

Planning Commission Staff Report

May 11, 2016
Item 5.a.

- SUBJECT:** P15-0620
- APPLICANT:** Terry Townsend
- PROPERTY OWNERS:** Paul Bommarito
- PURPOSE:** Application for Design Review approval to construct an approximately 5,398-square-foot, two-story custom home on an approximately 1.97-acre parcel
- LOCATION:** 3 Winding Oaks Drive (Lot 3)
- GENERAL PLAN:** Low Density Residential and Open Space-Public Health and Safety
- SPECIFIC PLAN:** Vineyard Avenue Corridor
- ZONING:** Planned Unit Development – Hillside Residential/Open Space (PUD-HR/OS) District
- EXHIBITS:**
- A. [Draft Conditions of Approval, dated May 11, 2016](#)
 - B. [Project plans, view simulations, and color and material board dated "Received March 22, 2016"](#)
 - C. [Arborist Report prepared by HortScience, Inc. dated "February 2, 2016"](#)
 - D. [Location and noticing map](#)

BACKGROUND

The Estates on Oak Ridge Subdivision (Subdivision) is a portion of the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan area and consists of seven residential lots for custom homes and one lot for a City water tank approved in 2006 (PUD-54). Currently, Lot 1 is under construction; all other lots remain undeveloped. The Estates on Oak Ridge Architectural Design Guidelines specify the required development standards for each lot within the Subdivision, including, but not limited to, the designated development area (DDA) or building envelope, building size, building height, maximum square footage, maximum floor area ratio, landscaping, and architectural styles.

In addition to the specified development standards, all homes within the Subdivision are encouraged to conform stylistically to one of six architectural styles: Craftsman/Bay Area Traditional, Mediterranean, Monterey/Spanish Eclectic, French Country, Tuscan Farmhouse, and Tudor/English Country. Each of these styles has its own distinct architectural elements,

intended to provide visual interest and diversity within the Subdivision, but to also ensure a cohesive neighborhood design.

The property owners request Design Review approval to construct an approximately 5,398-square-foot, two-story custom home on Lot 3 of the subdivision. PUD-54 requires the Planning Commission to review and approve all future homes within the subdivision. As such, the Design Review application is before the Planning Commission for review and action.

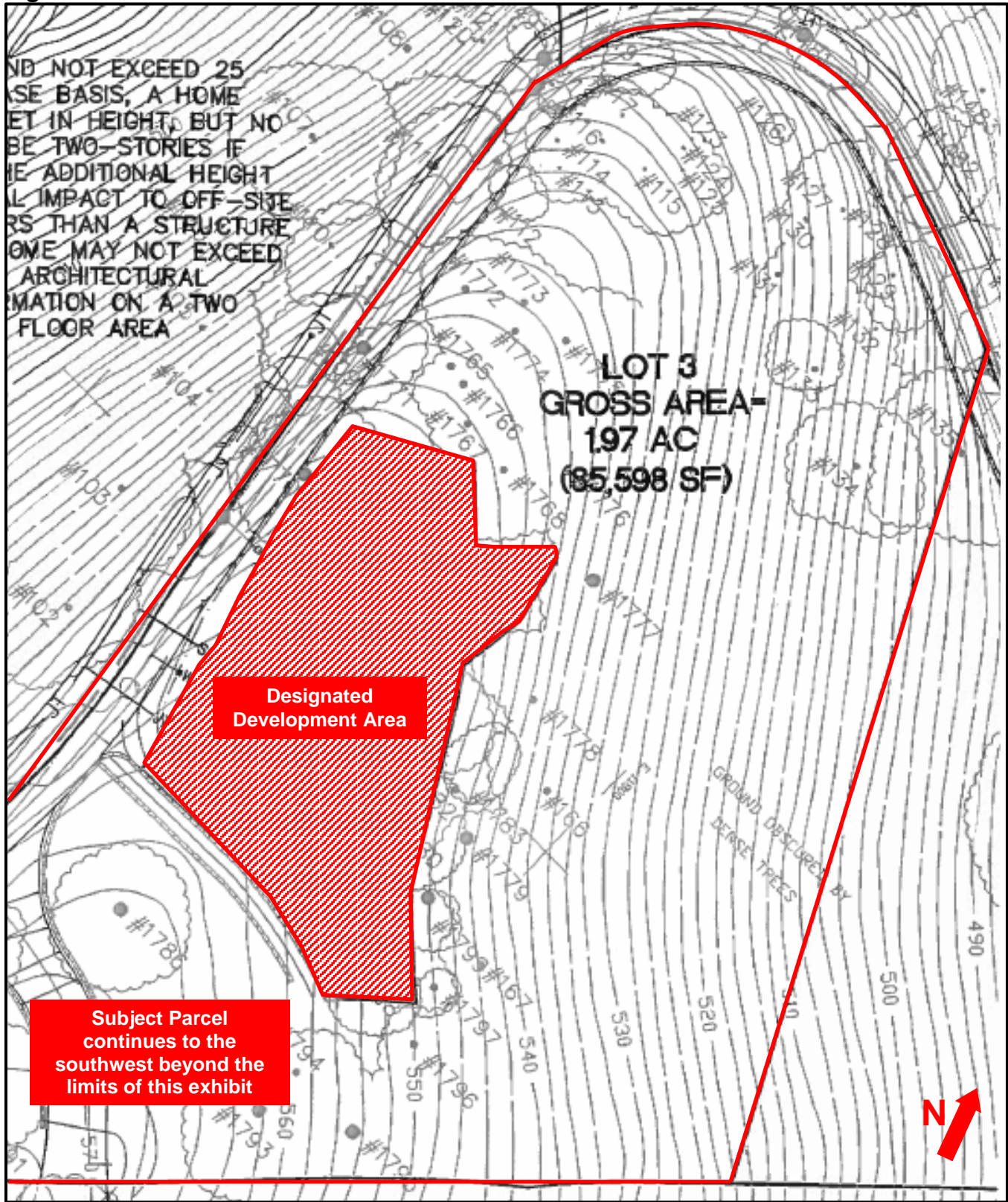
SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject site is Lot 3 or 3 Winding Oaks Drive within the Subdivision. The subject site is located on the east side of Winding Oaks Drive and is south of both Lot 1 and the subdivision entrance at the intersection of Old Vineyard Avenue and Winding Oaks Drive. The subject lot, which is currently vacant, is approximately 1.97 acres in size, irregularly-shaped and has a gradual to fairly steep downslope below the DDA generally running from the south to north/northeast. There are approximately 11 existing blue oak trees immediately adjacent to or within the DDA on the subject parcel. All of these oaks were preserved at the time the Subdivision was developed. One tree within the DDA (tree No. 11 as shown in Exhibit C) was approved for removal with the subdivision; however, the subdivision developer chose to preserve it. Twenty-six oak trees were planted on this lot as mitigation trees as part of the PUD-54 approval. Most of these mitigation trees were planted between the DDA and southerly side of the subject lot. Residential and/or open space areas generally surround the subject lot in all directions. Figure 1 shows an aerial photograph of the subject lot, and Figure 2 shows the subject lot's partial plot plan, along with the DDA.

