

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 19, 2023
ITEM: No. 2 - 1:50 pm
FROM: Claudette Diaz, Project Planner

SUBJECT: File No.: **PLP21-0022**; Electrical Contractor's Storage Yard
Applicant: Alameida Architecture
Address: 1688 Almar Parkway, Santa Rosa
APN(s): 059-210-039

Request

Preliminary review of a new 16,000 square foot industrial electrical and power equipment storage building to serve a proposed contractor's storage yard. Existing improvements include an office building and service building, approved under file UP/DRC90-423 to support a previous truck terminal on the site.

The request includes a reduction of a 65-foot building setback from the westerly property line to a 50-foot setback. The setback may be reduced by the Sonoma County Design Review Committee with the provision of additional landscaping in accordance with the Note #6 on the Final Map for the Northwest Regional Industrial Park Unit 3 - Phase 1 subdivision (Book 465, Pages 9 - 11, Sonoma County Records). This setback requirement stems from the development standards outlined in the Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan for Heavy Industrial designated parcels adjacent to parcels designated Industrial Park.

Background

The 3.6-acre site is zoned M2 (Heavy Industrial) 40,000 SQ FT AVG (Minimum Lot Size) RC100/25 (Riparian Corridor with a 100-foot and 25-foot setback) VOH (Valley Oak Habitat). The parcel has a General Industrial (GI) General Plan land use designation and a Heavy Industry land use designation in the Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan. The site is bordered to the west and south by MP (Industrial Park) zoned parcels and to the north and east by other M2 zoned parcels.

The project site is presently developed with a 2,100-square-foot office building, a 3,900-square-foot service building with a 3,100-square-foot awning, and associated grading and landscaping improvements.

The subject lot was created by the Northwest Regional Park Subdivision Unit 3 – Phase 1, approved by the Planning Commission under Resolution No. 90-071 on May 17, 1990. The approved project, File Number MJS90-053, involved subdividing 31 acres into 16 lots.

Phase I of the Northwest Regional Park Subdivision involved the creation of Lot 4 only (i.e. the project site), excluding in fee title the Riparian Zone and right-of-way dedication areas (Attachment 3). Phase II includes the complete Brickway Boulevard extension, the complete Riparian parcel, and the complete “C” street connection, all constructed with applicable infrastructure improvements (i.e., sewer, water, and power lines).

The Board of Zoning Adjustments approved the Use Permit (UP90-423) to allow for a truck terminal containing up to 50 gravel trucks, the development of a 3,900 square foot truck repair shop, a 2,100 square foot office building, including associated grading and landscaping (Attachment 4).

Analysis

General Plan

The project parcel has a General Industrial (GI) land use designation in the Sonoma County General Plan. This category is intended to provide sites for industrial activities and employment that require urban services. Permitted uses include manufacturing goods, warehousing, research facilities, machine shops, contractor’s storage, and processing plants. Warehouse and contractor’s storage use aligns with the overall purpose of the land use category.

Specific Area Plan

The project parcel has a Heavy Industry designation in the Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan (the Plan). This category provides sites suitable for industrial development and aims to contain such activities in visually restricted areas and reduce the impact of land use and environmental factors.

Consistency with the Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan’s development standards are discussed below.

Zoning

The project parcel has a Heavy Industrial (M2) zoning designation. Section 26-12-030 of the Sonoma County Code requires a Use Permit for a contractor’s storage yard use in the M2 zoning district.

The project is consistent with Article 65 (Riparian Corridor Combining District) of the Sonoma County Code in that the project is located outside of the Riparian Corridor setbacks applicable on the site.

The project is consistent with Article 67 (Valley Oak Habitat Combining District) of the Sonoma County Code in that the project does not propose to remove any trees on site.



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Consistency with the M2 zoning designation's development standard is discussed below.

Setbacks

Section 26-12-040 of the Sonoma County Code provides development standards for industrial zoned parcels. The M2 zoning designation does not require minimum setbacks for the front, side, or rear property lines.

The Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan requires a 20-foot front yard setback and does not require side or rear yard setbacks for new development. The Plan requires a 65-foot building setback when a Heavy Industry-designated parcel adjoins an Industrial Park designated parcel, which can be reduced by the Sonoma County Design Review Committee with landscaping provided. The same setback is also required by Note #6 recorded on the Final Map for the Northwest Regional Industrial Park Unit 3 - Phase 1 subdivision.

