



A Tradition of Stewardship  
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 8/21/2019

Agenda Placement: 7A

## Napa County Planning Commission Board Agenda Letter

---

**TO:** Napa County Planning Commission

**FROM:** Charlene Gallina for David Morrison - Director  
Planning, Building and Environmental Services

**REPORT BY:** Charlene Gallina, SUPERVISING PLANNER - 299-1355

**SUBJECT:** New Life Community Adventist Church

---

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **NEW LIFE COMMUNITY ADVENTIST CHURCH / NEW LIFE COMMUNITY ADVENTIST CHURCH PROJECT / USE PERMIT P16-00210-UP**

**CEQA Status:** Consideration and possible adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration. According to the Mitigated Negative Declaration, the proposed project includes mitigation measures in the following areas: Biological Resources. This project site is not on any of the lists of hazardous waste sites enumerated under Government Code Section 65962.5.

**Request:** Approval of a Use Permit for a new church and associated support and educational rooms/facilities on a 1.8-acre site at 1451 American Canyon Road in Napa County. The project includes the construction of a main, two-story, approximately 4,000 sq ft sanctuary/chapel structure and a 500 sq ft attached one-story conference room and bathrooms, a 1,700 sq ft fellowship hall, a 2,000 sq ft lobby, and a 3,100 sq ft semi-circular shaped classroom and office structure. All buildings will result in a net of 11,026 square feet of new development. Current membership for the New Life Community Adventist Church is 80 members. The proposed sanctuary building would have seating for 150 people. Church services will be held once a week on Saturdays, except for possible church events (a maximum of 4 per year) proposed with 250 attendees. Approximately five employees would be on site during the weekdays at various times of the day. An asphalt surface parking lot will provide parking for 56 spaces and would be accessed via a new paved project driveway with access to American Canyon Road. The church is proposing the use of satellite parking lot at the American Canyon High School for larger/wedding events on weekends with shuttle service between the two locations. The new development will also require the widening of American Canyon Road to provide a left turn lane pocket (eastbound) for vehicular access to the site. The proposed church development would be served by a new on-site septic system. Domestic and emergency fire suppression water needs would be served by the existing on-site water well. A 20' tall 35,000-gallon water tank is proposed in the central-western edge of the project site. The project is located on an approximately 1.8-acre site within the AW (Agricultural Watershed) zoning district 1451 American Canyon Road; APN: 059-100-002

**Staff Recommendation:** Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring & Reporting Program, and approve the Use Permit with the proposed conditions of approval.

**Staff Contact:** Sean Kennings, Contract Planner, (415) 533-2111, or [sean@lakassociates.com](mailto:sean@lakassociates.com) or Charlene Gallina, Supervising Planner (707) 299-1355, or [charlene.gallina@countyofnapa.org](mailto:charlene.gallina@countyofnapa.org)

**Applicant Representative:** John Wambaa, New Life Community Adventist Church; (707) 373-1106 or [wambaa.john@yahoo.com](mailto:wambaa.john@yahoo.com)

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Proposed Actions:**

That the Planning Commission

1. Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the New Life Community Adventist Church Project based on Findings 1-6 of Attachment A; and
2. Approve Use Permit P16-00210-UP, based on Findings 7-11 of Attachment A and subject to the conditions of approval (Attachment B).

### **Discussion:**

The project proposal is to construct new church and associated accessory structures and site infrastructure on a 1.8 acre property to be used by New Life Community Adventist members. The proposed property is located at 1451 American Canyon Road in Napa County approximately 1,000 feet to the east of the American Canyon Road / Newell Drive intersection and 1.6 miles southwest of the intersection of American Canyon Road and Interstate 80 (I-80). The parcel is comprised of approximately 1.8-acres of developed areas including a dilapidated single-family residence and associated site improvements. No agriculture and grazing activities currently occur on site. A building permit was issued on October 26, 2018 for demolition of the existing single-family residence due to security issues (B18-02168).

