



PROJECT NARRATIVE

Application Type: City of Sonoma Minor Conditional Use Permit

Project Name: Sonoma Square Public Market

Project Location: 2 West Spain Street, Sonoma, CA 95476

APN: Two Parcel Property -018-162-004 & 018-162-022 to be merged into one parcel

Property Owner: Nina & Maria Viviani Trust, Comerica Bank & Trust NA, Trustee of the Viviani Trust (Trust)

Project Owner and Developer: Sonoma Square Market, LLC, Napa, California.

Project Architect: SMS Architects, Gregory G. Simonoff.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The building located at 2 West Spain Street was built in 1945 for Celso Viviani to serve as the factory, retail space, and office for the Sonoma Cheese Factory. When Mr. Viviani and Tom Vella, established the company in 1931 it was the first dedicated cheese making facility in Sonoma.

The Sonoma Cheese Factory manufactured cheese continuously at this site until 2001. Since that time, changing cultural, ownership, and economic conditions affected the business. The current property owner, the Nina & Maria Viviani Trust, first proposed to revitalize the property through the creation of a new multi-tenant, specialty food marketplace featuring locally sourced, artisan foods, cheeses, baked goods, wine, coffee, and other related food and non-food products. The previously designated developer APPA Development applied for a Use Permit for the project which was conditionally approved by the Planning Commission on July 9, 2015.

Since that time, APPA Development has joined with the Carlin Company, the Napa based company responsible for developing the Oxbow Public Market in Napa, to form Sonoma Square Market, LLC ("Developer"). Sonoma Square Market has secured rights to a 99-year ground lease on the Property, and in that capacity has become project owner and developer. The Developer has made modest changes to the currently approved plans and is seeking a Conditional Use Permit based upon these updated plans.

Business Redevelopment Concept

The Sonoma Cheese Factory will be redeveloped to be a pedestrian oriented, central community gathering space that celebrates local artisan food and wine in an inviting and dynamic social setting. The history of the Sonoma Cheese Factory, and its ideal location on the plaza, provides an excellent opportunity for this to be successful. No other food retail operator in Sonoma has the iconic presence, historical significance, and the available well positioned location to do so.

The proposed marketplace concept will be similar to the Oxbow Public Market business model in nearby Napa however its emphasis will be the history, production, aging and sales of local cheeses and other related food products. Specifically, Developer intends to include in the project a one-of-a-kind cheese aging “affinage” facility in the new basement to draw upon and celebrate Sonoma’s rich heritage of cheese manufacturing. In addition to the affinage, the new marketplace will include multiple local owner operated vendors under one roof. The goal of this project is to revitalize and restore the Sonoma Cheese location as the preeminent specialty food purveyor in the Sonoma Valley. The project proposes to do so in the following manner.

Emphasizing Pedestrian Connectivity and Flow

The project will provide a significant community benefit to Sonoma by creating pedestrian connectivity and flow between the Sonoma Plaza, the Casa Grande Parking Lot, Depot Park, the Veterans Building and the Overlook Trail to the north. While the conditionally approved Use contained a pedestrian connectivity, the Developer has reimagined and relocated this feature. The project will build a new outdoor pedestrian walkway and exterior courtyard on the east side of the site between the Sonoma Cheese Factory building and the State Park. A narrow walkway exists there now. But the project design seeks to widen and extend this area to create a lively promenade and pass through. The previously approved location of this pedestrian walkway proceeds past the garbage collection facility used by the neighbor Mary’s Pizza Shack. By comparison, the newly imagined pedestrian path serves the community in a much more powerful way by including the architectural elements of the historic State Park. In this way, the project will also serve to activate this historical treasure.

New entry portals, signage, lighting and landscaping will provide welcoming features for pedestrians. This new walk way will provide a direct path of travel linking the commercial activity around the Plaza with the State Park, to the Casa Grande Parking lot, and beyond.

Preservation and Renovation of Existing Buildings

The existing Sonoma Cheese Factory is an ensemble of three buildings constructed over a period of time. The front and center portions of the building represent the original massing of the building. The rear concrete masonry unit (CMU) portions of the building were constructed at varying more contemporary dates. Beginning in 1958 the building underwent a series of additions and alterations primarily at the rear of the building. In 2005 the interior of the original building fronting Spain Street was extensively renovated to expand the retail use of the building.

Similar to the project's approach to site improvement, the project proposes to open the interior of the historic portions of the building to create a sense of procession, discovery, social interaction and flow through open market with multiple tenant spaces. Currently the three primary building elements of the Sonoma Cheese Factory Building are perceived as separate barely contiguous elements. The public only has access to roughly 50% of the building. The remainder of the building is underutilized and requires demolition and replacement or significant repairs or renovation in order to effectively contribute to the Sonoma Plaza commercial vibrancy and economy. The project proposes to make roughly 90% of the building open to the public and commercial uses.

Historic Resource Evaluation Study

In the summer of 2014 the Trust engaged Page & Turnbull Historic Resource Consultants, San Francisco, CA to prepare a Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) for the property. The HRE concluded the northern more contemporary portions of the building, which are proposed for removal and replacement by this project, are not historically significant. Per the HRE:

"Agglomerative additions at the rear of the building are not considered to be character defining features, as they are utilitarian in design, were partially constructed outside of the identified period of significance and are no longer used for cheese production."

