

**SONOMA VALLEY CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING AUGUST 27, 2014  
SONOMA POLICE DEPARTMENT, COMMUNITY ROOM  
175 FIRST STREET WEST, SONOMA  
6:30 p.m.**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Cynthia Wood, Rochelle Campana, Pat Pulvirenti, Jack Ding, Greg Carr, Kirsten Lindquist, David Cook for Ken Brown, Bruce Green, Tom Martin, Sean Bellach, Ditty Vella, Angela White

**ABSENT:** Ryan Lely

1. **Call To Order: 6:30 p.m.**
2. **Minutes Approved of July 23, 2014 Meeting**
3. **Public Comment:** Terry Shore introduced herself and announced her interest in becoming a member of SVCAC.
4. **Applicant Name:** Steve Martin Associates, Inc.  
**Owner Name:** Walter Schug  
**Site Address:** 602 Bonneau Road, Sonoma  
**APN:** 128-451-054

**Request for a Use Permit and Design Review to modify UP90-006 to increase production at an existing winery from 10,000 cases per year to 30,000 cases per year, add a 6,300 square foot tasting/hospitality building, including two marketing accommodation units, and three special events with up to 500 people each on a 10 acre parcel.**

**Applicant presentation:**

Steve Martin, designer, introduced Walter Schug, owner of the winery, who provided a brief history of his life. He grew up in the Rhine Valley in Germany, and armed with his knowledge and expertise, arrived in New York with his wife in 1920. They drove to California and after working and consulting for several wineries, he began his own label and has been successful to this day. His daughter is educational ambassador for California wines and his son is the marketing director.

Steve Martin: Schug Winery began in 1990 and was making 10,000 cases of wine. In 2004, we asked for production to increase to 30,000 cases and to build a 6300 sq ft hospitality administration building, but due to the economy, we could not build and the permit expired. The County is using the same environmental document except for updating a traffic study. We are requesting the same use permit: the admin building will include a tasting room, offices, and two guest suites. There is no change from the 2004 request, and no increase in accommodation or visitation, but there will be an additional 10 spaces for parking. The application is on a 10 acre parcel surrounded by vineyards so it's agricultural. The wastewater system will be expanded as wastewater flows increase. Currently, wastewater is screened into settling tanks and discharged into subsurface leach fields. We have had no complaints or violations and have been successful in private and Sonoma County monitoring but will be subject to PRMD design review. Scott Stone, general manager, and Michael Cox, winegrower, are here to answer questions.

**Commissioner questions:**

Ms. Wood: Have there been discussions with neighbors?

Steve Martin: No neighborhood meeting, but have met with wineries.

Ms. White: The use of the guest suites? Outside tasting bar for the overflow?

Steve Martin: National distributor housing, and restaurateurs. Guest units are not for hire. Yes, outside bar.

Ms. White: Is there a water recycling program? How will you address the water usage due to increase in production?

Steve Martin: No program at this time, water goes into a subsurface system leach field.

Ms. Vella: You've already increased the numbers, right?

Steve Martin: We increased production after the use permit was approved, currently at 23,000 cases. 5,000 case winery is equal to a 3 bedroom residence water usage. We're at the low end so 3,000 cases equate to 4 residences.

Walter Schug: We're very productive and careful with everything. We're 100% solar.

Ms. Campana: Where do the grapes for wine come from? Will they be trucked in?

Michael Cox: Existing vineyards, 100 tons, we crush 300-400 tons. Growers used, most are from San Giacomo.

Steve Martin: Four trucks per week.

Ms. Campana: The well on the adjacent property – what is its location? How deep is your well, and any issues with chloride with the new well?

Michael Cox: (points to map) Right about there. Their well came in after ours. Our well is very deep and good quality water. Now winery only use so water will be reduced.

Steve Martin: Tested at 200 gallons.

Ms. Campana: Special events?

Scott Stone: 3 events at 500 each: marketing events, Oktoberfest to highlight German heritage, looking for two others – may be existing industry events.

Steve Martin: They will occur during normal business/tasting hours.

Mr. Martin: Groundwater levels based on Sonoma County map of 1998. The use permit was granted in 2004, a very wet year. You claim no lowering of groundwater table.