The project includes the construction of a main, two-story, approximately 4,000 sq ft sanctuary/chapel structure and a 500 sq ft attached one-story conference room and bathrooms, a 1,700 sq ft fellowship hall, a 2,000 sq ft lobby, and a 3,100 sq ft semi-circular shaped classroom and office structure. All buildings will result in a net of 11,026 sq ft of new development. Current membership for the New Life Community Adventist Church is 80 members. The proposed sanctuary building would have seating for 150 people. Church services will be held once a week on Saturdays, except for possible church events (a maximum of 4 per year) proposed with 250 attendees. Approximately five employees would be on site during the weekdays at various times of the day. An asphalt surface parking lot will provide parking for 65 spaces and would be accessed via a new paved project driveway with access to American Canyon Road. The church is proposing the use of satellite parking lot at the American Canyon High School for larger/wedding events on weekends with shuttle service between the two locations. The new development will also require the widening of American Canyon Road to provide a left turn lane pocket (eastbound) for vehicular access to the site. The proposed church development would be served by a new on-site septic system. Domestic and emergency fire suppression water needs would be served by the existing on-site water well. A 20' tall 35,000-gallon water tank is proposed in the central-western edge of the project site.

Staff has reviewed the proposal and found it to be consistent with the Zoning Ordinance and applicable General Plan policies. Implementation of the proposed project would result in minimal potential environmental impacts. Based on these reasons, staff recommends approval of the project subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?                      No

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

Consideration and possible adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration. According to the Mitigated Negative Declaration, the proposed project includes preventative mitigation measures in the following areas: Biological Resources. This project site is not on any of the lists of hazardous waste sites enumerated under Government Code Section 65962.5.

Napa County circulated a Notice of Intent to adopt the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration to interested parties and through the State Clearinghouse for a 30-day review period starting on July 19, 2019.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

**Owner:** New Life Community Adventist Church, 219 Sandy Neck Way, Vallejo, CA 94591

**Applicant/Representative:** New Life Community Adventist Church; Contact: John Wambaa, 219 Sandy Neck Way, Vallejo, CA 94591

**Zoning:** AW - Agricultural Watershed

**General Plan Designation:** AWOS - Agriculture, Watershed & Open Space

**Application Filed:** May 20, 2016; **Resubmittal(s):** March 3, 2017, February 23, 2018, October 31, 2018, April 23, 2019; **Deemed Complete:** May 7, 2019

**Parcel Size:** 1.8-acres

**Existing Development:** The 1.8-acre project site is located within the AW zoning district at 1451 American Canon Road approximately 1,000 feet to the east of the American Canyon Road / Newell Drive intersection and 1.6 miles southwest of the intersection of American Canyon Road and Interstate Highway 80 (I-80). The parcel is comprised of approximately 1.8-acres of developed areas including a dilapidated single-family residence and associated site improvements. Currently, there is no existing agricultural or grazing activities on-site. A building permit was issued on October 26, 2018 for demolition of the existing single-family residence due to security issues (B18-02168).

**Project Characteristics:**

**Proposed Building Size:** An approximate total of 11,026 sq.ft. consisting a two-story approximate 4,000 sq.ft. sanctuary/chapel structure and a 500 sq.ft. attached one-story conference room and bathrooms; 1,700 sq.ft. fellowship hall with a kitchen area, 2,000 sq.ft. lobby and a 3,100 sq.ft. semi-circular shaped classroom and office structure.

**Proposed Sanctuary Seating:** 150 people

**Proposed Number of Employees:** Five (5) during weekdays

**Proposed Hours of Operation:**

**Weekday Office Hours:** 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

**Church Services:** Once a week on Saturdays; Services are on Saturdays in the morning, beginning with Sabbath School from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., main service for worship from 11:00 am to 12:00 p.m., followed by lunch, and activity.

**Possible Church Events:** Maximum of four (4) per year proposed with 250 attendees

**Proposed Parking:** 56 spaces plus use of satellite parking lot at American Canyon High School for a larger wedding or other church events on weekends with shuttle service between the two locations.

