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Road and Street Standards Exemption Request



March 7, 2016

Job No. 14-102

David Morrison, Director
Napa County Planning, Building and Environmental Services Department
1195 Third Street, Suite 210
Napa, California 94559

RECEIVED
MAR 07 2016
Napa County Planning, Building
& Environmental Services

Re: Request for Exception to the Napa County Road and Street Standards for the
Sodhani Winery Use Permit Application
3283 St. Helena Highway North, St. Helena, CA 94574
Napa County APN 022-080-004

Dear Mr. Morrison:

This request for an exception to the Napa County Road and Street Standards (Standards) and State Responsibility Area (SRA) Fire Safe Regulations is being filed concurrent with the above referenced Use Permit application for the Sodhani Winery. This exception request is a new part of this application because the proposed driveway conditions fully conformed with the Standards that were in affect at the time of filing. As of January 26, 2016 the revised Standards were adopted which created additional requirements for properties within the State Responsibility Area. The proposed driveway conditions fully comply with the current Napa County Road and Street Standards and this exception request is strictly limited to addressing the maximum longitudinal slope of 16% that is stipulated in the SRA Fire Safe Regulations.

We are providing this information for your review and final decision by the Conservation, Development and Planning Commission pursuant to Section 3 of the Napa County Road and Street Standards as adopted by the Napa County Board of Supervisors on January 26, 2016 (Resolution 2016-06). Section 3 of the Standards allows exceptions to the Standards and SRA Fire Safe Regulations provided that that the proposed driveway conditions, including the requested exceptions, still provides the same overall practical effect as the Standards and SRA Fire Safe Regulations towards providing defensible space and consideration towards life, safety and public welfare and:

1. The exception will preserve unique features of the natural environment which includes, but is not limited to, natural watercourses, steep slopes, geological features, heritage oak trees, or other trees of at least 6" dbh and found by the decision maker to be of significant importance, but does not include man made environmental features such as vineyards, rock walls, ornamental or decorative landscaping, fences or the like;
2. The exception is necessary to accommodate physical site limitations such as grade differentials; and/or
3. The exception is necessary to accommodate other limiting factors such as recorded historical sites or legal constraints.

It is our opinion that approving the project along with the proposed substantial access improvements and granting this exception will:

1. Preserve mature native oak trees located along both sides of the new driveway at its connection to State Route 29 / 128;
2. Minimize the need for grading on the steep slopes between the driveway connection to State Route 29 / 128 and the building site;
3. Provide more than adequate site distance at the driveway intersection at State Route 29 / 128; and
4. Provide the same overall practical effect as the Standards and SRA Fire Safe Regulations towards providing defensible space and consideration towards life, safety and public welfare.

The remainder of this letter describes the proposed project, provides background information regarding existing access conditions, outlines proposed driveway improvements that have been designed to meet the requirements of the Napa County Road and Street Standards and SRA Fire Safe Regulations, identifies the specific areas where an exception to the Standards is being requested and provides justification for the requested exception including measures to provide the same overall practical effect.

Project Description

The Use Permit application under consideration proposes the construction and operation of a new winery with the following characteristics:

- **Wine Production:**
 - The winery will be permitted for up to 12,000 gallons of wine per year. The primary focus of the new winery will be for processing fruit which is grown onsite and thus will eliminate the need to off-haul fruit from the site which currently accounts for 12 truck trips during harvest.

- **Employees:**
 - There will be 2 full time employees. One of the two full time employees will live onsite and the other full time employee will come to the winery on an occasional basis and will, for the most part, work from offsite.

 - There will also be 2 part time employees that will come to the winery on a limited basis when need for seasonal activities such as harvest and bottling.

- **Marketing Plan:**
 - There is no visitor or marketing plan proposed as part of this application. The project was specifically designed to not include a visitor or marketing program to minimize the traffic associated with the proposed winery.

Existing improvements on the property include a single family residence, accessory structures, approximately 6.3 acres of vineyard and the related access and utility infrastructure needed to support these uses.

Existing Access Conditions

Access to the subject property is currently via a shared private driveway off of the west side of St. Helena Highway (State Route 29/128) approximately 0.5 miles northwest of the intersection of St. Helena Highway and Ehlers Lane. The shared driveway currently provides access for the Sodhani property as well as the Sabin property located immediately to the north of the Sodhani property. Access to the Sabin property splits off from the shared driveway approximately 50 feet from the edge of State Route 29 / 128 and the driveway then continues on to the Sodhani property. There is an existing easement along the northwest Sodhani property line, following the existing driveway, that provides legal access to the Lyman property which is located immediately to the west of the Sodhani property however there is currently no development on the Lyman property.

