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Agenda Date: 3/21/2012

Agenda Placement: 9C

## Napa County Planning Commission Board Agenda Letter

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**TO:** Napa County Planning Commission  
**FROM:** John McDowell for Hillary Gitelman - Director  
Conservation, Development & Planning  
**REPORT BY:** Sean Trippi, Principal Planner - 299-1353  
**SUBJECT:** Cliff Lede Vineyards Use Permit Modification (P11-00438)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **CLIFF LEDE VINEYARDS / CLIFF LEDE / YOUNTVILLE CROSSROADS INC. - USE PERMIT MAJOR MODIFICATION P11-00438-MOD**

**CEQA status:** Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act, Class 1, which exempts alterations to an existing structure. This project is not on any of the lists of Hazardous waste sites enumerated under government Code section 65962.5.

**Request:** Approval of a modification to previous use permit approvals for the Cliff Lede Vineyards winery to allow the following: 1) increase the annual production from 60,000 gallons to 80,000 gallons; 2) convert an existing 1,102 sq. ft. storage room into a wine tasting area for by appointment only tours and tastings visitors; and 3) add tours and tasting by appointment only for 20 visitors per day with food pairings. The winery is located on a 25.3 acre parcel on the southeast side of Yountville Cross Road, approximately 1/4 mile southwest of its intersection with Silverado Trail within an Agricultural Preserve (AP) zoning district. APN: 031-220-023. 1473 Yountville Cross Road, Yountville.

**Staff Recommendation:** Find the project categorically exempt and approve the requested use permit modification as conditioned.

**Staff Contact:** Sean Trippi, 707-299-1353 or [sean.trippi@countyofnapa.org](mailto:sean.trippi@countyofnapa.org)

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **Proposed Action:**

That the Planning Commission:

1. Find the project categorically exempt, as set forth in Finding 1 of Exhibit A.
2. Approve Use Permit Modification No P11-00438 based on findings 2-6 of Exhibit A and subject to the recommended conditions of approval (Exhibit B)

**Discussion:**

This application proposes a modification to a winery use permit first approved in 1979 and modified several times over the years (see History, below) chiefly to allow an increase in production from 60,000 to 80,000 gallons annually, conversion of an existing storage area to a tasting room, and increasing the number of daily visitors for by-appointment tours and tasting by a total of 20 people per day, including food pairings. The existing facility pre-dates the Winery Definition Ordinance (WDO), a portion of which is located within the road setback. Expansion of pre-WDO facilities are permitted upon grant of a use permit modification contingent upon all expanded aspects complying with the WDO. The proposed project appears consistent with these requirements, and therefore, approval of the modification is recommended.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?                      No

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

The proposed project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act, Class 1, which exempts alterations to an existing structure. The project proposes to convert an existing 1,102 sq. ft. storage area to a tasting room for by-appointment visitors, add a maximum of 20 visitors per day for by-appointment tours and tastings, and increase production by 20,000 gallons per year. No modifications to the existing wastewater treatment systems are proposed and no increase in water demand results from the proposal because of past water conservation measures implemented at the winery. Traffic on Silverado Trail would increase by about 0.08% and by about 0.27% on Yountville Cross Road on a typical weekday and during crush by 0.13% and 0.46% on Silverado Trail and Yountville Cross road, respectively. This project is not on any of the lists of Hazardous waste sites enumerated under government Code section 65962.5.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

**Owner:** Cliff Lede Vineyards

**Representative:** George Monteverdi

**Zoning:** AP (Agricultural Preserve)

**General Plan Designation:** AR (Agricultural Resource)

**Filed:** November 11, 2011

**Complete:** March 5, 2012

**Production Capacity (approved):** 60,000 gallons per year

**Production Capacity (proposed):** 80,000 gallons per year

**Winery Size:**

**Development Area (existing / proposed):** approximately 26,430 sq. ft. / No Change

**Winery Coverage (existing / proposed):** approximately 57,730 sq. ft. or 1.3 acres (+/- 0.05% of parcel) / No Change  
(winery coverage is a maximum of 25% of parcel or 15 acres, whichever is less)

**Production facility (existing / proposed):** approximately 47,200 sq. ft. (includes 31,300 sq. ft. of caves) / No Change