**Required Building Setbacks:** American Canyon Road - 42' from Centerline; Property Lines - 20' front, 20' rear, and 20' side

**Proposed Building Setbacks:** Approximately 80' to the west property line (water tank is approximately 9' from west property boundary; fence around water tank on the property line); 41' to the north property line; 36' to the south property line; 107' to the east property line; Proposed tank and fence will need to meet 20' setback, therefore a condition of approval has been added.

**Adjacent Zoning/Land Use:**

All surrounding land is Zoned AW, Agricultural Watershed and designated AWOS, Agriculture, Watershed & Open Space by the County of Napa General Plan.

North: grazing/ranch lands, open space further north.

East: non-active gravel quarry.

South: American Canyon Road, single-family residence across American Canyon Road.

West: horse boarding and training center.

**Code Compliance:**

There are no open or pending code violations for the subject site.

**Discussion Points:**

Setting - The parcel is comprised of approximately 1.8-acres of developed areas including a dilapidated single-family residence and associated site improvements. A building permit was issued in the Fall of 2018 for demolition of the existing single-family residence due to security issues. Site topography ranges from slopes of one to less than five percent. The primary vegetation is disturbed grasslands which could be used for pasture grazing purposes. The property has access and frontage on American Canyon Road via an existing dirt ranch road. The property is bordered on the west by a small agriculture/livestock facility and grazing lands and American Canyon High School farther west, by rural residential to the south, and agricultural (grazing/animal) uses across American Canyon Creek farther to the south, residential subdivisions to the southwest, and steeper slopes to the southeast. East of the property is an old gravel quarry and steeper slopes to the east and northeast.

Proposed Church Operation - Currently, the existing New Life Community Church operates at a local elementary school off Silver Oak Trail in American Canyon. It has a membership of 80 members, of those 30 are children. Services are held on Saturdays in the morning, beginning with Sabbath School from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., main service for worship from 11:00 am to 12:00 p.m., followed by lunch, and activity. The bulk of the membership arrive for the main service and lunch. Initially, on the project site, the Sabbath school, main service, lunch, and afternoon activities would occur in the Fellowship Hall. As the membership grows, the Sanctuary proposes to be built and

activities would start in the Fellowship Hall for classes, move on to worship for main services, then back to the Fellowship Hall for lunch and activities. In addition, the applicant is also requesting up to four church events per year that would include 250 attendees. The applicant has stated that the Napa Valley Unified School District will rent the American Canyon High School parking lot for \$15/hour for overflow parking and charge the Church accordingly.

Building Layout, Design, & Materials – The project site is elevated from American Canyon Road and has a slight rise from west to east, from approximately 100' asl to 150' asl (approximately 600' on either side of the existing project site driveway). A vehicle traveling east along American Canyon Road would not be able to see the new improvements until relatively close to the project site. Traveling west, a vehicle would begin to see the new improvements approximately 1,200 feet to the east of the site. Due to the existing topography on the old quarry site, the project site is mostly blocked from views east of the site. The new structure has a high peaked roof on the south side, but would not project above potential views of ridgelines to the northeast or southeast. As part of the design packet for the proposed development the applicant prepared several elevations and illustrative perspectives. No visual simulations were included, but the applicant did provide two viewshed exhibits to illustrate what a vehicle might see traveling along American Canyon Road. Although the viewshed exhibit is not situated on a photo-realistic base map or exhibit, review of available aerial and street view imagery confirms that the proposed church would be located above the immediate field of vision for vehicles traveling along American Canyon Road. (See Attachment J - Graphics) There are several areas of rock outcropping features on the site in which the majority of existing rock outcroppings would be left undisturbed as part of the project. Only one such rock outcropping is proposed to be removed to construct the church parking lot. However, this rock outcropping feature is not a resource that has a vertically visual element and is not an identifiable feature from public views or vantage points along American Canyon Road. As proposed, the church design will be a combination of contemporary and traditional style of architecture. Materials used will be wood, metal, stucco, stone veneer, and glass. Building colors will be muted earth tones.