Beyond the Sodhani / Sabin driveway split the Sodhani driveway narrows to a paved width of approximately 8 to 12 feet and continues approximately 800 feet westerly to the point where it terminates at the existing Sodhani residence. Longitudinal slopes along the shared portion of the Sodhani / Sabin driveway are gentle and average less than 10%. The Sodhani driveway between the Sabin driveway and the Sodhani residence slopes more steeply with average longitudinal slopes of approximately 12% to 20%. A small section of the existing driveway, just uphill of the Sabin

driveway split has a longitudinal slope that exceeds 20% with the maximum slope being approximately 22.5%.

The existing driveway at its intersection with State Route 29 / 128 is paved with asphalt and is approximately 20 feet in width. Existing tapers and radii at the approach to the highway do not conform to current Caltrans standards. Sight distance from the subject driveway looking both north and south is in excess of 500 feet and complies with Caltrans standards for a design speed of 50 miles per hour (430 feet required).

Napa County Road and Street Standards & SRA Fire Safe Regulations Requirements

The Napa County Road and Street Standards and SRA Fire Safe Regulations require that private access roads to wineries in the State Responsibility Area provide two 10-foot-wide travel lanes resulting in a total of 20 feet drivable width and maximum 16% longitudinal slope.

Proposed Driveway Improvements and Request for Exception from the Napa County Road and Street Standards

The Sodhani Winery project proposes significant driveway improvements to provide safe access to the winery site. These improvements will also improve access to the existing residential uses on the property for emergency vehicles.

In particular, a new winery driveway, separated from the existing Sodhani / Sabin driveway is being proposed to provide improved access to the winery site from State Route 29 / 128. All winery traffic will utilize the new driveway and therefore the winery project will result in no increase in vehicle trips on the existing shared driveway connection at State Route 29 / 128. The new driveway at its intersection with State Route 29 / 128 will be paved with asphalt and will have tapers and radii at the approach to the highway that fully conform to current Caltrans standards, a significant improvement relative to the existing shared Sodhani / Sabin driveway. Sight distance from the new winery driveway looking both north and south is in excess of 500 feet and complies with Caltrans standards for a design speed of 50 miles per hour (430 feet required).

From its connection at State Route 29 / 128 (STA 10+00) the new driveway will traverse westerly and northwesterly approximately 200 feet where it will rejoin the existing Sodhani driveway at STA 12+00, just above the point where the existing shared Sodhani / Sabin driveway enters the Sodhani property. The new driveway is designed to conform to the existing shared driveway such that the existing shared driveway will still be a viable access point for emergency vehicles.

The section of driveway from STA 10+00 to STA 12+00 will be constructed in full conformance with the Standards and the SRA Fire Safe Regulations. Previously this section was designed to have a maximum slope of 20% to accommodate the steep topography however due to the change in standards the driveway has been redesigned to provide a maximum longitudinal slope of 16%. The proposed new driveway with 16% maximum longitudinal slope is a substantial improvement over the existing driveway which has slopes up to 22.5%.

Continuing toward the existing residence and proposed winery site from STA 12+25 to STA 16+75 the driveway will be improved in full conformance with the Standards and the SRA Fire Safe Regulations with the exception of longitudinal slope. This segment, totaling approximately 450 feet in length is proposed to have an average longitudinal slope of 18% and a maximum longitudinal slope of 20%. This slope is compliant with the Standards however it exceeds the SRA Fire Safe Regulations specification of 16% maximum slope. The increased slope is necessary in this area to minimize grading on steep hillside slopes adjacent to the driveway, accommodate existing grade differentials between State Route 29 / 128 and the building site, maintain the driveway at the location of the existing route prescribed by the existing legal easement serving the Lyman property and maintain property line setbacks to cut and fill slopes along the driveway as required by the California Building Code. Furthermore, the increased slope allows the existing disturbed roadway area to be utilized and minimizes the total hillside disturbance area, including disturbance of tree root systems located along the north edge of the driveway on the Sabin property consistent with the intent of the Napa County Conservation Regulations.

From STA 16+75 to the winery building site the proposed driveway conditions will be fully compliant with the Standards and the SRA Fire Safe Regulations.

In summary, the proposed access conditions include a driveway that is fully compliant with the Napa County Road and Street Standards for its entire length. A request for an exception to the SRA Fire Safe Regulations for maximum longitudinal slope is being requested for a total of 450 feet of the 2,100 feet of winery access road. The remaining 1,650 feet, or 79% of the winery driveway will be fully compliant with the SRA Fire Safe Regulations and the Napa County Road and Street Standards.

As previously described, Section 3.D. of the Napa County Road and Street Standards, states that an exception to the Road and Street Standards and SRA Fire Safe Regulations may be granted if the exception will preserve unique features of the natural environment (including native trees, watercourses, steep slopes and geologic features) and the proposed project provides the same overall practical effect as the Standards and the SRA Fire Safe Regulations towards providing defensible space, and consideration towards life, safety and public welfare.

