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Date
14 April 2017

To
City of Sonoma
Planning Department
Rob Gjestland, Senior Planner

Subject
Narrative for Conditional Use Permit

Project Information

APN:	N/A
Address:	Brazil Street Lot 227
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 228 436 Brazil Street, APN 018-051-011 400 Brazil Street, APN 018-051-002
Proposed Main House:	5,201 square feet
Proposed Garage:	707 square feet
Total Lot Area:	2.0 Acres [87,268 square feet]
Allowable Coverage:	15% [13,090 square feet]
Proposed Coverage:	12.1% [10,524 square feet]
Allowable FAR:	10%
Proposed FAR:	5.9%
CEQA:	Categorically Exempt
Standards:	Hillside Development Historic Overlay Zone

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Project Overview
The proposed project consists of a 5,201 square foot single family residence, 707 square foot detached two car garage and swimming pool on an approximately 2.0 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'-8" 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 grading, the project's long axis runs parallel to contour elevation and a balanced cut and fill approach has been utilized. On the uphill side of the residence, minor grading is combined with low boulder retaining walls to create a natural appearance. To emphasize the stepped massing and respond to topography, the detached garage is placed 3.25-feet lower than the entry level. The entry level is then placed 1.5-feet lower than the main level. The lower level is located 12-feet beneath the main and connects to natural grade on the south elevation at the pool terrace. The front of the detached garage is situated nearly flush with natural grade and the rear is cut into the hillside a maximum of 12-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 organic 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 a combination of gable and flat style roof forms in a modern farmhouse vernacular. The clean, horizontal lines created by this approach echo the shape of the contour lines 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 charcoal colored cedar 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. Careful attention has been giving to the siting of the home between oaks and native boulders on the both the south and north sides of the home. An organic shape has been selected for the auto court walls to preserve a grouping of three oak trees on the uphill side. 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.