Traffic and Parking – The project applicant prepared several reports and analysis for the proposed project, including expected trip generation calculations by Crane Transportation Group in April 2016, and a Focused Traffic Impact Analysis prepared by TJKM on August 20, 2017, with addendums prepared in February 2018, and again in June 2018. TJKM developed estimated project trip generation for the proposed project based on published trip generation rates from the Institute of Transportation Engineer's (ITE) publication Trip Generation (9th Edition). TJKM used published trip rates for Church (ITE Land use Code S60). Table 4 in the June 21, 2018 TJKM report shows the trip generation for the proposed project. Since activities would not occur in both buildings concurrently, trip generation is based on the Sanctuary building, which has the larger square footage. Though Saturday is the day for this project to worship, TJKM used the Sunday peak hour generator, as it represents the average trips generated during worship services. Using ITE rates, TJKM estimated the project to generate approximately 95 weekend peak hour trips (48 inbound, 47 outbound) during the peak hour. New Life Community Church only operates one service day a week (Saturday), with the maximum use of approximately one hour a week. Operation of the New Life Community Church facility, as proposed, would not result in a significant traffic impacts under Napa County guidelines, therefore no mitigation is needed. As an added safety measure, TJKM recommended the installation of a stop control at the project driveway with appropriate pavement delineation and signing.

As part of the Public Works Department and Engineering Services Division review, the project sponsor has updated the site plan and proposed infrastructure to include a new Left-Hand Turn Lane (eastbound travel turning onto the site). The need for a left-turn lane on American Canyon Road at the project driveway was evaluated based on criteria contained in the Napa County Road and Street Standards, 2011. Based on the 24-hour classification counts, average daily traffic on American Canyon Road is 9,034 vehicles. The proposed project driveway average daily traffic is 82 trips. Based on these traffic levels, a left-turn lane would be warranted at the project driveway, with a 165 feet storage lane. At full occupancy, (150 seats and 7,911 square feet based on the site plan), the (ITE) trip generation anticipates eight left turns into the project site during the Saturday peak. At a future buildout membership of 150 members, the capacity of the Sanctuary, there would be a maximum of 50 vehicles added to

the roadway network: 30 of which would be turning left into the project site. As a result, staff has reviewed the proposed improvements and recommended conditions of approval for preparation of engineered plans consistent with applicable standards. After construction of these proposed improvements, potential hazards due to a design feature, (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses would be eliminated.

Based on the project site plan dated April 12, 2016, 56 standard parking spaces are provided for the New Life Community Church project, which includes standard parking and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking. According to the Napa County Municipal Code (18.110.030), Churches requires one per employee plus one per each 3.5 seats in main sanctuary, or 43 spaces. Based on the proposed parking spaces to be provided on site, no parking impacts are projected on City Streets. The applicant has requested up to four (4) church events per year that would include 250 attendees. The applicant has stated that the Napa Valley Unified School District will rent the American Canyon High School parking lot for \$15/hour for overflow parking and charge the Church accordingly. The Church would then provide a shuttle for attendees to the project site. This agreement would be memorialized as a condition of approval upon project approval.

Water & Wastewater Analysis – CMP Civil Engineering conducted a Water Availability Analysis (WAA) on May 4, 2016 evaluating existing and proposed water uses within the project recharge area and analyses to estimate groundwater recharge relative to proposed uses (Tier 1) and a screening analysis of the potential for well interference at neighboring wells located within 500-ft of the project well (Tier 2). The WAA prepared by CMP Engineering indicates the existing water demand for the previous single-family residence located on the parcel is 0.50 AF/YR. The projected water use for the project is 0.21 AF/YR. Therefore, the anticipated total overall water demand for the project site represents a 0.29 AF/YR decrease of the existing water demand. Based on the anticipated use of the project well, and the decrease in use over existing conditions, the parcel water demand can be met with the existing project well and would not interfere with neighboring wells (and could be considered a net increase for neighboring wells). The Water Availability Analysis concluded that sufficient water would be available to serve the proposed project. According to the recharge evaluation, the existing on-site well has a capacity of 5 gallons per minute. The project's recharge rate analysis utilized a conservative average water year recharge rate of approximately 0.3 acre-ft/yr (or a well capacity value of 8.07 acre-ft/yr) compared to the maximum allowed water usage for the subject parcel of 0.55 acre-ft/yr. Comparing the proposed use of the new church, with an anticipated water usage of 0.21 acre-ft/yr (0.11 acre-ft/yr for the church and 0.10 acre-ft/yr for on-site landscaping needs) to the above 0.55 acre-ft/yr, as well as, the capacity value of 8.07 acre-ft/yr, CMP determined that the subject parcel and existing well has more than enough capacity to serve the proposed use.