Figure 1: Aerial Photograph of the Estates on Oak Ridge Subdivision and Lot 3



Figure 2: Lot 3 Partial Plot Plan



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant requests Design Review approval to construct an approximately 5,398-square-foot, two-story custom home. The proposed home also includes an approximately 901-square-foot garage and an 821-square-foot partially enclosed loggia at the rear. A summary of the prescribed development standards for new construction and a comparison of the subject proposal to those standards are provided below:

<i>Development Standard</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Proposed</i>
<i>Min. Setbacks</i>	No development outside of DDA	All development within DDA
<i>Max. Floor Area Ratio</i>	51%*	47.35%
<i>Max. House Size</i>	5,814 square feet**	5,398 square feet
<i>Max. Height Main House</i>	25 feet***	26 feet, 9 inches****
<i>Max. Driveway Width</i>	16 feet	16 feet
<i>Min. Garage Size/On-site Parking</i>	3 car + 2 on-site guest spaces	3 car + 2 on-site guest spaces
<i>Min. Tree Planting</i>	11 new 24-inch box trees	14 new 24-inch box trees

* The Estates on Oak Ridge Subdivision FAR is calculated by dividing the total conditioned space of each home (including garage area exceeding 700 sq. ft., but excluding non-habitable accessory structures, exterior balconies, stoops and steps, decks, and porches not enclosed on three sides) by the DDA.

** House size determined by size of the DDA multiplied by the floor area ratio (FAR).

***The height of a structure is measured vertically from the lowest finished grade adjacent to an exterior wall of a building to the highest elevation of the building, excluding chimneys and similar roof features as permitted by City R-1-40,000 District.

****A two-story home may be considered on a case-by-case basis with the following constraints: the proposed second floor area cannot be more than 20 percent of the floor area of the first floor; the proposed second floor must be “set into” the roof of the home so that the second floor walls are set back from the first floor walls; the second floor may be integrated into the roof with dormers used for windows or to provide headroom; and the height of the structure cannot exceed twenty-seven feet measured vertically.

The proposed 5,398-square-foot custom home is designed in a French Country architectural style, which typically features steep roof pitches with hip and gable elements, porches and verandas, divided-light windows, stucco walls combined with brick or stone, arched windows and shutters. The colors are primarily in the light earth tone range; the main body color is a light tan or beige; the stone veneer is a mixture of lighter and rustic earth tones, and the trim is a slightly darker tan or beige color. The roof is flat concrete tile with colors ranging from rustic earth tones to light grays.

