

LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 3, 2023
ITEM: No. 1 / 3:00 PM
FROM: Jen Chard, Project Planner
SUBJECT: **File No.: PLP22-0023 Marietta Farms Winery**
Applicant: Scot Bilbro
Address: 11971 Old Redwood Hwy, Healdsburg
APN: APN 086-120-047

Project Proposal

Preliminary Design Review for a Use Permit and Design Review to allow a new winery with an annual production capacity of 75,000 cases, construction of a 32,451 square foot wine production building, construction of a 1,260 square foot agricultural workshop that will be used to hold educational activities related to winemaking, conversion of an existing 1,900+/- square foot historic farmhouse (“Ransom Farmhouse”) to a public tasting room, and 24 annual winery events with a maximum of 300 attendees. Proposed daily hours of operation are: 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM for the Winery; 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM for the Tasting Room and Agricultural Workshop; and afternoons and evenings for the Winery Events, with all events concluding by 9:30 PM and clean-up ending by 10:00 PM. The winery facility proposes an average of 14 full time employees and up to 28 employees during harvest, and a 34-space parking lot with overflow parking on a 16.3-acre parcel.

According to the project proposal statement, the applicant intends to maintain the existing layout of the Ransom Farmhouse. Tastings will be held downstairs in the former living room, dining room and den. The second floor of the house will not be public and will be used as a non-rental bedroom with a small sitting room. The existing downstairs master bedroom will be converted into a commercial kitchen. Converting the Farmhouse to a commercial building occupancy will also require building improvements related to The Americans with Disability Act (ADA).

Staff’s Recommendation:

- Determine whether the property is a significant historic resource and qualifies as a Historic Landmark for HD (Historic District) Zoning.
- Provide design direction to applicant.

Analysis:Historic Survey:

The applicant submitted a Cultural Resource Study for the Marietta Farms Project, prepared by Lena Murphy, BA and Eileen Barrow, MA/RPA, Tom Origer & Associate, dated June 21,



2022. The Cultural Resource Study concludes that the existing 1,900+/- square foot home (“Ransom Farmhouse”) and three other buildings in the study area are potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (which would also make it eligible for the California Register). Note, the June 2022 Cultural Resource Study has been redacted to protect confidential archeological resource information, and is provided under Attachment 2.

During the initial referral period for the project, the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) provided comment on November 3, 2022 (Attachment 3). Their comments included a request for a Historic Building Survey based on two criteria identified in their review, listed below:

- 1. The proposed project area contains one building listed in the Office of Historic Preservation’s Build Environment Resource Directory, the R.A. Petray Property [Survey number 5448-0130-0000]. This building has a status code 3S, meaning it appears eligible for listing on the National Register through survey evaluation.*
- 2. The 1940 USGS Healdsburg 15’ quad depicts two buildings in the proposed project area. One of these may be the R.A. Petray Property. If the other unrecorded building or structure meets the Office of Historic Preservation’s (OHP) minimum age standard that buildings, structures, and objects 45 years or older may be of historical value.*

On December 7, 2022, NWIC provided a revised comment letter which states: “The proposed project area contains one recorded complex of buildings: P-48-006545, also known as the R.A. Petray Property. P-48-006545 was identified and included in the OHP BERD with a status of 3S, meaning it appears eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Murphy and Borrow (2022, page 13) updated the DPR forms on file and recommended that ‘if plans change and modifications are proposed to the buildings then they should be formally evaluated and if found important, assess the impacts on the house. This work should be conducted by a qualified architectural historian. If it is proposed to remove the foundation remains they may be removed without any further work.’” See NWIC December Comment Letter under Attachment 4.

Staff also received comments from the former Landmarks Commission Secretary, Chris Wendt (Secretary of the Interior Qualified Historian and Architectural Historian). Mr. Wendt requested further analysis of this project to support the conclusion that a Historic Building Survey or Historic Impacts Assessment was not needed. In response to Mr. Wendt’s comments, the applicant provided a letter and analysis prepared by Tom Origer & Associates, dated April 21, 2023 (Attachment 5).

Mr. Wendt rejected the findings of Tom Origer & Associate’s update to the DPR forms on file. His full analysis and findings are attached under Attachment 6. In response, the applicant provided a Historical and Architectural Evaluation and Impact Statement dated June 2023 (Attachment 7).

The June 2023 Tom Origer & Associates evaluation concludes that the current project does not propose alterations to the interior or exterior of the house, with the exception of a wheelchair ramp to the north of the existing porch. The ramp will extend from the porch to the ground, below the top of the foundation, and will not impact the architectural elements which previous recorders identified as worthy of preservation. Tom Origer & Associates conclude that the historical setting of the property



would not be impacted by the new winery and agricultural workshop structures because most of the agricultural buildings were removed in the past and the property no longer reflects its historical function. Additionally, the evaluation finds that existing mature trees screen the house from both proposed buildings, and the new construction would not impact the setting of the house.

Peer review of the above-mentioned studies is currently underway and will be used to help staff prepare an environmental analysis on the potential impacts to historic resources.

Attachments

1. Project Packet - Proposal and Plans
2. Redacted Cultural Resources Study, June 21, 2022
3. NWIC Initial Referral Comments, November 2, 2022
4. NWIC Updated Comments, December 7, 2022
5. Tom Origer & Associates response to Chris Wendt's Request, April 21, 2023
6. Chris Wendt's Response, May 2, 2023
7. Tom Origer & Associates' Historical and Architectural Evaluation and Impact Statement, June 2023