**Accessory Use (existing / proposed):** approximately 8,322 sq. ft. / No Change  
(An 1,102 sq. ft. storage room within an existing administrative building is proposed for conversion to a tasting room. No new structures are proposed)

**Accessory to Production Ratio (existing / proposed):** 17.6% / No Change  
(accessory to production ratio is a WDO maximum of 40%)

**Visitation:**

**Marketing (existing / proposed):** 18 events per year ranging from 15 to 400 guests with catered food / No Change

**Tours and Tastings (existing):** 125 visitors per day or 875 per week (maximum) open to the public/drop-in  
**Tours and Tastings (proposed):** 145 visitors per day or 1015 per week (maximum) open to the, 125 drop-in plus 20 per day by-appointment

**Number of Employees (approved / proposed):** 11 full-time / No Change

**Days & Hours of Operation (existing / proposed):** 7 days a week, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM (Visitation 10 AM to 4 PM) / No Change

**Parking (existing / proposed):** 42 / No Change

**Setbacks:**

The two existing winery administrative buildings are setback approximately 75 to 115 feet from the centerline of Yountville Cross Road. The original project approval, allowing the 115-foot setback, predates the requirement for a 300-foot setback from the centerline of Yountville Cross Road. A variance was granted in 2003 allowing the setback to be reduced to 75 feet. The production facility, located at the base of the hill, is setback approximately 565 feet from the centerline of Yountville Cross Road. No new structures are proposed with this application.

**Setting:**

The 25.3 acre project site is located approximately 1/4 mile southwest of the Silverado Trail/Yountville Cross Road intersection with access from Yountville Cross Road. The winery is split into two distinctive areas; administrative offices (including the tasting area); and, the production facility (including the caves). The administrative office/tasting area is served by three driveways. Two driveways provide looped access to the visitor parking area with full left-turn access. The third driveway provides access to the employee parking area. The production area is located at the base of a wooded knoll. The knoll extends onto the adjoining property to the south and includes a single-family home and guest cottage perched atop the knoll. The primary point of access to this

area is provided by a driveway to the west of the administrative offices/tasting area, which also provides access to the aforementioned home. A fourth driveway, further west of the driveway to the production area, provides access to the winery's wastewater ponds. These areas are interconnected by on-site access drives. The balance of the property is planted in vines. Surrounding uses include single-family homes, vineyards, and a number of wineries (see below).

Other producing wineries within about a mile of the project site include Kapscandy and Goose Cross Cellars on State Lane, which intersects Yountville Cross Road about 700-feet west from the driveway to the production area. There are also a number of wineries along Silverado Trail including Paraduxx, to the north and Robert Sinskey Vineyards, Baldacci Family Vineyards, Shafer Vineyards, Stag's Leap and Quixote to the south and east. There are also a few approved but not yet built wineries in the vicinity, Annapurna winery to the southwest, Pillar Rock to the southeast, Poetry to the east, and Perata to the north.

**Nearby Wineries:**

Kapcsandy - 1001 State Lane - 11,820 sq. ft. - 20,000 ga/yr - Tours & Tastings by appointment (36 visitors/week)  
Goose Cross Cellars - 1119 State Lane - 2,500 sq. ft. - 30,000 gal/yr - Tours & Tastings by appointment (350 visitors/week)  
Paraduxx - 7257 Silverado Trail - 124,400 sq. ft. - 200,000 gal/yr - Tours & Tastings by appointment (350 visitors/week)  
Robert Sinskey - 6320 Silverado Trail - 19,685 sq. ft. - 65,000 gal/yr - Public Tours & Tasting (820 visitors/week).  
Baldacci Family - 6236 Silverado Trail - 21,640 sq. ft. - 50,000 gal/yr - Tours & Tasting by appointment (10 visitors/week)  
Shafer Vineyards - 6154 Silverado Trail - 44,433 sq. ft. - 200,000 gal/yr - Tours & Tastings appointment (105 visitors/week)  
Stag's Leap - 6150 Silverado Trail - 70,108 sq. ft. - 315,000 gal/yr - Tours & Tastings by appointment (10 visitors/week)  
Quixote - 6126 Silverado Trail - 8,050 sq. ft. - 20,000 gal/yr - Tours & Tastings by appointment (70 visitors/week)  
Annapurna - 1467 Yountville Cross Road - 15,950 sq. ft. - 12,000 gal/yr - Tours & Tastings by appointment (60 visitors/week)  
Pillar Rock - 6110 Silverado Trial - 13,313 sq. ft. - 16,000 gal/yr - Tours & Tastings by appointment (40 visitors/week)  
Poetry - 6390 Silverado Trail - 9,428 sq. ft. - 12,000 gal/yr - Tours & Tastings by appointment (25 visitors/week)  
Perata - 1278 State Lane - 4,120 sq. ft. - 20,000 gal/yr - Tours & Tastings by appointment (50 visitors/week)