Steve Martin: We're in zone 1 high recharge area. Use is minimal when you look at the size of the aquifer.

Mr. Martin: Recharge is based on appropriate rainfall.

Steve Martin: Groundwater classification is not changed annually.

Mr. Martin: Traffic access is one of the most difficult in the Valley especially on weekends – increase in numbers will be phased. 2725 additional visits based on your charts – is that accurate?

Steve Martin: Based on 2.5 individuals per car. The 2004 study is being updated – proposed future improvements paid for by County taxes and mitigation fees.

Mr. Martin: Will the winery contribute to taxes and improvements?

Steve Martin: We already do – we'll pay fair share of improvements and traffic mitigation fees.

Chair Lindquist: What kind of fee is required and how is it calculated?

Steve Martin: Calculated based on percentage of traffic at the facility at intersection divided by cost of intersection. 500 trips, 50 are yours, will pay 10% cost of improvements - \$20,000.

Mr. Bellach: 300 sq ft now, add 6,000 with new facility – that's a tasting room, admin/special events purposes only?

Steve Martin: Two guest suites attached, rest rooms....

Mr. Bellach: 30,000 case limit, already at 23,000, increase by 7,000. Parking: visitors not all at once but all day long. Any additional parking?

Steve Martin: Adding 9 totaling 100 spaces – 70 for visitors with 500 person events, 30 for employees.

Mr. Bellach: 100 at one time max. Permeable surfaces?

Steve Martin: Paved and aggregate based areas - will use permeable asphalt.

Mr. Bellach: Neighboring residences, how many and no concerns with expansion?

Walter Schug: Two – one is a grower. None.

Ms. White: Newer well – when was it put in? Groundwater quality acceptable?

Scott Stone: 2012. Yes.

**Public questions and comments:**

Kathy Pons, Kenwood, President of VOM Alliance, organization dedicated to preserving rural character of Valley: Bonneau Rd. is at 121 and 116, with traffic lights and usually backed up with traffic. This corner begins a two mile stretch of 121 to Viansa with businesses, air park, fruit stand, and furniture store as well as six wedding event centers with 441 approved special events. Currently, there's a B&B and another tasting room applying for events before you get to Schug. This is a two-lane highway with four left turn lanes, one specifically for the storage business before you get to Viansa. Water is also of concern in this area. I'm a member of the Sonoma Valley Basin Advisory which developed a groundwater management plan. Part of his plan collects data for groundwater management and a monitoring program has been in place for five years that measured water levels and wells throughout the Valley. (Packets handed out). A review was just published and at the corner of 121 and 116, the five hydrographs show that water levels are close to sea level. Saline water is creeping up. Wells monitored are less than 200 feet deep and more data is needed for deeper wells. This area is over-concentrated with visitor-serving activities that threaten the quality of groundwater and special consideration should be extended. If Schug is tripling production, water used in processing and washing barrels should be captured and reused and not funneled into leach fields. This would offset groundwater use for landscape irrigation. We propose that the three special events with 500 people be eliminated due to traffic congestion already evident in area. There are 33 other promotional events with max of 75 people and seven industry-wide events proposed. We are also proposing elimination of the two marketing accommodation units. Lodging could be provided 3/10 of mile away. The new building would not need a whole second floor which might lead to rentals and not suited for ag land.

**Commissioner comments and discussion:**

Ms. Campana: Saltwater intrusion is irreversible and wells no longer used for irrigation. The purple area on the map must use reclaimed water because groundwater is not suitable.

Ms. White: Traffic can be fixed with lights and turn lanes but water can't. We're at a turning point and it's not feasible to allow greater usage at more wineries for wine production.

Mr. Bellach: Project is for expansion of facilities, not winemaking. They're already at 23,000, events are limited and not a huge impact on water supply. We can't reject based on water. My concern is with parking which will reach maximum capacity in a short time. For overflow parking, maybe look into a shuttle system at the park 'n' ride at the intersection.

Mr. Green: Question for Mr. Carr - once permit is approved, it's grandfathered with property?

