

**CITY OF SONOMA  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
October 13, 2016**

**Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West, Sonoma, CA**

**MINUTES**

Chair Felder called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Roll Call:**

Present: Chair Felder, Comms. Wellander, Willers, Roberson, Cribb, McDonald (Alternate)

Absent: Comm. Coleman, Sek

Others Present: Planning Director Goodison, Senior Planner Gjestland, Associate Planner Atkins, Administrative Assistant Morris

Chair Felder stated that no new items would be heard after 10:30 p.m. unless the Planning Commission so decides. Any decisions made by the Planning Commission can be appealed within 15 days to the City Council. He reminded everyone to turn off cell phones and pagers. Comm. McDonald led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Comm. Willers made a motion to approve the minutes of August 11, 2016. Comm. Cribb seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. (5-0) (Comm. Roberson abstained) Comm. Cribb made a motion to approve the minutes of September 8, 2016. Comm. Roberson seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. (5-0) (Comm. McDonald abstained).

**CHANGES TO AGENDA ORDER:** Chair Felder noted that Item #2 was being postponed to the meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup> and would not be heard this evening.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Planning Director Goodison reviewed the correspondence received after the distribution of the agenda packet.

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**Item #1 – Discussion – Report by City Engineer on the updated Urban Water Management Plan.**

Public Works Director/Civil Engineer Dan Takasugi presented staff's report.

The percentage of water connection fees for new construction projects was estimated.

**Chair Felder opened the item to public comment.**

No public comment.

**Chair Felder closed the item to public comment.**

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**Item 2 – Public Hearing Consideration of a Use Permit to operate a restaurant in conjunction with a wine retail establishment at 412 First Street East.**

**Applicant/Property Owner: Sonoma Wine Shop/Redbird Investment Group, LLC**

Item #2 is postponed to November 10, 2016 meeting.

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**Item 3 – Public Hearing Consideration of a Use Permit to operate a mobile food truck on a commercial property at 20490 Broadway.**

**Applicant/Property Owner: Picasso Food Truck/Bruce Needleman**

Associate Planner Atkins presented staff's report.

Salvador Chavez, Picazo Café, discussed the proposal and recognized some challenges with the site.

Comm. Cribb is disappointed the sketch and diagram presented is not to scale or accurate according to his site measurements. He viewed ingress and egress into the parking lot as problematic.

**Chair Felder opened the item for public comment.**

John Kelly, resident, said the intersection could not handle an intensification of use by adding a mobile food truck business. He noted no separation between the pedestrian access way from vehicular traffic and inadequate ADA parking.

Miranda Ive, owner/operator of kiosk business inside Freidmans/Sonoma Valley resident (19468 Arnold Drive), is concerned with limited parking at Salsa Trading to accommodate the use. She stated that Freidman's is leasing some of the parking spaces on the subject property for use by its employees.

**Chair Felder closed the item for public comment.**

Comm. Willers confirmed with staff that the Use permit runs with the land and does not expire with a change of ownership. He is mainly concerned with an intensification of use and traffic circulation. As a separate matter for future consideration, the need for a use permit versus obtaining a license for this type of use should be discussed.

Comm. Cribb agreed with comments that traffic conditions at the site are problematic.

Comm. McDonald said the location is not conducive for a food truck located so close to the sidewalk. He considered food trucks as a high-turnover use and viewed a temporary mobile food truck business at the entrance to the Gateway corridor as inconsistent with the Development Code.

Comm. Wellander clarified with Associate Planner Atkins that the application is for a mobile food truck on a 6-month trial basis.

Comm. Roberson opposed allowing a high-turnover restaurant in the Gateway District.

Chair Felder opposed the application because, in his view, it did not fit the site and was not appropriate for the Gateway Planning Area. He did not wish to grant a Use Permit for this type of use, as that approval runs with the land.

Comm. Cribb made a motion to deny the application. Comm. Willers seconded. The motion was unanimously approved, 6-0.

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**Item 4 – Public Hearing Consideration of a Use Permit to develop a seven-unit hotel a 158-172 West Napa Street.**

**Applicant/Property Owner: Michael Marino**

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

Chair Felder questioned if the use designation will change from vacation rentals to hotel use.

Planning Director Goodison responded that condition of approval #1 stated the hotel use supersedes/replaces the allowance for the buildings to operate as vacation rentals.

Michael Marino, property owner/resident/founder of California Wine Tours said his initial concept was to construct a small bungalow village of vacation rentals that has evolved into a small boutique hotel project.

Comm. Roberson is concerned the gate might create an obstruction as vehicles wait to enter the site and suggested that it remain open during the day.

Comm. McDonald inquired about the plan for guest's transportation needs.

**Chair Felder opened the item for public comment.**

Bill Hooper, President/Kenwood Investments, LLC/neighbor, expressed support for the proposal.

Nancy Simpson, Nathanson Creek Lane, fully supported the project since she viewed the small scale hotel design respected the downtown district historic guidelines and Sonoma character.

Fred Allebach, Sonoma Valley resident stated that the hotel is the perfect size and scale for the downtown area. He suggested the use could be considered a hybrid between a vacation rental and a hotel.