According to the Wastewater Disposal Feasibility Study prepared by CMP Civil Engineering on December 2, 2016, the project site and church development could be served by the on-site system with a maximum total flow of 840 gallons per day at peak flows. The proposed system would include a metering tank and pump for dispersal into the leach field of 375/gal/day. The CMP Civil Engineering report concludes that the project site would have adequate disposal capacity to serve the system designed for the project. Full design calculation and construction plans for the wastewater system(s) must be prepared in accordance with Napa County standards at the time of building permit application. The Division of Environmental Health reviewed this report and concurred with its findings. The preliminary grading and drainage plan have been reviewed by the Engineering Division.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies - The County requires project applicants to consider methods to reduce Green House (GHG) emissions consistent with the Napa County General Plan Policy CON-65(e), which requires GHG review of discretionary projects. The applicant has completed the Department's Best Management Practices Checklist for Development Projects, which is attached to this report as Attachment E. The applicant proposes to implement the following voluntary GHG reduction methods with the project either required through the building code or if financially feasible: roof mounted solar panels, solar hot water heating, energy conserving lighting, energy star roof (cool roof).

Project Consistency: General Plan - The general plan is the constitution for all future development; any decision

affecting land use and development must be consistent with the general plan. (Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors (1990) 52 Cal.3d 553, 570.) However, a project need not be in perfect conformity with each and every general plan policy. A project must be examined to determine whether overall it is in harmony and agreement with the policies stated in the general plan. (Sequoyah Hills Homeowners Ass'n v. City of Oakland (1993) 153 CA3d 391, 408.) A project may not conflict with specific mandatory policies or provisions contained in a general plan. Inconsistency with a single mandatory policy requires denial of a project, even if it is consistent with numerous other provisions. (Endangered Habitats League v. County of Orange (2005) 131 CA4th 777, 789.) It is well established that the County has considerable discretion in interpreting its own General Plan. A court's review of a County's interpretation of its general plan policies is highly deferential because "policies in a general plan reflect a range of competing interests" which it "must be allowed to weigh and balance the plan's policies when apply them, and it has broad discretion to construe its policies in light of the plan's purpose." (Friends of Lagoon Valley v. City of Vacaville (2007) 154 Cal. App. 4th 807, 816.)

The Planning Commission will need to examine all of the relevant General Plan policies and base their decision of consistency or inconsistency on their own judgment and interpretation of those policies. A full General Plan Element Consistency analysis has been provided in Attachment C.

In summary, staff believes the project is consistent with the Napa County General Plan since the project area is not within any areas that have been mapped by the State as Prime or Important farmland but instead is designated "Other Land" (X) by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resource Agency (Napa County Important Farmland 2012 Map, California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection). Furthermore, the subject property is located outside the urban development area designated in the General Plan Land Use Map but is adjacent to residential and school uses located within the community of American Canyon. The project site currently has utilities and services and would not require new utility infrastructure to service the site. Staff has also determined that the project would not displace agriculture or remove agricultural lands from agricultural use because the project will be located in an area that has already been disturbed and has little agricultural value. Over half of the property is characterized by rock outcroppings and slopes falling away towards American Canyon Road. While the project itself does not currently support agricultural land uses, it is not anticipated that the project will result in adverse effects to those parcels that currently or in the foreseeable future to support agriculture because less than half an acre of the property has suitable topography for agriculture or grazing production. The subject property is currently developed with a dilapidated single-family residence and existing services, including driveway and parking areas, a domestic water well, and electrical and gas utilities. No new utility services would be required to facilitate development of the proposed project.

