



A Tradition of Stewardship  
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 8/5/2009  
Agenda Placement: 9A

## 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:** Mary M Doyle, PLANNER - 299-1350  
**SUBJECT:** Lake Ridge Winery/Edward Fitts Use Permit Request #P09-00039

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **LAKE RIDGE WINERY / EDWARDS FITTS - USE PERMIT #P09-00039 UP**

**CEQA Status:** Negative Declaration prepared. According to the proposed negative declaration the proposed project would have no potentially significant environmental impacts. The 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 to establish the following: (1) a 10,000 gallon per year winery to include covered crush area/pad, fermentation, barrel storage and mobile bottling; (2) a 6,800 square foot winery/production 2-story building to include laboratory, office space, tasting/conference room, case and barrel storage, restroom, employee kitchen, (3) installation of domestic and winery wastewater systems, (4) 6,700 square feet of caves; (5) 1 full time employee, 1 part time employee and an additional 5 seasonal employees during harvest/crush; (6) six parking spaces for employees and visitors; (7) one loading area; and (8) days of operations Monday-Saturday from 10 am-5 pm with appointment only tours and tastings for a maximum of 10 visitors per week. The project is located on a 40-acre parcel on the west side of Long Ranch Road approximately 1 mile from its intersection of Sage Canyon Road and within the Agricultural Watershed (AW) zoning district. APN: 032-010-068. 90 Long Ranch Road.

**Staff Recommendation:** Adopt the Negative Declaration and approve the Use Permit with proposed conditions of approval.

**Staff Contact:** Mary Doyle, 299-1350, [mduoye@co.napa.ca.us](mailto:mduoye@co.napa.ca.us)

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **Proposed Action:**

1. That the Planning Commission adopt the Negative Declaration based on findings 1-5 of Exhibit A; and

2. That the Planning Commission approve Use Permit no. P09-00039 UP based on findings 2-6 of Exhibit A and subject to the attached conditions of approval (Exhibit B).

**Discussion:** The winery with its limited production capacity, limited visitation and no marketing events is in keeping with the Winery Definition Ordinance. The proposed design of the winery and cave and the limited removal and prudent modification to the natural environment is consistent with the County's goal of conveying the attractiveness of wineries and providing for the health and safety of local and visiting public. The design materials include concrete, stone veneer, metal and the color palette will be earthtones and will be complimentary to the existing natural environment. This parcel and the surrounding area is considered a high fire zone. The proposed design include defensible space for the winery structure and access road. The defensible space includes modifications to the natural environmental including removal of some trees, reducing fuel load, and removing dead shrubs.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?                      No

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:** A Negative Declaration has been prepared. According to the proposed negative declaration the proposed project would have no potentially significant environmental impacts. The project site is not on any of the lists of hazardous waste sites enumerated under Government Code section 65962.5.

### **BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

**Owner:** Lake Ridge Partners LLC/Edward Fitts

**Applicant/Representative:** Edward P. Fitts / Kelly J. Berryman (707-942-6755)

**Zoning:** Agriculture Watershed-AW

**GP designation:** Agriculture, Watershed, Open Space – AWOS

**Filed:** February 3, 2009

**Building Size:** 6,800 square foot winery/production 2-story building to include laboratory, office space, tasting/conference room, case and barrel storage, restroom, employee kitchen, and 6,700 square feet of cave for storage including 500 square foot wine library.

**Production:** 10,000 gallons per year

**Marketing:** none proposed, tours and tastings by appointment only (including the wine trade)

**Days and hours of operations:** Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Hours/days during Harvest/Crush 7a.m. -10 p.m. Sun-Sat)

**Parking:** 6 spaces (including 1 ADA compliant)

**Proposed Visitation:** 10 visitors per day appointment only

**Number of employees:** 1 full time, 1 part time and an additional 5 during crush and bottling periods

**Adjacent Zoning/Land Use/acreage:**

North: AW/City of Napa Lake Hennessey Municipal Watershed/120 acres and AW/vineyard & rural residential/69acres

South: AW/vineyard, winery, rural residential/42 acres

East: AW/winery, vineyard, rural residential/125 acres

West: AW/winery, vineyard, rural residential/69 acres

In the vicinity with access on Long Ranch Road are the following wineries: Two Rock Winery (02157-UP/62,500 gallons production/appointment only visitation), Colgin Partners (99226-UP/20,000 gallons production/appointment only visitation), David Arthur (00446-UP/30,000gallons/appointment only visitation and 13 marketing events), and Nellson/Johnson (02541-UP/18,000 gallons production/appointment only visitation).

**Property History:** The property has a main residence, garage, guest unit, associated infrastructure, pool, landscaping and a 7-acre producing vineyard. The parcel and surrounding area of 853 acres burned in 1955 and burned again in the 1981 Atlas Peak Fire along with some 33, 600 acres.

**Code Compliance History:** There have been no issues. At this writing the parcel is in compliance.

**Discussion:**

1. Access - This parcel has been a residential complex since the 1980's and an operational vineyard since 1996. There is an agriculture contract (#96148 AKG H) associated with the parcel. It is a landlocked parcel with two road easements to allow direct access to Long Ranch Road. The easements have a 60 feet width allowance (copies are attached with the application packet). The easements are on City of Napa parcels associated with Lake Hennessey as a municipal water source.

2. Road Widening - The existing road meets residential design standards. However, to serve a winery, the Public Works Road and Street standards require widening of the roadway. The applicant original proposed a Road Modification to seek relief from widening to the full extent called for by Public Works, however, that request was dropped and the applicant is now proposing to widen the road. The road widening will request in additional grading and tree removal along the roadway. The road passes through a heavily forested area, and therefore, the resulting trees lost to the widening should not discernibly change to the overall appearance of the road. The road will remain generally not visible from off-site vantage points.

3. Project Design - The winery building will be located close to the highest point on the property on a previously cleared area. The winery design features high quality materials that are complimentary to the surrounding natural vegetation. The design is also quite sensitive to existing nearby trees, and results in

minimal tree loss. Tree trimming and thinning will occur within 100 ft. of the winery to meet Fire Department defensible space requirements. A defensible space plan is included in the attachments. The tree trimming is considered a beneficial management practice for maintaining the surrounding oak woodland.

### **Consistency with Standards:**

1. Zoning: The project is consistent with the AW zoning district which allows a winery with a use permit approval. (County Code Section 18.124.010)
2. Building/Fire: As proposed and conditioned this project complies with the building and FIRE codes.
3. Public Works: As conditioned the project will comply with the applicable standards and guidelines under the Department of Public Works discretion.
4. Environmental Management Standards: As conditioned the project will comply with the applicable standards and guidelines under the Department of Environmental Management discretion.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

- A . Findings
- B . Conditions of Approval
- C . FIRE comments
- D . Environmental Management comments
- E . Building comments
- F . Napa County Public Works comments
- G . City of Napa Public Works comments
- H . Draft Negative Declaration / Initial Study
- I . Application
- J . Site Evaluation
- K . Applicant submitted Biology & Cultural Resource studies
- L . Application Plans
- M . Revised Application Information
- N . Applicant submitted easements
- O . Applicant submitted Defensible Space
- P . 60/40 Tree Coverage Calculation Maps
- Q . Graphics
- R . Revised Application Plans

Reviewed By: John McDowell