Mr. Carr: Depends on what they did with the permit. Typically, you must do something once permit is granted. They didn't do enough in the staff's view, to keep the permit going.

Mr. Green: They didn't need to expand production. They just got held up due to the economy. The County didn't have a problem with the increase in production?

Steve Martin: They planned to build the building and began to increase production but revenue wasn't there to build. Production space was not part of the application. We could increase production in the existing space. We could have put \$10,000 into grading or extended the permit but were unaware of the extensions. To address water use, when a winery triples production, it doesn't triple water use. It increases two times, it's not a linear increase. At 5 gallons of wastewater per gallon of wine, that's the industry average.

Walter Schug: Where our wastewater goes, there is less irrigation so it's reused.

Chair Lindquist: So you're recycling the water?

Steve Martin: Shallow subsurface leach field reclaims 100% of water, adding moisture to soil. It's 100% reused but not as direct as drip irrigation.

Ms. Vella: The three events are part of the original application?

Steve Martin: Not part of original application. Then we didn't have to state, now more definition is needed.

Scott Stone: The three events – two already existing so Oktoberfest is the only addition and we want to grow that event.

Ms. Vella: Not classified as industry events?

Steve Martin: In addition to industry events.

Scott Stone: Water use – the new well is 700 ft deep. Surface level is down 150 ft so have 550 ft. Drilling was not for increased production; we have three new pumps due to sand collapsing and release pressure – well's getting old. We're a 40 thousand case winery but a lot of production is offsite but within Sonoma County. We'd like to shift some gallons back to our winery so there's no difference if offsite or in-house.

Ms. Vella: The difference is you're on the edge of the saltwater intrusion.

Chair Lindquist: The permit was for 10,000, now at 23,000. Is the application before us due to the increase?

Mr. Carr: Lack of permits, events proposed. I don't know the determination re: production.

Chair Lindquist: Events are operating without a permit.

Mr. Carr: It will be a consideration as well as location of events. Cal Trans will have something to say re: intersection. Roundabout design is in progress. Groundwater issue needs further discussion and regulation, not specific projects.

Ms. Pulvirenti: Do all participating wineries have permits during wine festivals?

Chair Lindquist: I'm conflicted – am in support of local businesses growing but because of the water situation, we need to talk about new policies.

Mr. Bellach: I would like to make a motion for proposal for approval as presented.

Ms. Vella: Would like the County to pay special attention re: groundwater issue and traffic and number of events.

Mr. Bellach: Approve project as submitted with special consideration to traffic and events and water as stated during discussion.

Ms. Campana: Should the Commission scale down the project?

Chair Lindquist: We may speak to County officials re: changing policies on water, traffic and concentration.

Mr. Martin: What's special consideration?

Mr. Bellach: Water levels, impacts and traffic and events - planners to take special consideration to comments.

Mr. Martin: If not approved, it would bring to their attention.

Steve Martin: We're operating under 1990 permit – no definition of events. Even in 2004, there was no requirement of definition. This application is defining what marketing and special events are allowed, putting more boundaries than what they're already doing.

Mr. Ding: Improve water use procedure – investment not just for now but for future.

**Motion: Mr. Bellach. Approve the application as submitted with special concern to traffic/events and water as stated. Mr. Green seconded. Motion passed: 6 in favor, 3 opposed (Ms. Campana, Ms. White, Mr. Martin)**

Ms. Vella: The County needs to set bar, rethink policies since we can only implement what policies are.

5.      **Applicant Name:**            **Modus Inc., Attn: Eric James**  
          **Owner Name:**             **June Kunde Family LTD Partnership**  
          **Site Address:**            **1393 Nelligan Road, Kenwood**  
          **APN:**                        **051-250-010**

**Request for a Use Permit for a new telecommunications facility to consist of a 55 foot tall faux tree pole with 12 antennas and associated equipment cabinets with 50 kilowatts backup diesel generator on a 305.66 acre parcel.**

**Applicant presentation:**

Eric James of Modus, on behalf of AT&T is spearheading the project. The site is a 55 ft pole with an additional canopy camouflaged as a faux oak tree. Details and samples will be provided to the planner re: design. The area is 26 x 40, included is a 12 x 12 prefabricated shelter, on site backup generator in case of earthquakes and such.

