

**DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: August 3, 2022  
ITEM: No. 1 - 1:35 pm  
FROM: Claudette Diaz, Project Planner

SUBJECT: File No.: **PLP19-0048**; Cottage Housing Development  
Applicant: Stephen Pasquan  
Address: 654 Walnut Avenue, Sonoma, CA 95476  
APN(s): 052-413-015

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**Request**

The applicant requests preliminary design review of a proposed five-unit cottage housing development, including units ranging from 895 square feet to 906 square feet in size, with 106-124 square feet of private outdoor space per unit, located on a 0.32 acre parcel.

**Project Description**

A **Use Permit** and **Design Review** for a proposed cottage housing development, comprised of five 2-bedroom units, ranging from 895 square feet to 906 square feet in size, with 106-124 square feet of private outdoor space per unit, located on a 0.32 acre parcel.

**Background**

The project site is located on a 0.32 acre parcel at 654 Walnut Avenue in Sonoma. The subject parcel is zoned Low Density Residential (R1) 5 Dwelling Units per Acre (B6 5 DU), Vacation Rental Exclusion Zone (X), and has a General Plan land use designation of Urban Residential (UR) 5 Dwelling Units per Acre (5).

The site previously contained a 766 square foot single family dwelling, along with a several accessory storage structures, which were demolished under permit record DEM18-1297 in February of 2020.

The surrounding area is developed with single family residences and zoned Low Density Residential (R1). Neighboring areas are zoned Medium Density (R2) and contain multi-family units.

A Use Permit is required for cottage housing developments of more than three units, or that request to exceed standards. This project requests approximately 4,487 square feet of building area, which exceeds the 2,700-square foot maximum in Section 26-88-063(g)(2).

**Key Considerations**

## 1. **Building Design and Site Layout**

The project proposes five 2-bedroom cottages, ranging in 895 square feet to 900 square feet in size, with 106-124 square feet of private outdoor space provided as covered porch space.

The proposed project meets the 8,000 square foot minimum parcel size requirement for cottage housing developments and required setbacks for the R1 Zoning District, including 10 feet from the rear, 5 feet from the sides, 20 feet from the front property line and 45 feet from the centerline of Walnut Avenue. Access to all units will be provided via Walnut Avenue.

Units #1 and #5 will be standalone detached units, and units #2, #3 and #4 will be attached to one another. The units would be oriented towards the shared communal space, with a proposed lot coverage of 36.4%, which is below the maximum lot coverage of 40%. Units #1, #2, and #5 are proposed to be single story up to 18 feet and 9 inches tall and approximately 895-905 square feet in size. Unit #3 and #4 will be two stories, up to 28 feet and 11 inches tall, approximately 896 square feet in size. Unit #1 will be ADA accessible and include one ADA parking space along Walnut Avenue. Covered parking for Units # 2-5 will be located in the rear half of the lot, provided by a new garage attached to the building comprising units #2, #3 and #4.

The proposed units will be composed of Hardie siding with darker-colored asphalt shingle roofs. Proposed siding colors will vary by unit, but include green, yellow, gray, and blue.

Staff requests the Committee provide direction on the project's architectural design and scale, and use of proposed colors and materials.

## 2. **Landscaping and Lighting**

The applicant has prepared conceptual landscaping plans for the Committee's consideration. Staff recommends the Committee provide comments on the general design at this stage. The applicant intends to prepare complete landscaping plans in compliance with the Chapter 7-D3, the Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance (WELO), before the project returns to the Committee for final design review approval.

Staff requests that the Committee provide direction on the project's conceptual lighting plan, with individual fixture selection to be reviewed either during final design review by the Committee or administratively by staff.



### 3. Circulation and Parking

Staff has received concerns from neighbors regarding the adequacy of parking onsite. A Focused Traffic Study was drafted by W-Trans on November 23, 2020 and accepted by the Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works on December 28, 2020. The project would provide 7 covered spaces, all of which would be located onsite. One of the parking spaces would be accessible. The project complies with Section 26-86-010 of the Sonoma County Code, which requires one reserved space per unit (5 spaces) and one guest space for every 3 units (2 spaces), totaling 7 parking spaces.

Parking is discouraged in the front yard, however in order to avoid development near the drainage creek in the rear portion of the lot, accessible parking and guest parking spaces are proposed along the site's frontage.

### 4. Drainage

A drainage ditch runs across the rear corner of the parcel and it is not a designated Riparian Corridor by the Zoning Code or General Plan. The proposed project is designed for the drainage to flow north away from the ditch and into the municipal storm system.

Preliminary grading and drainage plans are provided in Attachment 3. A storm water permit (STW19-0006) was submitted in 2019, was approved, and expired on March 11, 2022. The storm water permit will need to be renewed prior to building permit issuance and a grading permit will need to be submitted. Under the draft condition of approval, the applicant will need to demonstrate via hydrologic and hydraulic analysis that flooding frequency on adjacent properties will not be increased as a result of the project.

### **Environmental Review**

The environmental determination under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is currently under review. An Initial Study is in process.

### **Public Comment:**

Several letters have been received opposing the project found in Attachment 7. Comments included concerns on provided parking and on grading of the property and potential flooding impacts of the proposed project due to its close proximity to the drainage located on the rear of the property.

### *Prior Meetings*

The project was presented before Sonoma Valley Citizen's Advisory Committee (SVCAC) and received approval with comments on energy efficiency and landscaping. The Committee recommended the applicant include more energy efficiency options as well as more native and drought tolerant plants.



**Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department**  
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## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends the Design Review Committee provide preliminary feedback on the following project elements:

- Building location, height, scale and massing
- Architectural design and facade articulation
- Use of exterior colors and materials
- Conceptual landscape design
- Conceptual exterior lighting
- Vehicular and pedestrian circulation

## **Next Steps**

The proposed project requires Use Permit approval by the Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA). The use permit and related environmental considerations are currently under review by Permit Sonoma. Permit Sonoma will publicly notice the use permit and environmental determination when those items are ready for consideration and action by the BZA. Permit Sonoma will also send out public notices for subsequent hearings before the Design Review Committee.

## **Attachments**

1. Project Proposal Statement
2. Project Plan Set
3. Preliminary Grading and Drainage Plans
4. Landscaping Plans
5. Focused Traffic Study
6. Sonoma Valley Citizens Advisory Commission (SVCAC) Minutes
7. Public Comments

