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Recommended Findings

**PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING – MAY 6, 2020
RECOMMENDED FINDINGS**

**Chappellet Winery Use Permit Major Modification
Application Number P18-00307-MOD & Exception to Road and Street Standards
1579 & 1581 Sage Canyon Road, St. Helena, California
APN #032-010-090; and 098**

ENVIRONMENTAL:

The Planning Commission (Commission) has received and reviewed the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and of Napa County's Local Procedures for Implementing CEQA, and finds that:

1. The Planning Commission has read and considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) prior to taking action on said Mitigated Negative Declaration and the proposed project.
2. The Mitigated Negative Declaration and MMRP is based on independent judgment exercised by the Planning Commission.
3. The Mitigated Negative Declaration and MMRP was prepared and considered in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
4. There is no substantial evidence in the record as a whole, that the project will have a significant effect on the environment provided that measures to mitigate potentially significant impacts to biological resources, geology and soil and transportation are incorporated into the project approval.
5. There is no evidence, in considering the record as a whole that the proposed project will have a potential adverse effect on wildlife resources or habitat upon which the wildlife depends.
6. The site of this proposed project is not on any of the lists of hazardous waste sites enumerated under Government Code Section 65962.5 and is not within the boundaries of any airport land use plan.
7. The Secretary of the Commission is the custodian of the records of the proceedings on which this decision is based. The records are located at the Napa County Planning, Building & Environmental Services Department, 1195 Third Street, Second Floor, Napa, California.

EXCEPTION TO ROAD AND STREET STANDARDS:

The Commission has reviewed the attached described Road and Street Standards (RSS) Exception request in accordance with Road and Street Standards Section 3 and makes the following findings:

8. The exception will preserve unique features of the natural environment which include, but are not limited to, steep slopes, heritage oak trees, or other trees of at least 6"dbh and found by the decision-maker to be of significant importance, but do not include man made

environmental features such as vineyards, rock walls, ornamental or decorative landscaping, fences or the like.

Analysis: Strict application of the requirement to improve the existing driveway to current standards will result in mass grading on steep slopes in excess of 50 percent as well as the removal of mature native trees on steeply sloping hillsides. Granting of the exception will minimize impacts to biological resources. As discussed in the Biological Resources section of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, all potential biological resources related impacts will be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures and with approval of this exception. This exception has been reviewed by the County Engineering Services Division and Fire Marshal who have determined that the request will preserve unique features in the natural environment and recommend approval.

9. Grant of the Road and Street Standards Exception will provide the same overall practical effect as the Standards do in providing defensible space, and does not adversely affect the life, safety, and welfare of the public or persons coming to the property.

Analysis: The County Engineering Services Division and Napa County Fire Department reviewed the request and conducted a site visit. Engineering staff, as well as, Fire Department staff recommend approval of the requested road exception, subject to recommended conditions in their memo of September 27, 2019 and October 25, 2019, respectively. The improvement achieves the same overall practical effect of the NCRSS by providing defensible space and consideration toward life, safety and public welfare by providing the following permanent measures: 1) horizontal and vertical vegetation management as described in the RSS exception request shall be implemented along the entire length of the private lane and driveway connection to Sage Canyon Road; 2) significant improvements are proposed to bring a majority of the road into compliance with the NCRSS as illustrated on the Chappellet Winery Use Permit Modification Conceptual Site Plans prepared by Applied Civil Engineering; 3) substandard width road sections are mitigated with standard turnouts throughout and/or are short in length with standard width sections immediately before and after the substandard section; and 4) all portions of the driveway not discussed in the Engineering Division Road Exception Evaluation are proposed to meet commercial standards as defined in the NCRSS.

PLANNING AND ZONING ANALYSIS:

USE PERMIT:

The Commission has reviewed the use permit major modification request in accordance with the requirements of the Napa County Code §18.124.070 and makes the following findings:

10. The Commission has the power to issue a Use Permit under the Zoning Regulations in effect as applied to property.

Analysis: The project is consistent with the Agricultural Watershed (AW) zoning district regulations. A winery (as defined in the Napa County Code Section 18.08.640) and uses in connection with a winery (refer to Napa County Code Section 18.20.030) are permitted in the AW District with an approved use permit. The project, as conditioned, complies with the Napa County Winery Definition Ordinance (WDO) and all other requirements of the Zoning Code as applicable.