Report written by Angela White and read to audience:

**AT&T Site Visit**  
**1393 Nelligan Road, Kenwood**  
**August 14th, 2014**

**Those in attendance:**  
**SVCAC Commissioners:** *Chair Kirsten Lindquist, Secretary Angela White & Alternate Pat Pulvirenti*

**AT&T Representative:** *Eric James and two of his assistants*

**AT&T Consultant:** *Debbie Barrieos*

**PRMD planner:** *Karin Theriault*

The intended site for the new AT&T cell tower is located a few miles back from Hwy 12 up Nuns Canyon Rd. in a large corner lot off of Nelligan Road owned by the Kunde family. The area is primarily vineyard space with the closest neighbor being approximately 300 ft. across Nelligan, opposite from the intended site.

As it was explained to everyone in attendance the site was chosen for a few reasons: first it was established that there is a need in the area, second the site is on a hillside which will reach a radius of 1/2 mile and lastly, it's far enough off of Hwy 12 that it's very difficult to see from the road. In an effort to have the tower blend in to the natural environment, it will be designed to imitate a 60ft tall Oak Tree with the base of the tower being landscaped to blend in with the

surrounding environment. While we were there Eric James and his assistants hoisted a balloon into the air to represent the proposed height of the tower. It was taller than most of the trees in the area but, as it was explained to us, needed to be in order to provide optimal service. We were told that multiple notices had been sent to all neighbors concerning the use of the site and proposed plans with little to no response or concern.

In my opinion this is probably one of the best cell tower sites I have seen. It is far from Hwy 12, VCACThere are very few neighbors and the proposed design is aesthetically pleasing to the area.

**Commissioner questions:**

Mr. Green: AT&T came 60 days ago for approval of water tower. Is this an alternate plan?

Eric James: I'm not aware, this is not related.

Mr. Green: Will there be multiple towers to serve the same area?

Ms. Pulvirenti: This is an additional tower. Because of Smart phones, radius is only ½ mile.

Chair Lindquist: Because of the amount of data, it's ½ mile radius for service. There will be more towers proposed because we need them.

Mr. Ding: Who do you represent - sounds like you represent Modus Inc.

Eric James: AT&T issues projects out to contractors such as Modus and gives us authorization to represent, build and title sites and meet governmental processes. I'm an independent contractor allowed to represent AT&T.

Mr. Ding: You're carrying out this project, not to gather comments from folks.

Mr. Bellach: Any pictures? Pine or oak tree?

Eric James: It's a camouflage tree. Planners will specify oak tree and how many branches per foot.

Mr. Bellach: Will it be visible from Highway 12?

Eric James: 10 feet above treetops, it will be visible for the antenna to reach but due to the distance, will blend in with the existing tree growth.

Chair Lindquist: There will be antennas without leaves?

Eric James: The tree will be above the existing tree line. Green on green.

Mr. Bellach: Please explain the increase in coverage for AT&T. On Highway 12, how far will coverage increase?

Eric James: Nun's Canyon to south of the town of Kenwood.

Mr. Bellach: That's west of the Kenwood boundary. Nun's Canyon is east of that. Half mile?

Eric James: Might be a mile stretch from the center.

Mr. Green: The last one from AT&T 2 months ago, we talked about co-location – other carriers had the right to attach to the water tower. If there were 20 more carriers, will your design add branches to cover antennas to the top of the tree?

Eric James: The design would only go up and attach to the existing pole. Towers are generally over-engineered to support more antennas due to earthquakes. If extended 10 ft up, the tree would continue up.

Ms. White: Towers must be built for co-location?

Eric James: Tower must be over-engineered for fewer disruptions to existing site. If someone wants to locate, they'll be below our antennas and well within the leaves as close to the center as possible due to weight.

Chair Lindquist: if 10 other companies co-locate, will it increase electromagnetic energy and health risks?

Eric James: It's up to the landlord to decide on more carriers for site because it's their property, and the County to review design changes. The County is not required to accept the new pole or design. An exposure report must be filed and cleared by a third party.