**Chair Felder closed the item for public comment.**

Comm. Roberson is satisfied with the reuse and property improvements.

Comm. McDonald stated that he supports the concept in general, but has reservations about installing a gate as, in his opinion, it works against creating a pedestrian friendly experience. He appreciated the high-quality materials used for the project.

Comm. Wellander concurred with Comm. McDonald that a gate is unnecessary. He supported some flexibility about whether an onsite manager should be required.

Comm. Willers was pleased that a live-in onsite manager was a consideration, since it would be a unique situation in Sonoma whereby an employee could live at the job location. He endorsed the project and supported the waiver of the residential component. He agreed with his fellow commissioners that a gate was undesirable.

Comm. Willers clarified with staff the intent is for on site management in shifts.

Comm. McDonald felt it is not necessary to require a live in manager during the slower seasons.

Michael Marino, business owner, explained that hiring someone to live on site, employed 24 hours day, is expensive. He intends to impose strict regulations with his boutique hotel and preferred volunteer oversight rather than “controlling management”.

Comms. McDonald and Cribb are satisfied with an onsite manager during normal business hours 8-6.

Comm. Willers made a motion to approve the project with the following conditions: 1) onsite manager during normal business hours 8-6 p.m., 2) only a decorative gate, 3) language regarding the parcel merger and utilities, and 4) a correction to condition of approval #3. Comm. Roberson seconded. The motion was unanimously approved, 6-0.

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## **Item 5 – Study Session on a proposal to construct 30 apartments on a 1.5-acre site at the Northern/vacant portion of 590 West Napa Street.**

### **Applicant/Property Owner: DeNova Homes Inc./Paul Norrbom**

Senior Planner Gjestland presented staff’s report.

Trent Sanson, DeNova Homes, Inc., described the plan to build 30 apartments within the mixed use commercial district that could provide affordable work force housing in Sonoma. The business mantra/motto is “building a better community”. The main concern expressed by neighbors at a neighborhood meeting was the massing and location of the buildings. They preferred placing the buildings on the east side of the site to minimize the negative impacts.

### **Chair Felder opened the item for public comment.**

Fred Allebach, Sonoma Valley resident, questioned if the Planning Commission could recommend to the City Council placing a moratorium on large scale housing projects until the Nexis housing study is completed so a full spectrum of affordable inclusionary units could be offered since this is a housing opportunity site.

William Buss, neighbor, (426 Bernice Lane) abutting the middle building, preferred the original design that is the reverse/flip of the current site plan.

Jane Zimmerman, neighbor, (450 Bernice Lane) desired more space between the fence and the new buildings. She recommended moving the project to the west end of the property to maintain her privacy. She is pleased to hear there will be more affordable housing in Sonoma.

**Chair Felder closed the item for public comment.**

Comm. Roberson supported the apartments.

Planning Director Goodison said flipping the buildings will create an island but is feasible.

Comm. Willers appreciated a multifamily apartment project. He viewed the buildings as “out of scale” for the neighborhood.

Comm. McDonald requested more analysis for breaking up the buildings. He agreed with Planning Director Goodison about consideration for reconfiguring the buildings on site.

Comm. Cribb concurred with his fellow commissioner’s comments and welcomed this type of apartment development.

Comm. Wellander encouraged the developer to minimize the visual impacts along West Spain Street.

Comm. Willers recommended reduced parking stall spaces to 9-9.5 feet to allow for more landscaping.

Chair Felder is pleased with the apartment complex concept but recommended a more creative placement of the buildings, with greater variety in setbacks. He agreed with Comm. Willers about reducing the size of the parking stalls.

The applicant thanked the Planning Commission for its feedback.

Robert Lee, the project architect, respected the comments and would explore options for revisions based on the Commission's feedback.

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**Item 6 – Public Hearing Consideration of a Tentative map to subdivide a +2-acre parcel into two lots at 590 West Napa Street.**

**Applicant/Property Owner: DeNova Homes Inc./Paul Norrbom**

Senior Planner Gjestland presented staff's report.

**Chair Felder opened the item for public comment.**

Trent Sanson, DeNova Homes, Inc., explained the reason for the minor subdivision/tentative parcel map request is to divide the land into two separate parcels in order to purchase the land for developing a multi-unit housing development consistent with the mixed use designation in the General Plan.

Lee Cambra, resident, sought out DeNova Homes, Inc., to consider the site for a residential development. He fully endorsed the plan.

**Chair Felder closed the item for public comment.**

Following a discussion of the item, Comm. Roberson made a motion to approve the tentative map to subdivide a +2 acre parcel into two lots at 590 West Napa Street subject to the conditions of approval. Comm. Willers seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 6-0.

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**Issues Update:** Planning Director Goodison reviewed the Planning issues update report.

**Comments from Commissioners:** Comm. Wellander asked about the status of the 870 Broadway site. Planning Director Goodison said there have been a lot of inquiries but no applications filed.

**Comments from the Audience:** None.

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**Adjournment:** Chair Felder adjourned the meeting at 10:29 p.m. to the next regular meeting. Comm. Willers seconded. The next regular meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 10, 2016.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Sonoma Planning Commission on the 13th day of December, 2016.

Approved:

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Cristina Morris, Administrative Assistant