11. The procedural requirements for a Use Permit set forth in Chapter 18.124 of the Napa County Code (zoning regulations) have been met.

Analysis: The Use Permit Major Modification application has been appropriately filed and noticed and public hearing requirements have been met. The hearing notice and intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration were posted on March 20, 2020 and April 24, 2020, and copies were forwarded to appropriate persons on the mailing list. The public comment period ran from March 20, 2020 to May 5, 2020.

12. The grant of the Use Permit, as conditioned, will not adversely affect the public health, safety or welfare of the County of Napa.

Analysis: Granting the Use Permit Major Modification for the project, as proposed and conditioned, will not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of the County. Various County divisions and departments have reviewed the project and commented regarding site access, wastewater disposal, parking, building permits, and fire protection. Conditions are recommended which will incorporate these comments into the project to ensure the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare. As conditioned, the divisions and the departments recommend approval.

13. The proposed use complies with applicable provisions of the Napa County Code and is consistent with the policies and standards of the Napa County General Plan and any applicable specific plan.

Analysis: Compliance with the Zoning Ordinance

The project is consistent with the AW zoning district regulations. A winery (as defined in the Napa County Code Section 18.08.640) and uses in connection with a winery (refer to Napa County Code Section 18.20.030) are permitted in the AW District subject to an approved use permit. The proposed project includes the continued operation of an existing winery and will comply with the development standards of the AW District. The project, as conditioned, complies with the Napa County Winery Definition Ordinance (WDO) and all other requirements of the Zoning Code as applicable.

Analysis: Compliance with the General Plan

As proposed and as conditioned, the requested Use Permit is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the General Plan (2008). The General Plan land use designation for the subject parcel is Agriculture, Watershed, and Open Space (AWOS).

General Plan Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Goal AG/LU-1 guides the County to “preserve existing agricultural land uses and plan for agriculture and related activities as the primary land uses in Napa County.” General Plan Goal AG/LU-3 states that the County should “support the economic viability of agriculture, including grape growing, winemaking, other types of agriculture, and supporting industries to ensure the preservation of agricultural lands.” Goal AG/LU-3 and Policy AG/LU-2 recognize wineries as agricultural uses.

The continued use of the property for fermenting and processing of grape juice into wine supports the economic viability of agriculture within the County, consistent with Goal AG/LU-3 and Policy AG/LU-4 (“The County will reserve agricultural lands for agricultural use including land used for grazing and watershed/open space...”). By allowing the continued agricultural use, the requested Use Permit Major Modification supports the economic viability of both the

existing vineyard and agricultural product processing uses on the property, consistent with Economic Development Goal E-1 and Policy E-1.

The “Right to Farm” is recognized throughout the General Plan and is specifically called out in Policy AG/LU-15 and in the County Code. “Right to Farm” provisions ensure that agriculture remains the primary land use in Napa County and is not threatened by potentially competing uses or neighbor complaints. Napa County’s adopted General Plan reinforces the County’s long-standing commitment to agricultural preservation, urban centered growth, and resource conservation.

Applicable Napa County General Plan goals and policies:

Goal AG/LU-1: Preserve existing agricultural land uses and plan for agriculture and related activities as the primary land uses in Napa County.

Goal AG/LU-3: Support the economic viability of agriculture, including grape growing, winemaking, other types of agriculture, and supporting industries to ensure the preservation of agricultural lands.

Policy AG/LU-2: “Agriculture” is defined as the raising of crops, trees, and livestock; the production and processing of agricultural products; and related marketing, sales and other accessory uses. Agriculture also includes farm management businesses and farm worker housing.

Policy AG/LU-4: The County will reserve agricultural lands for agricultural use including lands used for grazing and watershed/open space, except for those lands which are shown on the Land Use Map as planned for urban development.

