

**Date**

10 February 2017

**Project**

Brazil Street Lot 228

APN 018-051-007

**To**

City of Sonoma

Planning Department

Rob Gjestland, Senior Planner

**Subject**

Project Narrative for Conditional Use Permit

Rob,

The Brazil Street Lot 228 project consists of a 5,504 square foot single family residence, detached two car garage and swimming pool. The long axis of the project is oriented parallel to the natural topography. The project is cut into grade on the uphill side and fill with grading at a 2:1 ratio is utilized on the downhill side. By separating the garage and the main house structures, the individual buildings are able to step down with the hillside. To further the stepped massing approach, the pool terrace is split from the main terrace and located at a lower elevation. The profile of the buildings are kept low with simple shed style roof forms. Earth tones of are selected for the color scheme to enable the home to blend with the natural landscape. The wood siding proposed is gray barnwood and the base on the home is proposed as gray ledgestone which provides visual grounding.

Sincerely,

Clare Walton, AIA

License No. C32099

Walton Architecture + Engineering, Inc.

walton



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City of Sonoma  
Planning Department  
Rob Gjestland, Senior Planner

**Subject**

Narrative for Conditional Use Permit

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**Project Information**

APN: 018-051-007  
Address: Brazil Street Lot 228  
Zoning: Sonoma R-HS  
Building Height Limit: 30-feet from finish grade  
Setbacks: 30-feet for primary structure and 5-feet for accessory structure with 9-feet maximum wall height and 15-feet maximum building height

Adjacent Neighbors: Brazil Street Lot 227  
436 Brazil Street, APN 018-051-011  
400 Brazil Street, APN 018-051-002

Proposed Main House: 5,504 square feet  
Proposed Garage: 593 square feet

Total Lot Area: 2.69 Acres [117,242 square feet]  
Allowable Coverage: 15% [17,586 square feet]  
Proposed Coverage: 14.5% [17,066 square feet]

Allowable FAR: 10%  
Proposed FAR: 4.6%

CEQA: Categorically Exempt

Standards: Hillside Development  
Historic Overlay Zone

**Project Overview**

The proposed project consists of a 5,504 square foot single family residence, 593 square foot detached two car garage and swimming pool on an approximately 2.7 acre site. The site is located within a mile of Sonoma's historic plaza and the Sebastiani Winery. Views of the local vineyards and distant rolling hills are enjoyed from the building site.

**Planning Summary**

The proposed project is consistent with the Sonoma General Plan, the Historic Overlay Zone and the standards outlined in the Hillside Development Code. The existing topography and site features have guided the project's design including the orientation, grading and driveway. Careful consideration has been given to minimize the visual impact the proposed project will have on neighbors and the valley below. A certified arborist and licensed civil engineer are part of the project team to help ensure the success of our planning considerations.

**Structure Height**

The maximum height of the structures above finished grade is 29'-2" which is within the building height limit for this property.

**Building Site**

The building site has a slope of approximately 20%. Aside from fencing, there are no existing structures on the site. The proposed building site was chosen due to it being mostly clear of native trees for a distance that allowed the project's long axis to orient parallel to topography. The natural vegetation surrounding the building site, including mostly oak and bay trees, will remain untouched. The building site is free of surface drainage waterways or swales and any other notable natural features.

**Grading**

To minimize the grading initially proposal for this project in August of 2016, the finish floor elevations of the residence have been lowered 10-feet. The main finish floor level now sits 1.5-feet lower than the garage slab level which has been lowered 8-feet from the August proposal. To further emphasize the stepped massing, additional steps down for a 3-foot elevation change have been incorporated between the main terrace and pool terrace.

The project's long axis runs parallel to contour elevation and a balanced cut and fill approach has been utilized to integrate the separate structures into the site. On the uphill side of the property, the front of the detached garage is situated nearly flush with natural grade and the rear is cut into the hillside a maximum of 8-feet.

The slopes created by grading on the downhill side of the project are kept to a ratio of 2:1. This ensures stability and allows the graded areas to blend successfully with the natural topography.

The proposed grading is consistent with the extent of grading utilized for neighboring properties. The grading required is mitigated by the orientation of the home relative to contour elevation, the balanced cut and fill approach, the stepped massing of the detached structures and the 2:1 ratio for graded slopes.

### **Site Access and Driveway Layout**

The proposed driveway begins at the end of an existing driveway that extends approximately 200-feet from the corner of the public intersection. The proposed driveway is 16-feet wide and approximately 800-feet long. Emergency vehicle access requirements have all been observed with the proposed driveway layout including maximum distances, roadway widths, overhead clearances, and minimum radii curves. There are fire department turnouts at 400-foot increments and a turn-around at the highest point where the driveway splits between Lot 227 and Lot 228. To the greatest extent feasible, the proposed driveway is designed to follow the natural contours of the terrain to minimize the need for grading, retain natural features and minimize tree removal.

### **Design and Location of Structures**

#### **1. Siting**

The grade separations employed between the detached garage and residence allow the project to step down the natural slope and echo the fall of the land. To further assist in blending the project with the landscape, varied structure heights and setbacks are utilized. The garage maintains the required 5-foot setback while the residence maintains the required 30-foot setback. A carefully choreographed entry walkway and courtyard with an asymmetrical layout connect the two structures together while emphasizing the varied setback approach.

## 2. Form

To preserve the character and profile of the natural slope, the buildings are kept low with simple shed style roof forms in a modern farmhouse vernacular. The clean, horizontal line created by the shed style roof forms echo the shape of the contour line that the structures are aligned to follow.

## 3. Massing

Although the residence consists of two-stories, the levels are staggered to respond to the shape of the hillside. The main finish floor elevation sits nearly flush with contour elevation on the uphill side. The roof of the lower level is then used as an open deck space for the main level. The adjacent single-story detached garage helps to further soften the overall expression and blend the project into the landscape.

## 4. Material and Color

Building materials and color schemes have been selected to blend with the natural earth tones of the landscape. The wood siding proposed is gray barnwood and the base on the home is proposed as ledgestone in a gray/brown hue to provide visual grounding.

## 5. Visual Impact

The site has minimal visibility from Fourth Street East and Lovall Valley Road. The combination of low-laying simple building forms, earth toned materials and natural screening ensure that neighboring views are minimally affected by the proposed project.

## 6. Trees

The property is screened by mature trees which will remain untouched on and around the property. This natural screening helps to render the project nearly hidden from adjacent streets and neighborhoods. The expert services of a certified arborist have been included from the beginning stages of planning and will be retained throughout the duration of the project. The arborist report is included in our submittal.