In addition to the significant driveway improvements that will be implemented to improve ingress and egress to the property for both existing and proposed uses, several other measures have been incorporated into the project design to provide the "same overall practical effect" as the Standards and SRA Fire Safe Regulations towards providing defensible space and consideration towards life, safety and public welfare. Below is a summary of the proposed measures:

Defensible Space

1. Horizontal and vertical vegetation management will be implemented along the entire length of the private access driveway and around the existing and proposed structures on the Sodhani property to create defensible space. This will include vegetation management and modification 10 feet horizontally and 15 feet vertically along all private access roads and 100 feet around buildings in accordance with Napa County Fire Department requirements.

Life Safety and Public Welfare

1. Improvements to the existing private access road to bring them into compliance with the Standards will result in safe access conditions and onsite circulation for emergency vehicles and the general public. As noted portions of the driveway will exceed the SRA Fire Safe Regulations requirement for maximum slope of 16% longitudinal slope. In order to mitigate and provide the same overall practical effect as the SRA Fire Safe Regulations the driveway surface will be paved with asphalt to increase traction and road surface stability and will therefore provide the same practical effect to provide safe access to the site.
2. The new driveway connection to State Route 29/128 will result in better access conditions than what exists today. The proposed geometric layout will bring the driveway into full conformance with Caltrans standards and will therefore result in improved safety for ingress and egress.
3. Site distance on State Route 29/128 exceeds Caltrans design requirements.
4. The project results in a minimal increase in ADT. The project scope was purposely kept to a minimal level to keep the ADT to the lowest level possible by including the following provisions as part of the project statement:
 - a. No public visitors or marketing events will be allowed at the winery.
 - b. There will be 2 full time employees. One of the two full time employees will live onsite and thus will not generate additional traffic above existing residential levels. The other full time employee will come to the winery on an occasional basis and will, for the most part, work from offsite. There will also be 2 part time seasonal employees that will come to the winery on a limited basis when needed for seasonal activities such as crush and bottling.
 - c. The onsite vineyard produces approximate 22 tons of fruit which equates to 3,300 gallons of wine. Given the nature of the ripening process in the vineyard it is currently harvested in six different batches resulting in six trucks hauling grapes from the site (twelve trips in and out). All fruit grown onsite will be processed in the proposed winery and thus no fruit will be hauled off thereby eliminating those twelve truck trips. Approximately 58 to 60 tons of fruit will be hauled into the site when and if the winery grows to its full production capacity of 12,000 gallons per year. It is planned that this fruit will be brought in 10 ton batches to minimize truck trips bringing fruit to the winery.

Section 3.F. of the Standards specifically identifies limiting of marketing events and visitors as a permit condition that can be used to help achieve the same overall practical effect as the Standards towards providing defensible space, consideration of life, safety and public welfare and not compromising civilian access or Fire Department access.

5. All proposed structures will be outfitted with built in fire protection systems including sprinklers and a pressurized fire hydrant. The additional onsite water storage and pressurized fire hydrant will be a benefit to both the proposed winery building and the existing residence.

Section 3.F. of the Standards specifically identifies that built in fire protection systems can be used to help achieve the same overall practical effect as the Standards towards providing defensible space, consideration of life, safety and public welfare and not compromising civilian access or Fire Department access.

Conclusions & Findings In Support of Exception Request

It is our opinion that this request to allow the proposed winery access driveway to be approved with segments that exceed the SRA Fire Safe Regulations maximum longitudinal slope requirement, meets the criteria established in Section 3 of the Road and Street Standards. More specifically, approval of the proposed exception will:

1. Preserve mature native oak trees;
2. Minimize the need for grading on steep slopes;
3. Maintain the driveway along the alignment of the existing recorded legal easement providing access to the Lyman property; and
4. Provide the same overall practical effect as the Standards and SRA Fire Safe Regulations towards providing defensible space and consideration towards life, safety and public welfare.

As previously described, there are mature native trees and hillside slopes along the driveway that are worthy of preservation. It is important to preserve the natural character of the area by minimizing the amount of grading and tree removal. Not only do the tree stands contribute to the rural character of the woodlands and watershed areas, they also provide shelter and habitat for a wide range of animal and plant species and provide screening of development on adjoining properties from the view of passersby on State Route 29 / 128.

