. Furthermore, fire protection water storage will be provided per California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection requirements.

The existing roadway with the proposed improvements has been designed to provide the same overall effect as the Road and Street Standards. Following is a narrative description of the proposed roadway conditions:

Primary Access Road: The primary access road serving the proposed winery will be built to the current Road and Street Standards. The primary access road will be eighteen feet wide with two foot shoulders on each side. The road will be paved with 3 inches of Asphaltic Concrete over 12 inches of Class 2 Aggregate Base rock (the final road structural section will be determined when a geotechnical investigation has been completed). The road will be chip sealed to provide a country feel while still maintaining appropriate structural integrity.

Winery Production Access Road: The winery production access road will be built to the current Road and Street Standards. The winery production access road will be eighteen feet wide with two foot shoulders on each side. The road will be paved with 3 inches of Asphaltic Concrete over 12 inches of Class 2 Aggregate Base rock (the final road structural section will be determined when a geotechnical investigation has been completed).

Secondary Access Road: The secondary access road will be twelve (12) feet wide with a chip seal over the existing gravel section. A letter from Joe Borden, a Certified Arborist from Britton Tree Service, suggests that all grading should be avoided in the roadway adjacent to the four oak trees (see attached letter). The portion of the access road affected by this request will be from Zinfandel Lane approximately 240 lineal feet to the point where the secondary access road intersects with the winery production access road.

In summary, Section 3 of the Standards states that "standards that affect native trees or other geologic features are prime examples of those circumstances where exceptions may be reviewed." The exception requested herein is consistent with this goal, in that it achieves the same effect as the specifications outlined in the Standards, but without removing or damaging four significant oak trees.

Monitoring of Safe Access Conditions

The Applicant agrees to establish a formal maintenance program for assuring adequate and clear horizontal and vertical access for larger vehicles such as trucks and emergency vehicles, as well as for automobiles.

Summary

The attached materials are provided to assist with your decision. It would be of great assistance to have a short letter of concurrence from the Public Works Department, should approval of the exception be granted.

Thank you for your consideration of our request for this exception. You may contact us directly with any questions or to schedule a site visit if necessary.

Sincerely,



Paul N. Bartelt, P.E.
Principal Engineer

cc: Donna Oldford
John Nees
Duane Kanuha, Kahala Investment Works

Attachments: USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle "Rutherford"
Wheeler Winery Conceptual Site Improvement Plan



