The proposed landscape plan includes a tree/plant palette of native and non-native species that are primarily drought tolerant, as well as some hardscape features highlighted by a decorative concrete driveway and concrete paver entry walkway and patio designed to complement the stacked stone on the proposed home. There are 11 mature blue oak trees immediately adjacent to or within the DDA on the subject parcel, as well as approximately 26 younger oaks planted as mitigation trees related to the PUD-54 approval. One of the 11 existing mature oaks is proposed for removal (tree No. 11 as shown in Exhibit C). This tree is within the DDA, and as previously mentioned, was originally approved for removal with the subdivision; however, the subdivision developer chose to preserve it. Additional mature oaks exist throughout the subject parcel; however, they are not in close proximity to the DDA and will not be affected by this project.

Photo simulations showing the post-construction condition are provided in Exhibit B as required by PUD-54. As shown, the proposed home would be located on a ridgeline, but would

generally not be visible from the photo simulation locations (Thiessen Street at Vineyard Heights Lane and Vineyard Avenue at Manoir Lane) due to existing mature oak trees.

Please see the attached project plans (Exhibit B) for additional information on the subject proposal.

ANALYSIS

Design Review

The architectural design guidelines that were established by PUD-54 (Estates on Oak Ridge) address the DDA/building envelope, building size, building height, maximum square footage, maximum floor area ratio, landscaping, architectural style, and other design parameters. Below is an analysis of the subject proposal in comparison with those architectural design guidelines. Please see the project plans and view simulations in Exhibit B, and color and material board available at the hearing for additional information on the subject proposal.

Site Design

The architectural design guidelines prescribe a DDA that establishes a defined building envelope that limits development on the subject lot to that area only. As such, there are no specific setback requirements for the Subdivision.

The proposed home is sited completely within the DDA area as required. The DDA is fairly flat in relation to the other portions of the subject lot, which reduces the amount of grading necessary to accommodate the footprint of the home. By orienting the driveway approach within a flat portion of the site, minimal grading would be necessary to provide access from Winding Oaks Drive.

Architectural Design

Building Form/Massing/Materials and Color

The architectural design guidelines indicate buildings should be designed to minimize visual height and bulk. Building height, bulk, and floor area should respond to the lot size, natural site terrain, and other site conditions. Wall recesses and projections, roof overhangs, decks, porches, bay windows, dormer windows, and other architectural features are encouraged to reduce visual bulk and create interest. Buildings should be designed for consistency in massing, proportions, details, materials, and colors on all exterior walls. Roof forms should generally include traditional styles such as hip and/or gable. Brick, stucco, stone or wood is encouraged for exterior walls, while slate, concrete or clay (barrel or flat) are encouraged for roofing materials. All colors should be earthtone in nature.

The proposed home is a two-story structure with articulated wall lines that break the massing of the home and promote visual interest. The roof lines are varied to reduce the perceived massing of the structure and the entire residence incorporates stone veneer and smooth stucco.

As proposed, the exterior walls of the house will be articulated and the perceived massing of the building will be compatible with others in the neighborhood. The use of stone treatments, wall articulation and detailing will provide an attractive home for the neighborhood. The projecting front entry element adds architectural interest and the home design incorporates high quality materials and elements. The front entry and garage doors are nicely detailed and

are compatible with the design of the proposed home. In general, the architectural design and finish materials/colors are generally consistent in their interpretation of the required French Country architectural style. Figure 3 shows the proposed elevations.

Staff notes that the proposed home is two stories. Two-story structures may be considered on a case-by-case basis with the following constraints: (1) the proposed second floor area cannot be more than 20 percent of the floor area of the first floor; (2) the proposed second floor must be “set into” the roof of the home so that the second floor walls are set back from the first floor walls; the second floor may be integrated into the roof with dormers used for windows or to provide headroom; and (3) the height of the structure cannot exceed twenty-seven feet measured vertically. The project’s compliance with these provisions is analyzed below:

- As proposed, the second floor area will be approximately 664 square feet, which is approximately 14.65 percent of the first floor area (approximately 4,533 square feet).
- The second floor plan (Sheet 4 of Exhibit B), roof plan (Sheet 5 of Exhibit B), the elevations (Sheets 6-7 of Exhibit B), and Figure 3 below show that the second floor wall plane will be set back slightly from the first floor wall plane. This distance is approximately three feet, nine inches on the rear or east of the residence and approximately two feet on the left or north side of the residence. Staff notes that there are portions of the second floor wall plane that are not set back from the first floor wall plane (the two wall planes are flush); however, given the relatively small size of the second floor area, this only occurs for very short distances and staff believes this is acceptable.
- As proposed, the maximum height of the proposed residence is 26 feet, nine inches.