Preservation of these features can be achieved by allowing specific segments of the driveway to have slopes that slightly exceed the SRA Fire Safe Regulations maximum longitudinal slope specification. The Applicant is willing to improve all private access roads to the greatest extent practicable while minimizing unnecessary grading on steep slopes and preserving trees to the greatest extent possible. Furthermore, the Applicant will provide the necessary clearing of trees and roadside vegetation (15 feet vertically and 10 feet horizontally on either side of the private access road) to provide adequate clearance for emergency vehicles and also to reduce the potential for fire hazard. With the proposed improvements, mitigation measures and minimization of project vehicle trips by careful project programming, proper vegetation management and regular maintenance, there is no reason that these steep slopes, native trees and existing legal constraints cannot be preserved while still achieving the same overall practical effect as outlined in the Standards and the SRA Fire Safe Regulations.

We trust that this information is sufficient to process the pending Use Permit application. Please contact us at (707) 320-4968 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Applied Civil Engineering Incorporated

By:

Michael R. Muelrath

Michael R. Muelrath, R.C.E. 67435
Principal



Enclosures:

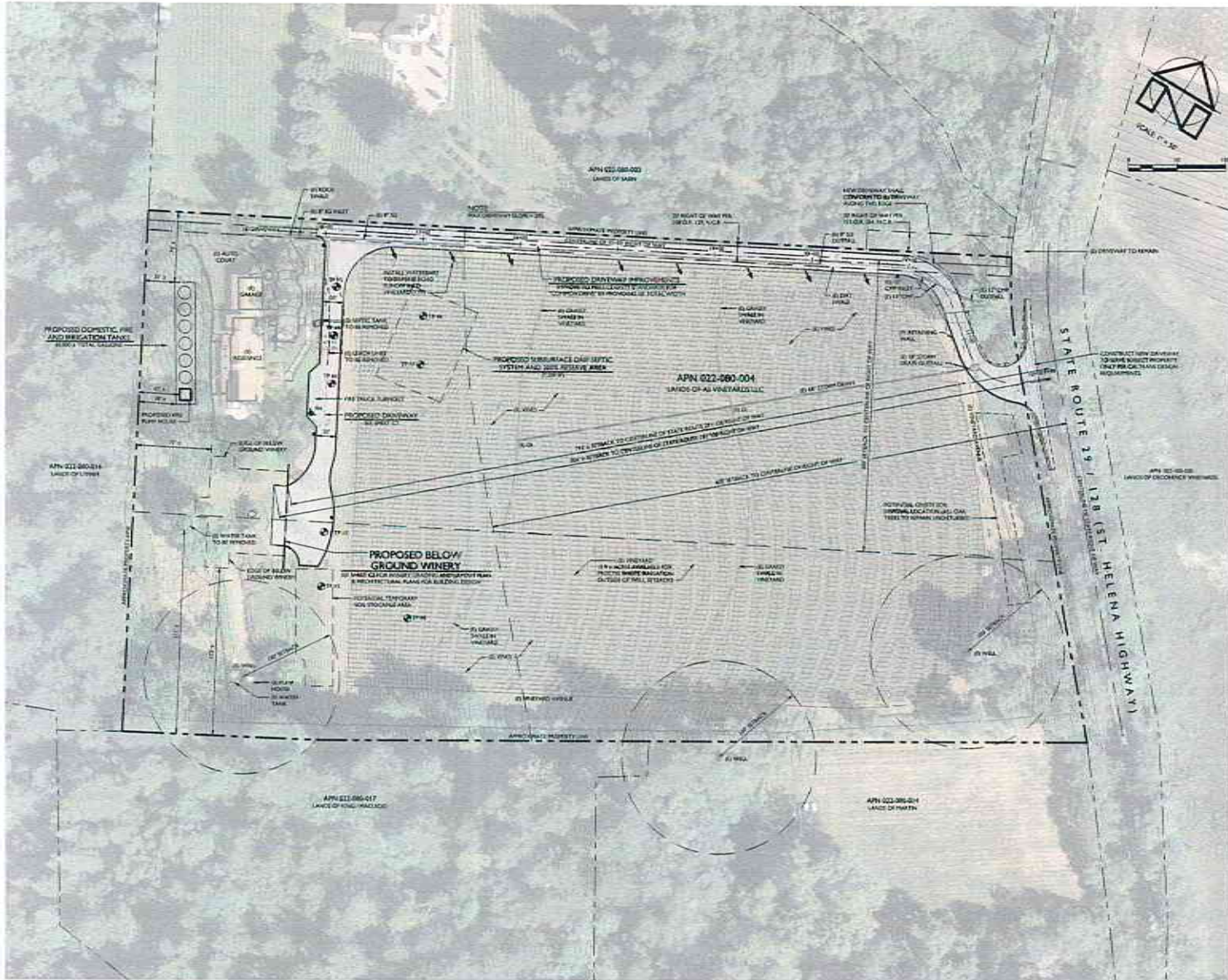
Sodhani Winery Use Permit Conceptual Site Plans