Chair Lindquist: Does it increase exponentially?

Eric James: I'm not an electromagnetic engineer. You need to speak to an expert on this.

Mr. Green: The City has had problems with AT&T. First, they sent an RF expert; the second time, they sent an attorney due to lawsuits, now a contractor. Why does it keep changing? Last time all we could do was object to the design.

Ms. Campana: Half mile radius – will we see applications for every ½ mile on Highway 12?

Eric James: Not from AT&T. For this site and what I've seen, they go where there's demand.

Ms. White: Who decides there's a demand?

Eric James: RF engineer decides on sites based on gaps.

Chair Lindquist: Is the increase in tourism behind the demand?

Eric James: Highway 12 has increased users – more visitors in the summer and residents around the site.

**Public questions and comments:**

Jay Gamel, Kenwood Press: I'm commenting on the earlier projects. The first one at St. Francis Vineyard failed – there was an easement and couldn't build on it due to legal issues. The second one moved to Adobe Canyon Rd. because VOM breaks up line of sight and gives short cell phone usage. This one on Nelligan aims directly at the dead spot. So there will be a series of towers throughout the Valley and each one will be a different contractor.

Mr. Carr: Applicant might need coverage maps when they go before the County so that we can see why a particular site is needed or why one is better than another.

Eric James: I will email to everyone on the Commission. There is an absence of signals in this part of the Valley.

Terry Shore: You could call the County for an overview of the plan instead of project by project.

**Commissioner comments and discussion:**

Mr. Bellach: Are the service coverage maps for alternative sites or this or both?

Mr. Carr: Coverage map shows current coverage of geographical area and you can see gaps. When companies come looking for the least intrusive site, map will show issues for the site.

Mr. Bellach: A photo scanned in color would help in decision for future presentations. Is it oak or pine – it's hard to see  
How many more will there be although we need coverage?

Chair Lindquist: This looks like the best site for the cell tower – it will look like native trees.

Mr. Ding: I appreciate your hard work but we need someone to explain this project.

Chair Lindquist: It would be best if AT&T put their name on the projects.

Mr. Ding: AT&T should just do it.

Mr. Green: Coverage area is half mile – that was not presented properly the first two times.

Chair Lindquist: Rapid increase of data and usage and shrinking in coverage area.

Mr. Carr: Technology, range and usages change.

Chair Lindquist: Ugly telephone poles

Ms. Vella: Towers can be upgraded.

Eric James: They get modified over time.

**Motion: Ms. White. Approve the application as presented. Ms. Wood seconded. Motion passed: 7 in favor, 1 opposed (Mr. Green), 1 abstained (Mr. Ding)**

#### **6. Discuss a potential date and time for a SVCAC retreat**

Pat Gilardi said that Supervisor Gorin thought it might be helpful for the Commission to talk about issues members may be grappling with such as cell towers and how to approach them, to be given some direction and help in decisions, or issues surrounding events and the direction at the County and the obstacles she faces. The purpose of the retreat is for the Supervisor to help the Commission understand its role and some of the issues. Mr. Bellach asked if it would be OK to talk about such matters, in relation to the Brown Act. Pat explained that they will be discussing the process and not projects as well as decision-making. Chair Lindquist asked if they could have a discussion about County policies and how to express concerns. As for individual projects, Pat asked the Commission to look over the packets on the upcoming agenda and call her or the County for clarification or for better info and handouts. The retreat is tentatively scheduled at the Police Department or Supervisor Gorin's office on Grove St. on a Friday during the day at the end of October or early November. Pat suggested that members email her with topics of concern ahead of time.

#### **7. Consideration of items for Future Agenda**

Ms. Pulvirenti mentioned that she went to the Planning Commission study meeting on the new hotel proposal in Sonoma and David Goodison said that they will be coming before the SVCAC. She also said that the info Kathy Pons provided on the two mile stretch would be a good agenda item for the retreat.

Pat Gilardi said that Supervisors Gorin and McGuire have lots of data on that as well as vacation rentals, and solutions which are not quick and easy, and all the discussions going on at the County.

#### **8. Meeting Adjourned: 8:45 p.m.**