Policy AG/LU-8: The County’s minimum agricultural parcel sizes shall ensure that agricultural areas can be maintained as economic units.

Policy AG/LU-15: The County affirms and shall protect the right of agricultural operators in designated agricultural areas to commence and continue their agricultural practices (a “right to farm”), even though established urban uses in the general area may foster complaints against those agricultural practices. The “right to farm” shall encompass the processing of agricultural products and other activities inherent in the definition of agriculture provided in Policy AG/LU-2.

Goal CON-10: Conserve, enhance and manage water resources on a sustainable basis to attempt to ensure that sufficient amounts of water will be available for the uses allowed by this General Plan, for the natural environment, and for future generations.

Goal CON-11: Prioritize the use of available groundwater for agricultural and rural residential uses rather than for urbanized areas and ensure that land use decisions recognize the long-term availability and value of water resources in Napa County.

Policy CON-24(c): Maintain and improve oak woodland habitat to provide for slope stabilization, soil protection, species diversity, and wildlife habitat through appropriate

measures including one or more of the following:

c) Provide replacement of lost oak woodlands or preservation of like habitat at a 2:1 ratio when retention of existing vegetation is found to be infeasible. Removal of oak species limited in distribution shall be avoided to the maximum extent feasible.

Policy CON-53: The County shall ensure that the intensity and timing of new development are consistent with the capacity of water supplies and protect groundwater and other water supplies by requiring all applicants for discretionary projects to demonstrate the availability of an adequate water supply prior to approval. Depending on the site location and the specific circumstances, adequate demonstration of availability may include evidence or calculation of groundwater availability via an appropriate hydrogeologic analysis or may be satisfied by compliance with County Code “fair-share” provisions or applicable State law. In some areas, evidence may be provided through coordination with applicable municipalities and public and private water purveyors to verify water supply sufficiency.

Policy CON-54: The County shall maintain or enhance infiltration and recharge of groundwater aquifers by requiring all projects in designated groundwater deficient areas as identified in the County’s groundwater ordinance (County Code Chapter 13.15) be designed (at minimum) to maintain a site’s predevelopment groundwater recharge potential, to the extent feasible, by minimizing impervious surfaces and promoting recharge (e.g., via the use of water retention/detention structures, use of permeable paving materials, bio-swales, water gardens, cisterns, and other best management practices).

Policy CON-55: The County shall consider existing water uses during the review of new water uses associated with discretionary projects, and where hydrogeologic studies have shown that the new water uses will cause significant adverse well interference or substantial reductions in groundwater discharge to surface waters that will alter critical flows to sustain riparian habitat and fisheries or exacerbate conditions of overdraft, the County shall curtail those new or expanded water uses.

Policy CON-60.5 All aspects of landscaping from the selection of plants to soil preparation and the installation of irrigation systems should be designed to reduce water demand, retain runoff, decrease flooding, and recharge groundwater.

Policy CON-72: The County shall seek to reduce the energy impacts from new buildings by applying Title 24 energy standards as required by law and providing information to the public and builders on available energy conservation techniques, products, and methods available to exceed those standards by 15 percent or more.

Policy CON-77: All new discretionary projects shall be evaluated to determine potential significant project-specific air quality impacts and shall be required to incorporate appropriate design, construction, and operational features to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants regulated by the state and federal governments below the applicable significance standard(s) or implement

alternate and equally effective mitigation strategies consistent with BAAQMD's air quality improvement programs to reduce emissions. In addition to these policies, the County's land use policies discourage scattered development which contributes to continued dependence on the private automobile as the only means of convenient transportation. The County's land use policies also contribute to efforts to reduce air pollution.

Policy CON-81: The County shall require dust control measures to be applied to construction projects consistent with measures recommended for use by the BAAQMD [Bay Area Air Quality Management District].

Goal E-1: Maintain and enhance the economic viability of agriculture.

Policy E-1: The County's economic development will focus on ensuring the continued viability of agriculture in Napa County.