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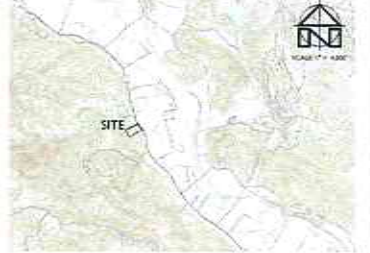
Arvind Sodhani, AS Vineyards (via email)
Donna Oldford, Plans 4 Wine (via email)
Patrick Ryan, Napa County PB&ES – Engineering Division

SODHANI WINERY

USE PERMIT CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS



OVERALL SITE PLAN
SCALE 1" = 40'



LOCATION MAP
SCALE 1" = 4000'

PROJECT INFORMATION:
PROPERTY OWNER & APPLICANT:
 AS VINEYARDS LLC
 CARE OF: ARVIND SODHANI
 85 21ST AVENUE
 SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94121
SITE ADDRESS:
 3183 ST. HELENA HIGHWAY NORTH
 ST. HELENA, CA 94574
ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER:
 022-080-004
PARCEL SIZE:
 11.1 ± ACRES
PROJECT SIZE:
 1.4 ± ACRES
ZONING:
 AGRICULTURAL WATERSHED (AW)
DOMESTIC WATER SOURCE:
 ONSITE WELLS
FIRE PROTECTION WATER SOURCE:
 STORAGE TANKS
WASTEWATER DISPOSAL:
 ONSITE TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL

SHEET INDEX:
 C1 OVERALL SITE PLAN
 C2 WINERY GRADING AND LAYOUT PLAN
 C3 DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE PLAN
 C4 IMPERVIOUS AREA EXHIBIT
 C5 STORMWATER CONTROL PLAN EXHIBIT

FLOOD HAZARD NOTE:
 AFFIRMING TO THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP (FIRM) NUMBER 8005000100, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 21, 2008, THE PROJECT SITE IS NOT LOCATED IN A SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA.

GRADING QUANTITIES¹

CUT	6,200 ± CY
FILL	1,800 ± CY
NET ²	5,300 ± CY (CUT)

¹ THIS ESTIMATE IS PROVIDED AS A TOOL FOR THE REVIEWING AGENCIES TO EVALUATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT. IT IS NOT INTENDED TO BE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES. CONTRACTOR IS TO PERFORM THEIR OWN QUANTITY CALCULATIONS AND SHALL NOT USE THE ESTIMATES PRESENTED ABOVE. THIS ESTIMATE IS BASED ON IN PLACE VOLUMES AND DOES NOT INCLUDE PAVING, AGGREGATES OR SELECT FILL VOLUMES.
² KNOWN SOIL CUT FROM THE PROJECT WILL BE PLACED IN THE SOIL DISPOSAL AREA OR WILL BE HAULLED OFFSITE TO A LOCATION TO BE APPROVED BY NAPA COUNTY.

NOTES:
 1. AERIAL BACKGROUND REPRESENTS EXISTING TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES. TOPOGRAPHIC INFORMATION WAS TAKEN FROM THE MAP OF TOPOGRAPHY OF A PORTION OF THE LANDS OF 3283 ST. HELENA HIGHWAY PREPARED BY ALBERT SURBERT, INC. DATED JUNE 28, 2014. APPLIED CIVIL ENGINEERING INCORPORATED ASSUMES NO LIABILITY REGARDING THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF THE TOPOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.
 2. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS WERE OBTAINED FROM THE NAPA COUNTY GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) DATABASE AND ARE DATED APRIL 9, 2011.
 3. CONTOUR INTERVAL: ONE (1) FOOT, HIGHLIGHTED EVERY FIVE (5) FEET.
 4. BENCHMARK: NAPA COUNTY BENCHMARK NO. 10541 ELEVATION = 141.11'
 5. THE PROPERTY LINES SHOWN ON THESE PLANS DO NOT REPRESENT A BOUNDARY SURVEY. THEY ARE APPROXIMATE AND ARE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. PROPERTY OWNERS SHALL HIRE A LICENSED LAND SURVEYOR TO LOCATE THE EXACT LOCATION OF PROPERTY LINES & BOUNDARIES AND PROPOSED NEAR ANY PROPERTY LINE OR REQUIRED PROPERTY LINE SETBACKS.



