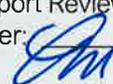


Agenda Report Reviewed by:
City Manager: 

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM

Meeting Date: March 3, 2020
To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director *KSD*
Subject: Consideration of Transmittal of Comment Letter to Sonoma County PRMD (Permit Sonoma) Regarding Revised Referral for DRH19-0006, a proposed mini-storage development at 1382 Hwy 116 South, Sebastopol
Recommendation: Authorize the Mayor to sign the comment letter
Funding: Currently Budgeted: _____ Yes _____ No X N/A
Net General Fund:
Amount: \$
Account Code/Costs authorized in City Approved Budget  (verified by Administrative Services Department)

BACKGROUND:

The City Council reviewed the Permit Sonoma referral for a proposed mini-storage project at 1382 Highway 116 South at its February 18, 2020 meeting, and directed staff to prepare a draft comment letter for consideration at the Council's March 3 meeting based on the Council's discussion. The proposed letter is attached for the Council's consideration.

Note, the Council had asked for a comparison to the Southpoint Storage use in south Sebastopol. Southpoint Storage includes 1590 storage units ranging from 3x3x3 ft to 10x30 ft in size; this project proposes 582 units varying from 5x5 ft to 10x30 ft.

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the Mayor to sign the comment letter to Permit Sonoma expressing Council's concerns.

ATTACHMENTS:

Comment letter

City Council

Mayor Patrick Slayter
Vice Mayor Una Glass
Michael Carnacchi
Sarah Glade Gurney
Neysa Hinton



March 3, 2020

Permit Sonoma
Attn: Eric Gage, Project Planner
2550 Ventura Avenue
Santa Rosa, Ca 95403-2859

Re: 1385 Hwy 116 S, Sebastopol; File No. DRH19-0006

Dear Mr. Gage:

This letter is to submit the City of Sebastopol's concerns regarding the proposed mini-storage project located within the City of Sebastopol's Sphere of Influence. While we understand that the use is a permitted use in the County, subject to Design Review and CEQA review, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the referral for this project.

While there are several discrepancies in the documents which makes it difficult to interpret the current plans (tree removal, square footage of use, etc.), the City of Sebastopol has a number of concerns with the proposed project that we believe need to be addressed as the project moves forward.

The size and scale of the project is of concern, especially as it is essential the southern gateway to the City.

While the current design includes some articulation along the easterly highway-facing frontage, the design is essentially a fortress-like design. It is critical that the design of this elevation, as well as elevations visible from neighboring properties to reduce the monotony of the very lengthy façades. Robust landscaping is needed to break up all elevations, and should include trees as well as other lower landscaping, especially along the frontage (vines on the building and other smaller plantings). Any project conditions should also require proper irrigation and maintenance to ensure these plantings survive and the landscaping is properly maintained.

Likewise, tree removal should be minimized, especially those mature trees that serve to screen the use from adjoining property owners to the north and west. Some drawings show the

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northern property line trees being removed, which is not necessary and does not allow for appropriate transitions to adjoining uses.

Regarding traffic, the City has significant concerns regarding both ingress and egress from the site. The current site presents challenges to those turning into and out of the site, and to those traveling through given the lack of a turn lane; the curved roadway at this location; and the difficulty existing the site.

The City would like to see collision data included in the traffic analysis being requested by the County Transportation Department, and any issues be addressed as part of the project. In addition to a "left turn lane", which has found to be warranted based on the applicant's analysis, a 'multi-directional center turn lane' (i.e. 'suicide lane') for those exiting the site and turning left onto Highway 116 northbound, as this is perceived as a dangerous conditions currently and should be addressed. The existing traffic counts should also be reviewed, as some of the uses on the site that are proposed to be demolished are functioning as a somewhat marginal uses, and likely do not have the vehicle traffic attributed to it in the initial assessment using a 'discount store' use for the trip generation factors. There may likely be an increase in traffic over the actual trips currently generated by the site's uses.

Additionally, the traffic study and design should consider appropriate queuing space for vehicles waiting to get into the storage unit site so that vehicles do not queue on the highway. This could be done by moving the entry to the storage use further west on the site.

Provisions should also be made for bicycle and pedestrian access across the site, not just the provision of an easement for future construction by another party. If the property were located in the City, full sidewalk/curb/gutter improvements would be required; the City feels including a multi-use path or other provision across the site frontage would be appropriate and consistent with City goals of improving access for pedestrians and bicyclists along Hwy 116, as well as users of the bus stop at the south side of the site.

Lastly, the City feels it is important for the nearby property owners to be notified given the scale of this project and potential impacts to the surrounding uses. While the County's notification includes 300 feet from the property line, the City requests you consider increasing this to 600 feet as would be required in the City.

Sincerely,

Patrick Slayter
Mayor