Policy SAF-20: All new development shall comply with established fire safety standards. Design plans shall be referred to the appropriate fire agency for comment as to:

- 1) Adequacy of water supply.
- 2) Site design for fire department access in and around structures.
- 3) Ability for a safe and efficient fire department response.
- 4) Traffic flow and ingress/egress for residents and emergency vehicles.
- 5) Site-specific built-in fire protection.
- 6) Potential impacts to emergency services and fire department response.

14. That the proposed use will not require a new water system or improvement causing significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on the affected groundwater basin in Napa County, unless that use will satisfy any of the other criteria specified for approval or waiver of a groundwater permit under Sections 13.15.070 or 13.15.080 of the County Code.

Analysis: The project is consistent with General Plan Conservation Policies CON-53 and CON-55, which require that applicants who are seeking discretionary land use approvals, prove that adequate water supplies are available to serve the proposed use without causing significant negative impacts to shared groundwater resources. The project is categorized as "all other areas" based upon current County Water Availability Analysis policies and therefore water use criteria is parcel specific based upon a Tier 2 analysis. A Tier 2 analysis was completed by O'Connor Environmental, Inc. on July 27, 2018 which included a parcel specific recharge evaluation. The project recharge area also includes portions of six neighboring parcels. According to the recharge evaluation, groundwater recharge within the project recharge area is estimated to be 168.3 AF/YR in an average year and 95.6 AF/YR during drought conditions (O'Connor Environmental, Inc., 2018).

The project well, Well 1, is also known as the Corral Well and is located 0.95 miles south of the winery on parcel number 032-010-092. This parcel is owned by Alexa Chappellet et al, an official easement allowing the winery to use this water is included in the 2014 Transient Non-community Water System technical, managerial and financial report by Applied Engineering (Applied Civil Engineering, 2014). The Corral Well was drilled in 2008 to a

depth of 710 feet and completed to a depth of 627 feet. The geologic log describes a sequence of clays and gray rock for the first 125 feet, ash and gray rock were encountered between 125 feet and 450 feet, and hard light gray and hard green and gray rock from 450 feet to 615 feet. At 615 feet rocks described as “gray and green shale with streaks of serpentine” are recorded to the bottom of the hole at 710 feet, indicating that they penetrated the basement rocks of the Coast Range ophiolite. Well 1 is screened between 447 feet and 627 feet. Approximately 12 feet of the screened interval is within the serpentinite. Due to the generally poor aquifer characteristics of this rock and the relatively short section of perforated well casing in the serpentinite, the project aquifer is assumed to be within the Sonoma Volcanics. The well log reports depth to first water as 440 feet and a static water level of 400 feet after development in May 2008. A pump test was performed in August 2011 and reported a prepumping water level of 408 feet. After six hours of pumping at rate of 30 gallons per minute the water level had drawn down eight feet to 416 feet and remained stable for the last two hours of the test. Within four minutes after shutting off the pump the water level had recovered to its initial level of 408 (O'Connor Environmental, Inc., 2018). According to the water analysis, the existing groundwater use within the project recharge area is 26.4 AF/YR. The anticipated total overall water demand for the project recharge area including the project site would be 29.4 AF/YR representing a 3.00 AF/YR increase of the existing water demand of 26.4 AF/YR. The estimated groundwater demand of 29.4 AF/YR, represents an increase of 3.00 AF/YR over the existing condition. The average annual recharge of 168.3 AF/YR and 95.6 AF/YR during drought conditions is higher than the average annual groundwater demand estimated to be 29.4 AF/YR. Therefore, the project is considered not to have a potential to significantly impact groundwater resources. Because the projected water demand for the project is below the estimated water availability acre feet per year for the parcel, the requested Use Permit Major Modification is consistent with General Plan Goals CON-10 and CON-11, as well as the policies mentioned above that support reservation and sustainable use of groundwater for agricultural and related purposes. The project will not require a new water system or other improvements and will not have a negative impact on local groundwater. The project is also consistent with General Plan Conservation Policy CON-54 because it minimizes impervious surfaces and utilizes bio swales to aid in maintaining the site's predevelopment groundwater recharge potential.