SODHANI WINERY
 USE PERMIT CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS
 OVERALL SITE PLAN

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

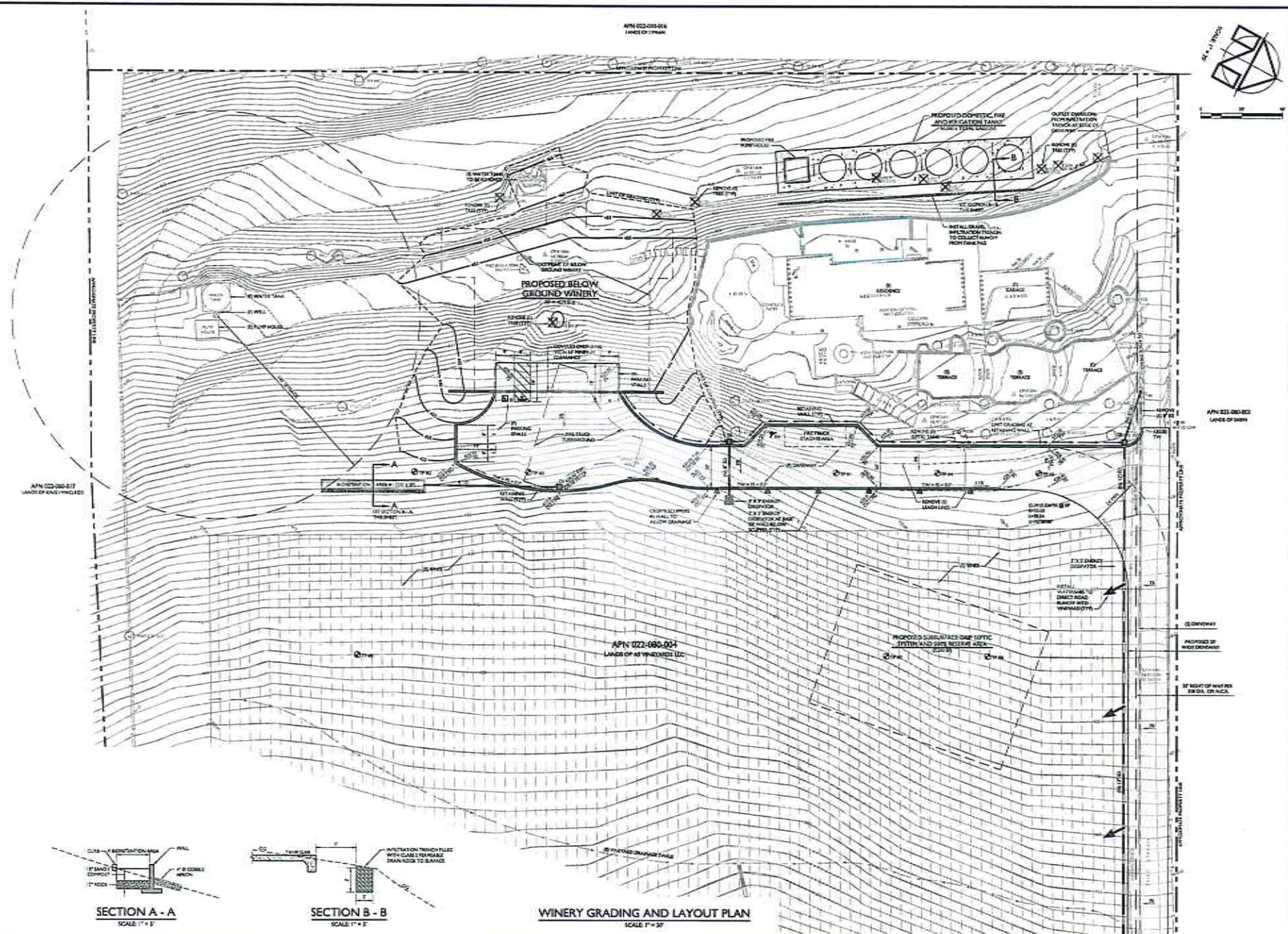


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JOB NUMBER: 14-02
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DWG. SIZE: 24" X 36"
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SODHANI WINERY
USE PERMIT CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS
WINERY GRADING AND LAYOUT PLAN



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MLM
DATE:
MARCH 7, 2016
REVISIONS: 01

JOB NUMBER:
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16-102CON-010
ORIGINAL SIZE:
36" X 36"
SHEET NUMBER:

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SECTION A - A
SCALE: 1" = 5'

SECTION B - B
SCALE: 1" = 5'

WINERY GRADING AND LAYOUT PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 30'

811 APPLICABLE INCLUDING ABOVEGROUND UTILITIES



SECTION A - A
SCALE: 1" = 4'

SECTION B - B
SCALE: 1" = 10'

DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE PROFILE
SCALE: 1" = 10'

DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 10'



SODHANI WINERY
USE PERMIT CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS
DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE PLAN AND PROFILE



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REVISIONS: BY:

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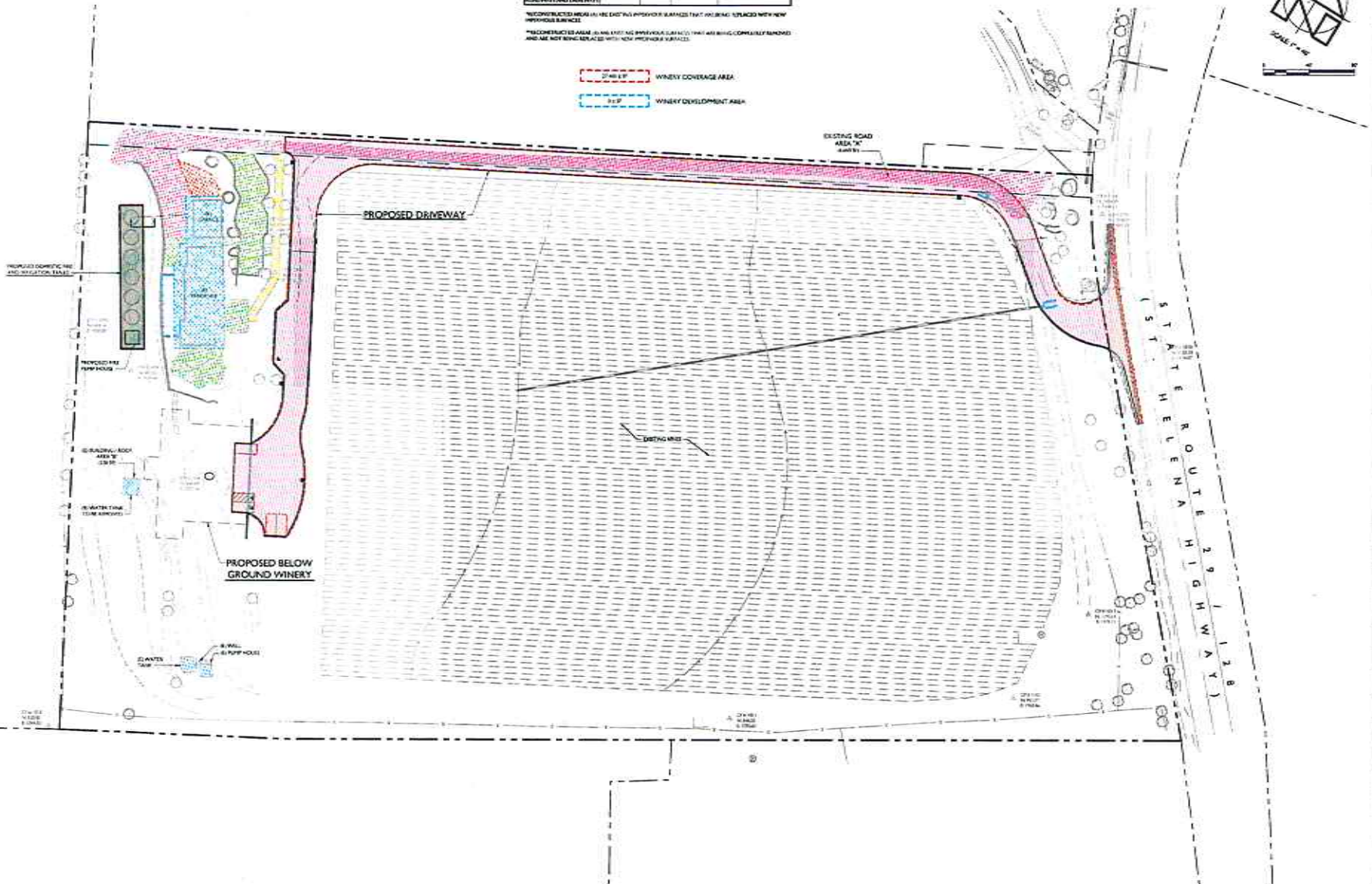
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IMPERVIOUS SURFACE SUMMARY

CATEGORY	NEW PROJECT		TOTAL NEW AND RECONSTRUCTED	
	AREA (SQ FT)	AREA (SQ FT)	AREA (SQ FT)	AREA (SQ FT)
BUILDING ROOFS	1,800	3,370	220	5,170
PAVING (DRIVEWAYS/PARKING)	2,400	8	2,400	8
CONCRETE DRIVEWAYS	1,100	0	0	0
PAVING	200	0	200	0
CONCRETE AND GROUNDWATER	1,200	0	1,200	0
OFF-STREET IMPERVIOUS IMPROVEMENTS	200	0	200	0
TOTAL NEW AND RECONSTRUCTED PAVED (INCLUDING ROADWAY AND DRIVEWAYS)	11,800	4,178	16,000	4,178

*NONCONSTRUCTED AREAS ARE THE EXISTING IMPERVIOUS SURFACES THAT WILL BE REPLACED WITH NEW IMPERVIOUS SURFACES.
 **RECONSTRUCTED AREAS ARE THE EXISTING IMPERVIOUS SURFACES THAT ARE BEING COMPLETELY REPAIRED AND ARE NOT BEING REPLACED WITH NEW IMPERVIOUS SURFACES.