At 1.8-acres, the parcel size is below the current standard for AWOS zoned agriculture parcels (160-acre minimums) and most of the property is characterized as rock outcroppings. The proposed church development would only feature services on Saturdays with some office uses during the week. The church development would be replacing a residential use on an agriculturally zoned property and would not include converting an undeveloped parcel. Although Policy AG/LU-12 precludes the development/conversion of agriculture parcels for other uses, the subject property is undersized, has poor topography, and would appear unsuited for production of a viable agriculture operation. Furthermore, the property is adjacent to the City of American Canyon, has existing services, and would not require significant public improvements or services to facilitate new development. Overall, the development intensity and daily activity would be less impactful than a full time single-family residential use. Proposed as part of the project is a left-turn lane for access off American Canyon Road which would reduce any potential traffic or circulation impacts to less than significant thus reducing any potential transportation needs.

Project Consistency: Zoning - A Zoning Consistency analysis has been provided in Attachment C. The zoning districts that covers the New Life Church project site is Agricultural Watershed (AW). The intent of the Agricultural Watershed designation is to provide in those areas of the county where the predominant use is agriculturally oriented, where watershed areas, reservoirs and floodplain tributaries are located, where development would adversely impact on all such uses (Napa County Code Section 18.20.010.). However, pursuant to Napa County

Code (NCC) Section 18.120.010(B)(11) (Exceptions to use limitations) churches may be permitted in any zoning district upon the granting of a use permit.

Staff has determined that the proposed project includes the development of a small 1.85-acre, disturbed, residential site, with little or no agriculture activities. The project site has existing services, an existing well, and areas allocated for development of a septic system necessary to serve the proposed use. With the exception of a new left-turn lane within the right of way of American Canyon Road, no significant infrastructure is required to construct the project. Furthermore, the proposed church is located just adjacent to the urban boundary of American Canyon.

### **Decision Making Options:**

As noted in the Executive Summary Section above, Staff is recommending approval of the project with conditions of approval as described in Option 1 below. Decision making options including the following:

#### Option 1 – Approve Applicant’s Proposal with Project Specific Conditions of Approval

Discussion - This option would result in construction of the proposed church development. Development setbacks meet or exceed the requirements of the AW Zoning District. No exceptions or variances to the AW development standards have been requested. Staff recommends approval of the applicant's request to include the conditions contained in Attachment B - Conditions of Approval and the suggested additional conditions of approval provided in the staff report. The Commission could also suggest modifications or deletions of some of the recommended special conditions of approval under this option.

Action Required – Follow proposed action listed in Executive Summary. If conditions of approval are amended, specify conditions to be amended at time motion is made.

#### Option 2 – Reduced Project Alternative

Discussion – This option would result in the Commission imposing a reduced project alternative such as floor area, restrictions on the number of employees, hours of operation for church activities and/or number of church events.

Based on the administrative record as of the issuance of this staff report, there does not appear to be any evidence that suggests such limits on the proposed development. Development limitations as noted herein may impact viability of the intended use of the building.

Action Required – Follow proposed action listed in Executive Summary and amend scope and project specific conditions of approval to place limits on development. If major revisions of the conditions of approval are required, item will need to be continued to a future date.

#### Option 3 – Deny Proposed Use Permit

Discussion - In the event the Commission determines that the project does not, or cannot meet the required findings for grant of a use permit or consistency with the General Plan, Commissioners should articulate what aspect(s) of the project is in conflict with required findings or General Plan, and either deny the request or continue the item to allow the applicant an opportunity to redesign the project.

Action Required – Commission should would articulate the aspect(s) of the project in conflict with required findings or General Plan and either take action to deny the project or, if needed, remand the matter to staff for preparation of required findings to return to the Commission on specified date.



Option 4 - Continuance Option

Discussion - The Commission may continue an item to a future hearing date at its own discretion.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

- A . Recommended Findings
- B . Recommended Conditions of Approval & Agency Memos
- C . General Plan Consistency Analysis
- D . Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration & MMRP
- E . Use Permit Application Packet
- F . Traffic Study & Subsequent Traffic Memos
- G . Biological Site Assessment
- H . Water Availability Analysis
- I . Wastewater Feasibility Study
- J . Graphics

Napa County Planning Commission: Approve

Reviewed By: Charlene Gallina