The Plan further requires that the 20 feet nearest the property line be planted with dense landscaping. In lieu of the 65-foot building setback, a 30-foot landscape setback planted with a dense landscape screen may be approved by the Design Review Committee on site-specific design considerations.

The project meets the Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan and subdivision map setback requirements because it proposes a 16,000 square foot structure approximately 50 feet from the westerly side property line that abuts an Industrial Park parcel, more than 65 feet from the front property line and more than 80 feet from the rear property line. The project also proposes to increase the existing 20-foot landscape reserve area on the west side to 30 feet to allow for a bio-retention swale.

Height

Section 26-12-040 of the Sonoma County Code limits structures in the M2 zoning district to 65 feet.

The Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan requires a 35-foot maximum height at the building setback line. For each foot of setback interior to the building setback lines, an additional 6 inches of building height shall be permitted. The project proposes a 44-foot tall structure approximately 45 feet outside of the 20-foot front yard setback, which allows for a maximum height increase of 22.5 feet above the 35-foot height limit.

Lot Coverage

The existing building improvements include a 2,100 square foot office building and a 3,900 square foot service building with a 3,100 square foot awning. The project proposes a new 16,000 square foot structure.



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The allowable lot coverage is 50% of the lot or 78,408 square feet. The proposed lot coverage is far below the maximum allowable.

Parking Spaces

The project proposes a total of 16 parking spaces and 3 bicycle parking spaces.

Article 86 (Parking Regulations) of the Sonoma County Code requires one parking space for every 250 square feet of floor area for office buildings and one parking spaces for every 2,000 square feet of gross building floor area for warehouse buildings.

The proposed parking is below the required 19 spaces, however, provides at least 3 bicycle parking spaces and is located approximately 0.50 miles from the Sonoma Marin Area Transit (SMART) station. The Design Review Committee may approve a reduction in the number of required parking spaces in accordance with Zoning Code Section 26-86-020(i) if it can be demonstrated that fewer spaces can adequately serve the use.

Key Considerations

Site Layout, Architecture, and Exterior Building Materials

The design of the building is consistent with the industrial nature of the surrounding area. The proposed building is composed of metal clad moment frame. The site is currently surrounded by chain link fencing and mature landscaping, which will remain.

The project site is currently developed with the 2,100 square foot office building, a 3,900 square foot service building with a 3,100 square foot awning, and associated grading and landscaping improvements.

Lighting and Landscaping

The project was developed under the approval of file number UP/DRC90-423 and currently has mature landscaping surrounding the building site. Additional landscaping for this project is proposed primarily as a bio-retention swale and widening the landscape corridor on the west property line.

The Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan requires a 10 percent minimum lot coverage of landscaping area. The project does not propose any changes to the existing mature landscaping other than increase the existing 20-foot landscape reserve area to 30 feet to allow for additional landscaping and a bio-retention swale.

New LED fixtures are proposed on the new building around the perimeter of the building. Illumination will be directed downward from approximately 28 feet in height as not to contribute to night sky light pollution.



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Setbacks

The project proposes a reduced building setback, required by the Final Map Northwest Regional Industrial Park Unit 3- Phase 1, Note #6, Book 465, Pages 9-11.

Northwest Regional Industrial Park Unit 3 Phase 1 Note #6:

“The building setback on the westerly half of Lot 4 may be reduced by the county design review committee if the landscape reserve area is increased to 30 feet and adequately landscaped”

The project proposes a reduction of the 65-foot building setback line to 50 feet to allow for the new 16,000 square foot warehouse building. The existing 20-foot landscape reserve area will be increased to 30 feet to allow for additional landscaping and a bio-retention swale along the western property line.

Environmental Review

Staff is in the process of preparing an initial study of the potential environmental impacts from the proposed project.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Design Review Committee provide preliminary feedback on the project's design elements; approve the reduced setback; and direct the applicant to return with revisions or final details, or proceed with permitting for staff approval.

Attachments

1. Proposal Statement
2. Project Plans
3. Northwest Regional Industrial Park Subdivision Unit 3 Phase 1
4. UP/DRC 90-423 Application Materials



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