**Adjacent General Plan Designation/ Zoning / Land Use:****North:**

AR General Plan designation, AP zoning -

To the north of the project site are three properties totaling about 68 acres with the majority of the acreage planted in vines. The property furthest to the west of these three properties is the Kapscandy winery. There are also two homes located in this area.

**South:**

AR General Plan designation, AP zoning -

There is an 18 acre property adjoining the south side of the production area that has one home. The project site also surrounds a home on a 1.2 acre site that fronts on Yountville Cross Road.

**East:**

AR General Plan designation, AP zoning -

S. Anderson Vista owns the 24.5 acre vineyard to the adjoining the east side of the project site. This property

includes solar panels that provide electricity to the Lede Vineyards production facility.

**West:**

AR General Plan designation, AP zoning -

The west side of the property adjoins a 44.3 acre property planted in vines with a single family home.

**History:**

The winery was established in 1979, prior to adoption of the Winery Definition Ordinance, and has been in continuous operation since that date and has also been known as S. Anderson Vineyards or Stanley Anderson Vineyards.

April 4, 1979 – The Planning Commission approved Use Permit (#U-247879) for the Stanley Anderson Vineyards winery which allowed a 24,000 gal/yr winery with approximately 4,700 sq. ft. of floor area. No public tours or tastings or tours and tastings by prior appointment were approved.

June 3, 1987 - Use Permit (#U-438687) was approved by the Planning Commission for S. Anderson which allowed a production increase to 30,000 gallons per year, tours and tastings by appointment only, 6,000 sq. ft. cave, and adding 2,500 sq. ft. of floor area to an existing 1,700 sq. ft building for a new total 4,200 sq. ft. of floor area.

July 6, 1988 – Use Permit (#U-438687) Modification #1 was approved by the Planning Commission for the Stanley Anderson Vineyards winery. The Use Permit modification allowed public tours and tastings.

January 24, 1992- Use Permit Modification (#91266) was approved by the Zoning Administrator which allowed a 110 sq. ft. building addition to the existing tasting room to be used for storage.

May 14, 2003 – Use Permit Modification (#02494) was approved for the Cliff Lede Vineyards winery by the Zoning Administrator which allowed a new cave portal an approximately 2,600 sq. ft. cave expansion and an access road to the new portal for emergency vehicles.

July 16, 2003 - Use Permit Modification (#02606) and Variance (#02605) were approved by the Planning Commission which allowed the remodel and conversion of an existing 2,564 sq. ft. former residence into winery uses and a new parking area located within the 300-foot setback from Yountville Cross Road (approximately 75-foot from the roads centerline). This approval also recognized the following existing pre-1990 marketing activities: 12 annual events for 15 guests; 2 annual events for 200 guests; one annual events for 75 guests; one annual event for 300 guests; one annual event for 350 guests; and, one annual auction-related event for 400 guests.

March 17, 2004 - Use Permit Modification (#03496) was approved by the Planning Commission. The approval allowed among other things a new 12,000 sq. ft. production building, 24,500 sq. ft. of new caves, a production increase from 30,000 to 60,000 gallons annually, a new 1,200 sq. ft. crush pad and conversion of 2,916 sq. ft. portion of a winery building to wine related storage.

August 7, 2006 - Use Permit Modification (P06-01059) was approved by the CDPD Director for Cliff Lede Vineyards to allow two wastewater ponds with a capacity of 353 million gallons each.

**Compliance History:**

Based on a review of the Planning Division's files, there are no records of any code compliance issues on this property.