The proposed development plan will not alter any of the character defining features of the building that enable it to convey its historic appearance and potential significance including its distinctive orange tile cladding, any fenestrations at the primary south facade, the southern portions of the east and west facades, metal awnings over the primary entrances or the massing and footprint of the primary building as it was originally constructed.

Originally Proposed as a Three Phase Project, Then Combined

The project was originally proposed to the Sonoma Planning Commission as a three phased project. On November 13, 2014, Phase I of the project was granted a conditional Use Permit by the City of Sonoma Planning Commission. On July 9, 2015, the project was granted a conditional Use Permit which retained the prior approved Conditional Use Permit and in addition granted conditional approval of the remaining phases of the project, combining them into a single coordinated construction project. The present application similarly presents a single unified project.

Description of Currently Approved Project Phases

All previous project phases are generally described below.

PHASE I: Phase I includes partial demolition of the non-significant northern CMU building, renovation and construction of new multi-tenant improvements in the existing retail space fronting the Plaza, new ADA restrooms and the construction of a new exterior pedestrian walkway and courtyard directly and visually linking the Historic Sonoma Plaza with the Casa Grande Parking lot and Depot Park to the North.

PHASE II: Phase II includes: Demolition of the remaining non-significant northern CMU buildings and reconstruction of a new approximately 3,100 GSF Addition (Tenant Space 12).

PHASE III: Construction of a new approximately 1,900 GSF Building (Tenant Space 13).

Description of Revised Project

Developers are proposing the same partial demolition of the same non-significant northern CMU building as were previously approved by the Planning Commission. Similarly, the current proposal includes the same renovation and construction of multi-tenant improvements in the existing retail space fronting the Plaza, new ADA restrooms and the construction of a new exterior pedestrian walkway and courtyard directly and visually linking the Historic Sonoma Plaza with the Historic State Park and the Casa Grande Parking lot and Depot Park to the North.

The current proposal differs from the previous project in that it includes entirely new construction behind the existing historical façade. The currently proposed building will feature a first floor area of approximately 14,935 GSF, and a basement of approximately 10,065 GSF housing the affinage, for a total building of approximately 25,000 GSF.

Land Use Type and Food Service Seating

Neither the Land Use Type nor the Food Service Seating have significantly changed from the conditionally approved use. As set forth in the previously approved application, defining a project like this as purely "retail" or "restaurant" does not accurately describe the public market experience. Virtually all tenants will sell food. Most tenants will require food service seating at their stall. The tenant mix will change over time, however, all tenants will be artisan food purveyors whenever possible. Offering seating flexibility to tenants is paramount to the success of projects like this. The Oxbow Public Market in Napa, Pike Place Market in Seattle, The Ferry Building in SF, and the Packing House in Anaheim are precedents in support of this approach. For parking and food service seating purposes the definition of "retail" and "restaurant" is blurred for this project type. Therefore for the purpose of clarifying the Project's

food service seating and parking requirements the land use type "Restaurant" per the Sonoma Development Code's Parking Requirements by Land Use Table 4-4 has been applied.

Parking will be based on interior seat count.

Grandfathered Parking and Food Service Seating Allotment

On November 13, 2014 the Sonoma Planning Commission granted the project a Conditional Use Permit for Phase I of the project inclusive of a parking credit of one space per 300 SF of existing building area and the grandfathering of 103 existing restaurant seats in respect to parking requirements. This yields:

Existing Retail Building = 11,397 SF/300 = 38 grandfathered parking spaces, plus 103 grandfathered food service seats.

Allowable Food Service Seating Relative to Grandfathered Parking Spaces

Restaurant seating is calculated as one space per every four seats. Therefore translating the grandfathered parking spaces into allowable seat count is: 38 spaces x 4 or 152 food service seats. This approach will support the flexible interior seating requirements of a changing tenant mix. This Use Permit requests the project be designated "Restaurant" for parking and seating purposes and be allowed up to 152 interior seats and the assignment of the 103 grandfathered food service seats towards exterior seating should they be required.

SPECIFIC PROJECT DATA

Site Parcel Addresses: 2 West Spain Street, Sonoma CA
 APN: 018-162-004
 Zoning: Commercial, Downtown District, Historic Overlay.

BUILDING AREA SUMMARY

GSF				
Phase	Floor – 1	Floor – 2	Basement	Total
Existing	10,621	776	0	11,397
Proposed Project	14,935	0	10,065	25,000

DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

Building Setbacks:

Front and street: None

Side: none required except when abutting a residential zone Rear: none required

Garage Setback: 20' from main structure (for residential)



Building Height: 35' allowable. No building height change is proposed for this project.

Total Lot Area: 20,335 SF

Existing Building Coverage: 10,621 SF

FAR Allowable: 2.0 x Total Site Area or 40,670 SF

Actual Lot Coverage: 73% lot coverage

Actual Building Area at Full Build Out: 25,000 SF (w/ Basement) = FAR compliant
14,935 SF (w/o Basement)

Open Space: 5,400 SF (approximately 27% of site area)

Landscape: New pedestrian courtyard entry portal, signage, lighting, plantings, street furniture and hardscape paving.

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