22,400 SQ FT WINEY COVERAGE AREA
39,370 SQ FT WINEY DEVELOPMENT AREA



IMPERVIOUS SURFACE EXHIBIT
SCALE 1" = 40'



SODHANI WINERY
 USE PERMIT CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS
 IMPERVIOUS SURFACE EXHIBIT

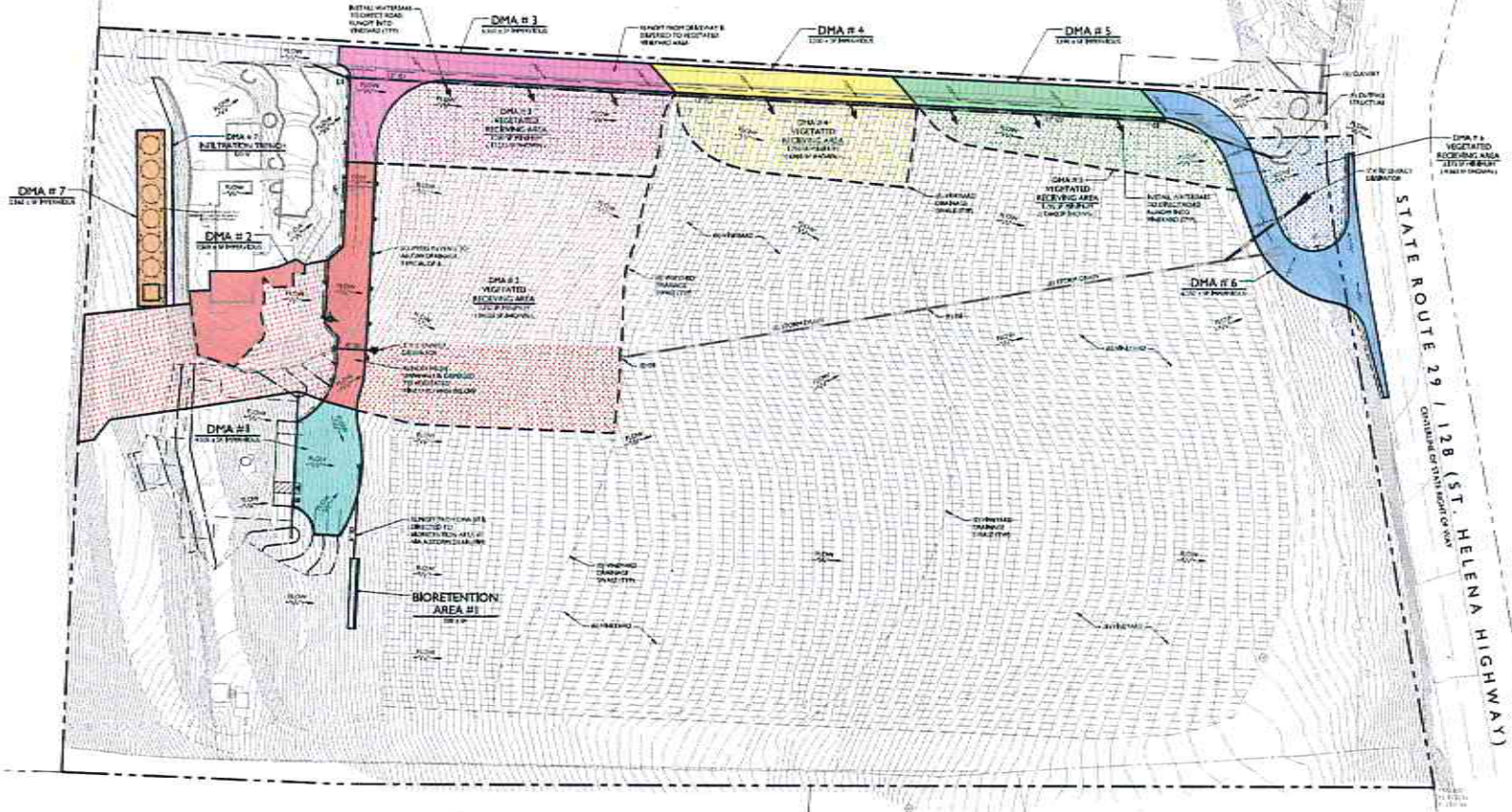


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of 5



STORMWATER CONTROL PLAN EXHIBIT
 SCALE: 1" = 40'

SODHANI WINERY
 USE PERMIT CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS
 STORMWATER CONTROL PLAN EXHIBIT



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