**Discussion:**

Use Permit Modification - The use permit modification currently before the Commission includes an increase in annual wine production from 60,000 gallons to 80,000 gallons, conversion of an existing winery storage area to a tasting room, and adding 20 visitors per day for by-appointment tours and tastings with food pairings. No new construction, other than the interior remodel, site improvements or expansion of the wastewater treatment system would be required as part of this request. Prior to adoption of the WDO the winery had an approved annual production capacity of 30,000 gallons. Subsequent modifications increased production to its currently approved level of 60,000 gallons per year. As a result, any production above 30,000 gallons annually, which would be 50,000 gallons, is subject to the County's 75% grape source rule.

Annual Production Increase - The existing production facility has adequate floor area, if new tanks are needed, to accommodate the increase in annual production with regards to fermentation, barrel storage and case good storage. Environmental Management has determined that the existing winery wastewater system will be sufficient in area to accommodate the 20,000 gallon production increase and increased visitation.

Tours and Tastings - The original use permit for the winery was approved prior to adoption of the WDO. However, the original approval did not allow tours and tastings. Subsequent pre-WDO approvals eventually allowed public tours and tastings. The winery currently has public tours and tasting with a maximum of 125 visitors per day. The applicant's request includes adding by-appointment tours and tastings for a maximum of 20 visitors per day with food pairings to be conducted in the 1,102 converted storage space. The storage space previously held office supplies and equipment and personal items belonging to the winery owner. All previously stored items have been repurposed or were moved to other approved storage areas. No changes are proposed to the existing marketing plan. The pre-WDO tasting room includes approximately 895 sq. ft. for tasting and retail sales. Tastings for drop-in visitors would not be allowed in the new tasting room.

Traffic Generation – The total average daily trips projected under this modification would be 116 on a typical weekday and 165 during crush on a Saturday. The additional increase in daily traffic associated with the increase to production and visitors would be about 8.4 trips on a weekday to 14.4 trips during crush on a Saturday, or about one additional trip an hour on a week day and about 1.8 additional trips on a Saturday during crush. Traffic counts taken in 2008 on Silverado Trail were 10,500 daily trips and 3,110 daily trips on Yountville Cross Road, west of the Trail. Traffic on Silverado Trail would increase by about 0.08% and by about 0.27% on Yountville Cross Road on a typical weekday and during crush by 0.13% and 0.46% on Silverado Trail and Yountville Cross Road, respectively. The cumulative increase in traffic resulting from this proposal is relatively minor when compared to traffic volumes on nearby roadways.

Climate Action Plan/GHG - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) has screening criteria in their CEQA guidelines (May 2011) with regards to greenhouse gas emission. Projects may use the screening criteria Table 3-1 of the guidelines to assess an individual project's potential for a cumulative impact to air quality. The table does not include criteria for wineries so the type of use in the list that most resembles a tasting room, in the case of this project, would be a quality restaurant which has a screening size of 9,000 sq. ft. The conversion of an existing 1,102 sq. ft. storage area to a tasting room is well below this threshold. Although the screening criteria are under challenge, they still provide a basis for comparison. This project would not contribute to a cumulatively significant increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

Once adopted the County's draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) would require discretionary projects to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 38% below "business as usual" by applying a combination of state, local and project-specific measures. Proposed projects like this one which include no new construction and increases to production and visitors would find it challenging to reduce emission as required by the CAP unless the project can take credit for GHG reductions that have occurred at the winery since 2005. In the case of this winery, solar panels providing power to the winery production facility were installed in 2010/2011. The winery also plans on utilizing

steam for barrel/tanks cleaning in the near future which will result in reduced water use. Other water and energy saving measures the winery has taken are outlined in the attached March 8, 2012 letter from Monteverdi Consulting.

**Consistency with Standards:**

Zoning -

The project is consistent with AP (Agricultural Preserve) zoning district regulations. A winery (as defined in Napa County Code § 18.08.640) and uses in connection with a winery (see Napa County Code § Section 18.16.030) are permitted in the AP district with an approved use permit. This application complies with the Winery Definition Ordinance. The Fire Department, Public Works Department, and Environmental Management Department have all recommended approval of the project as conditioned.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

- A . Findings
- B . Conditions of Approval
- C . Review Agency Comments
- D . Previous Project Approvals
- E . Application Submittal Information
- F . Additional Submittal Materials
- G . Graphics

Napa County Planning Commission: Approve

Reviewed By: John McDowell