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August 3, 2004

Robert Peterson, Director of Public Works
Napa Co. Public Works Dept.
1195 Third Street, Room 201
Napa, CA 94559

Re: Oakford Winery
Road Exception Request
APN 027-360-018
Permit #04029-UP
Project Number 2003048

Dear Mr. Peterson:

This letter is to request your Department's consideration of a road exception request for access roadways serving the above referenced property, herein referred to Oakford Vineyards. This road exception request is for two portions of roadway: 1) The offsite portion of the access road, from it's junction with Oakville Grade at Acacia Drive to the entry to the subject property at Oakford Vineyards and 2) The proposed onsite driveway for access to the proposed winery site.

A detailed road exception request exhibit is included with this correspondence to assist with your evaluation of this request. The exhibit is based upon topographic mapping prepared by Michael W. Brooks and Associates. The field survey was completed on July 27, 2004.

PART 1 – OFFSITE ROADWAY

Existing Conditions

The paved private access road connecting the parcel with Oakville Grade Road varies in width from 13' at its narrowest point to a maximum width of 19'. Condition of the existing surfacing is good to excellent. This private road provides access to three (3) private residences and two (2) wineries, including Harlan Estates Winery. Existing traffic on this road is minimal. In general, site distance along the existing roadway is good.

An existing open drainage course parallels the roadway along the west side between stations 11+25 and 18+25 and between stations 19+90 and 28+30. An existing open drainage course also exists along the east side of the road way between stations 22+50 and 29+60 and between stations 32+40 and 42+90 and again between stations 45+00 and 45+75. The existing road is within stream setbacks for a significant portion of the road length. The stream setbacks are identified on the attached exhibit documents.

Between stations 10+50 and 22+70 the slopes adjacent to the roadway varies between 30% and over 50%. The adjacent slopes flatten to between 0% and 30% between stations 22+70 and 32+25. The slopes become steeper again between stations 32+25 and 43+60 where the slopes vary from 15% to 30% and over 50%. This information was generated utilizing Land Development Desktop Slope Analysis feature.

In general, the access roadway is flanked by extensive stands of native oak trees in areas that are characterized as rural and natural oak woodlands. Trees measuring 8" in diameter or greater at breast height have been shown on the road exception exhibit.

Proposed Improvements

Utilizing the field mapping, locations have been identified along the alignment that will allow for the installation of turnouts and widening of the existing road. Stationing along the road has been incorporated to help identify the locations with stationing beginning at 10+00 at the approximate intersection at Oakville Grade Road. Locations of turnouts have been identified as well as approximate limits of widening the existing access road to the property. The turnouts will be construction to Napa County Fire (CDF) standards (10' wide 30' long with 25' transitions). Where feasible, the roadway will be widened to 18' wide with 2' shoulder, meeting the Napa County Public Works standard access road. The proposed improvements to the roadway have been identified as follows:

1. Station 18+06 to 18+80 install turnout on west side of roadway
2. Station 22+70 to 27+40 widen west side of roadway to 18' with 2' shoulder total width (470 lf)
3. Station 27+40 to 28+30 widen west side of roadway to 18' with 2' shoulder total width (90 lf)
4. Station 28+55 to 30+20 widen the south side of roadway to 18' with 2' shoulder total width (165 lf)
5. Station 31+30 to 31+70 widen the east side of roadway to 18' with 2' shoulder total width (40 lf)
6. Station 32+00 to 32+60 install turnout on east side of roadway*
7. Station 32+00 to 36+00 widen west side of roadway an additional 2-3'* (400lf)
8. Station 35+10 to 35+70 install turnout on east side of roadway*
9. Station 39+00 to 46+00 widen both sides of roadway to 18' with 2' shoulder total width* (700 lf)

**It should be noted that at station 31+75+/- the roadway enters the setback of a mapped blue line stream that runs in a culvert parallel to the road along the west side and continues to fall within the setback to the property access point (station 46+65). Because the existing mapped stream is within a culvert for much of its length, it is proposed to widen the roadway in those locations where it is feasible to do so without removal of native trees or disturbance to steep slopes.*

The areas of the existing road that have not been proposed to be improved are those that are restricted by slopes above 30%, within stream setbacks, or where existing native trees would need to be removed. A total of 1,865 linear feet of road are proposed to be improved with the addition of three turnouts. Refer to the exhibit for the mapped location and size of existing native trees.

PART 2 – ONSITE PRIVATE ROADWAY

Existing Conditions

An existing paved road serves a private residence on the Oakford Vineyards parcel. The development pad for the residence will become the winery development area, utilizing the existing road on the west side of the residence as the access road for the winery. The existing access road to be utilized is located within an existing stream setback and on slopes exceeding 30%. The roadway is flanked on both sides with mature native trees.

Proposed Improvements

From a point just north of the existing residence development pad, a new road will be provided to loop to the east of the development and reconnect with the existing roadway near the gate at the entry to the property. This road is proposed to be a one way loop. The newly developed portions of the road will be 10 feet in width per the County standard.

The road exception request is related only to the few portions of the existing one way access road that are approximately 8 feet in width. Widening these portions of the access road would entail encroachment into the creek setback, significant disruption of steep slopes adjacent to the riparian corridor and removal of mature trees.

Refer to the enclosed road exception exhibit for a layout of the proposed one-way loop road as well as the configuration and constraints associated with the existing roadway.

CONSISTENCY WITH STANDARD OBJECTIVES

Criteria 1: The exception is necessary to protect and ensure the preservation of unique features in the natural environment.

The off-site section of the access road travels through areas of steep slopes, stream setbacks and is flanked by stands of native oaks. Widening the existing access road to County Standard along its entire length would have a significant adverse impact on the roadway corridor. Sections of the roadway are in areas of steep slopes (greater than 30%), within mapped stream setbacks and contain mature native oaks. The roadway is proposed to be selectively improved and widened to County Standards in those areas that do not involve adverse impact to the above noted environmental features. Refer to the attached exhibit for details. Note that approximately 1865 linear feet of roadway are proposed to be improved with the addition of three turnouts meeting County Standards.

Widening the on-site section of roadway would have significant environmental impacts to undeveloped hillside habitat containing a mature stand of native oaks as well as encroachment into the existing stream setback (see exhibit). In addition, the roadway is situated in an area of very steep slopes (greater than 30%) which exacerbates the environmental impacts of roadway widening. Use of a one-way loop road allows the existing developed road to remain while shifting development of a required roadway to less sensitive areas of the property.

Criteria 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.


The existing off site access road is very lightly traveled and has served the few existing users well for many years. In general, the sight distance and pavement condition is good along the length of the road. The improvements in road width proposed, as well as the fuel reduction and defensible space clearing that is proposed, will result in a substantial improvement over existing conditions. CDF personnel have reviewed the roadway and indicated that the proposed mitigations and roadway improvements are acceptable from the standpoint of safety as it relates to fire protection.

The observations and requirements of CDF, based on their preliminary site visit and that Department's review of plans as submitted, reflect conditions of approval that will be incorporated into the project.

The proposed onsite one-way loop access road provides the same practical effect as the standard for a two-way road, without adversely impacting the native trees, or encroaching into the stream setback. The one way loop road provides additional redundancy beyond that provided by the standard in that a completely different route is available to access the proposed winery building. The existing section of roadway would be repaved and maintained in accordance with County Code sections related to exceptions.

Please review this request for road exception and contact this office with any questions.

Sincerely,



Greg Swaffar, P.E.
PRESIDENT

Enclosures

cc: Donna Oldford
Tom Futo