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CEQA Categorical Exemption Memorandum

Yount Ridge Cellar LLC Pool and Patio Viewshed Protection Program
Application #P22-00328
Zoning Administrator Hearing Date February 28, 2024



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Planning, Building & Environmental Services

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Brian D. Bordona
Director

To: Zoning Administrator From: Matt Ringel, Project Planner

Date: February 28, 2024 Re: P22-00328-VIEW; Yount Ridge Cellar LLC Pool and Patio Categorical Exemption Determination 7400 St. Helena Hwy, Napa Assessor's Parcel No. 031-130-029-000

Pursuant to Section 303 of Napa County's Local Procedures for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Planning division has prepared this environmental evaluation for the proposed Yount Ridge Cellar LLC pool and patio Viewshed Application (P22-00328-VIEW) under the Viewshed Protection Program, as defined in Chapter 18.106 of the Napa County Code.

The viewshed application proposes the removal and replacement of an existing spa, installation of a cold plunge, back deck addition, front porch addition, outdoor sauna, American Disability Act (ADA) improvements, and landscaping screening in conformance with the Viewshed Protection Program.

Existing Setting:

The project is located on an 8.17-acre parcel at 7400 St. Helena Hwy, Napa, Assessor Parcel Number 031-130-029-000. The parcel is located approximately 1.2 miles north of the Town of Yountville, on the eastern side of Highway 29. The property is within the AP (Agricultural Preserve) Zoning District and within the AR (Agricultural Resource) General Plan land use designation. The project site is located on the northeastern portion of the parcel, approximately 360 feet above mean sea level. The parcel itself has a varied terrain, with slopes exceeding 50% in undeveloped northern and eastern portions of the parcel. The entrance of the parcel begins on the Valley floor and quickly elevates to a peak of the Yountville Hills, an outcropping of hills located in the center of the Valley. Soils on site consist of Hambright-Rock outcrop complex, 2 to 30 percent slopes. The majority of the parcel is underlain by Late Tertiary Assemblages that are Andesitic to Basaltic Lava Flows.

The project parcel is developed with a single-family residence (with authorization to operate an owner occupied Bed and Breakfast), detached garage, and wine cave, in-ground spa, and deck. The surrounding land uses include vineyards, wineries, and residential development on large parcels, the nearest of which is approximately 680 feet to the east from the existing residence. The project site is located outside of the boundaries of the 100- and 500-year flood hazard zones. Existing native vegetation of the site includes Coast Live Oak habitat. Based on the information contained in Napa County's environmental maps, there are no archeological sites within one mile of the project site. The

project site is not located on any of the lists of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

CEQA Exemption Criteria and Analysis:

Article 19 of the State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines) establishes a list of classes of projects that are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA, including CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Categorical Exemption Class 1, Existing Facilities) which exempts interior and exterior alterations to existing structures and Section 15303 (Categorical Exemption Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) which exempts the construction of new structures, including single-family residences, a second dwelling unit, and appurtenant structures.

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, a Class 3 Categorical Exemption cannot be applied to projects where; (1) the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant, (2) where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances, (3) if the project would result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway, (4) the project is located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code, and (5) the project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Based upon the above analysis there is no reasonable possibility that the project or its cumulative impact would have a significant effect on the environment or damage scenic resources. The criteria for the Viewshed Protection program require that any proposed improvement be substantially screened from view from any designated scenic road and designated landforms. The proposed project includes the protection of existing screening vegetation and the planting of new vegetation to screen a significant portion (over 51%) of the proposed structure from view from any designated scenic roadway and landform. The proposed project will not be visible from any designated state scenic highway and will be screened from view from all designated viewshed landforms, such as Mount Saint John. The proposed project will not cause a substantial adverse change to a historical resource. Based on the proposed project as described above, the Yount Ridge Cellar LLC pool and patio application request meets the criteria for eligibility as a Class 1 and Class 3 Categorical Exemption from CEQA.