

STAFF REPORT
Historic and Design Review Commission
July 22, 2015

TO: Historic and Design Review Commission
FROM: Alyson Hunter, Senior Planner
DATE: July 14, 2015
SUBJECT: Consider a Large Design Review Permit for the development of up to 40 multi-family residential units and the demolition of a large equipment shed located on the southeast corner of Foster Avenue and Alliance Road, APN 505-131-014, File Number 145-074-DR2-PDP.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC):

1. Make all the Findings and Approve the Project as Conditioned; and
2. Review and Adopt the Initial Study and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration.

INTRODUCTION: The project proponent requests a Type "A" Design Review Permit to develop up to 40 multi-family residential units on the subject property and to demolish a 3,400 sf former mill-related equipment shed. The proposed residential development is not exempt from CEQA and an Initial Study and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) has been prepared for the HDRC's review and action. The applicant will develop a pedestrian trail across the western portion of the property from the southeast corner of Alliance and Foster to the Rail with Trail.

The property is ± 1.70 acres in size. The Type "A" Planned Development Permit (PDP) will be heard by the Zoning Administrator at a separate noticed public hearing.

DISCUSSION: Staff has identified the following topics for Commission review and discussion:

1. Project Compliance. The project requires Design Review, per Land Use Code (LUC) sections 9.72.040, for new multi-family development and per LUC section 9.53.060 for demolition. The Zoning Administrator (ZA) will take separate action on the Type "A" Planned Development Permit (PDP) per section 9.72.070 of the LUC. The project meets all LUC standards (see Attachment B).
2. Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard. Portions of the subject property are located within the Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone. A Fault Hazard Evaluation (LACO, April 2015) was prepared which identified the extent of the fault hazard zone. The project has been designed to adhere to the recommendation of the evaluation and all habitable structures are beyond the required 50' setback as required by the A-P Fault Zone Act. The parking lot and other open space areas are allowed uses within the fault hazard area.
3. Neighborhood Conservation Area. The property is not located within an NCA.
4. CEQA. The project is not exempt from environmental review. The proposed development requires wetland mitigation. Mitigation measures to address wetland impacts have been included in the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The Initial Study and draft MND has been circulated to the State Clearinghouse in compliance with CEQA.
5. Trail. The applicant shall dedicate a 10' wide trail easement to the City of Arcata and develop within said easement a 6' wide (average with appropriate turnouts) ADA-accessible pedestrian trail from the southeast corner of Foster and Alliance to a location on the Rail with Trail agreed upon by the Director of the City's Environmental Services Department. Trail material shall be as shown on the site plan. Trails are an allowed use in the creek and wetland setbacks.
6. Demolition. The project includes the demolition of a 3,400 sf equipment shed that was associated with the former Speiers Mill B. A 1947 photo of the site with the barn to be demolished is included as Attachment E. In May 2008, Susie van Kirk and Bill Rich surveyed the property and specifically the subject building. They determined that the building is not eligible for State or federal listing, but

does meet two of the seven eligibility criteria for Landmark designation per Section 9.53.040.B.1 of the LUC. The 2013/14 Report prepared for the Rail with Trail project notes that the structure currently lacks historical integrity. The HDRC *may* refer the item to the Historic Landmark Committee (HLC) for input on whether the structure should be considered for Landmark designation.

7. **Low Impact Development.** The project will result in 38% lot coverage and 62% open space. The plans include areas of bioswales and wetland mitigation areas, undisturbed open space, landscaping and grassy recreation areas. The Conditions of Approval require that the development meet all of the City's local and State-mandated stormwater requirements.
8. **Wetland and Creek Setbacks.** The property is encumbered by wetlands and/or wetland setbacks as well as riparian setbacks from Jolly Giant Creek. General Plan Policies RC-2 and RC-3 protect streams and wetlands, respectively, and have established setbacks and buffers that all projects must meet. Jolly Giant Creek is located 100' from the nearest proposed structure and Shay Pond, on the City's property adjacent to the south, is 50' from nearest proposed development. The project will replace disturbed wetlands through the development of a wetland mitigation area onsite. The MND requires that the mitigation plan, prepared in compliance with Section 9.59.I of the LUC, be reviewed and approved by the Environmental Services (ES) Director or his designee. The applicant will utilize the variable width setback standards in Section 9.59.050.A of the LUC.
9. **Building Design/Materials and Amenities.** Project proposes a combination of cementitious (Hardi) shingle/ horizontal siding, vinyl windows and composition shingle roofing. Each unit will have either a balcony or private patio space. One laundry room will be provided for the residents of the studios and 1-bedroom units. All buildings will be two stories, not exceeding 30' in height.

Amenities include bike and motorcycle parking, outdoor BBQ and picnic areas, a horseshoe pit, one laundry facility, centralized mail boxes, landscaped and open space area, access to the new Rail with Trail which is currently under construction, and a bus stop directly in front of the site on Foster Avenue.

Although the centralized location cannot be considered an amenity, per se, it is very centrally located to Arcata High School, Arcata Elementary School, HSU, downtown Arcata and the Plaza and the Westwood Shopping Center.

Attachments

- A. Project Plans and application materials
- B. Zoning Compliance Table
- C. Staff recommended Findings and Conditions of Approval
- D. Initial Study and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration
- E. Referral Comments
- F. Speier Mill Photo 1947

Attachment F



1947 aerial view of Speier's Mill B property, existing shop building circled, Alliance Road at right.

(Photo from JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, which prepared the Historical Resources Evaluation Report for the City's Rail with Trail Project, January 2014)