The second floor is located at the northeast corner of the proposed residence. Although this portion of the residence faces Vineyard Avenue, as previously described and as shown in Figure 1 above and the photo simulations in Exhibit B, the proposed residence will be constructed on a portion of the subject lot completely surrounded by mature oak trees that will substantially obscure and/or soften the visibility of the proposed residence from the surrounding areas and parcels, reducing any visual impacts.

Figure 3: Proposed Elevations



Landscaping

The architectural design guidelines prescribe a specific number of new 24-inch box trees to be planted per lot. Additionally, the architectural design guidelines indicate all hardscape elements should be carefully planned in conjunction with the site and landscaping to tie in aesthetically with the architectural style and landscape design. Materials such as stone, brick, exposed aggregate, stamped and/or colored concrete, and/or interlocking pavers are encouraged. The proposed landscape plan includes a variety of planting materials. The plan includes a tree/plant palette of native and non-native species that are mostly drought tolerant, as well as

hardscape features, including a concrete paver entry walkway and patio designed to complement the stone veneer on the proposed home.

The architectural design guidelines require a minimum of 11 new 24-inch box size trees on the subject lot. The proposed landscape plan includes a total of 14 new trees throughout the plan, all 24-inch box size. As previously discussed, one existing site tree will be removed in conjunction with this project. This tree was approved for removal with the subdivision, but was preserved by the developer; however, it is within the DDA and within the footprint of the development. The 14 new trees shown on the proposed landscape plan comply with the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan requirement that all trees to be removed be mitigated at a 6:1 replacement ratio.

Staff believes the proposed Landscape Plan will provide adequate landscaping for the site as required by the architectural design guidelines. The combination of plant materials and hardscape will add interest to the site and will also soften the appearance of the site from the surrounding parcels.

Staff is recommending a condition of approval requiring the applicant to revise the plant palette prior to the issuance of a building permit to include a significant number of water efficient plant species and more native/indigenous tree species.

Fencing and Walls

The architectural design guidelines indicate fences and walls should be considered as an extension of the architecture of the residence. They should be designed to be compatible with the total surrounding environment. Open wire and wrought iron fencing may be allowed within the DDA. Solid fencing is only permissible to screen equipment and garbage areas and is prohibited on property lines. Exposed retaining walls greater than five feet are not permitted and need to be plastered and colored to match the residence or be stone-faced.

Wire mesh, wrought iron, and solid redwood good neighbor fencing are proposed in accordance with the architectural design guidelines. A small retaining wall that ranges from zero to five and one-half feet in height is proposed at the rear of the residence. This retaining wall only exceeds the five-foot maximum at the back corner and quickly tapers back down well below the five-foot maximum for the majority of its exposed height. Due to this wall's location behind the home, staff believes a minor exception to the maximum height for a small distance is permissible, and most likely will not be visible from or create impacts on the surrounding areas or parcels. A condition of approval has been recommended requiring the retaining wall to be stone-faced to match the proposed home, as required by the architectural design guidelines.

Lighting

The architectural design guidelines specify that all exterior lighting be designed, installed and controlled to minimize lighting on the hillsides and prevent lights from pointing directly at up-hill or adjacent properties. Building up-lighting and/or wash lighting on the building is prohibited, excluding low-level lighting for pathways and entryways. In addition, wall-mounted lighting on the proposed home should be complementary to the architectural style and consistent with the architectural design guidelines.

Low voltage path and landscaping up-lighting is proposed. Staff believes the low voltage path lighting is acceptable based on the architectural design guidelines; however, the low voltage landscaping up-lighting would be inconsistent with the design guidelines in that it would be directed upward and used to highlight landscape features, contrary to the requirement of minimizing lighting on the hillside. Therefore, staff is recommending a condition of approval requiring the removal of all the landscaping up-lighting.

A second condition of approval requiring the applicant to submit design details and locations of all wall-mounted lighting on the proposed residence has also been recommended by staff. The condition requires that all wall-mounted lighting be complementary to the architectural style of the residence.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

Notices of this application were sent to surrounding property owners and tenants within a 1,000-foot radius of the site. Staff has provided the location and noticing maps as Exhibit D for reference. At the time this report was published, staff had not received any public comments about the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This project was programmatically reviewed as part of the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which was certified on June 1, 1999. Pursuant to Section 15182 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, no additional environmental review is required for residential projects that are proposed in accordance with a Specific Plan for which CEQA documentation was certified after January 1, 1980. Therefore, no environmental review document accompanies this report.

CONCLUSION

Staff has reviewed the subject proposal in accordance with the approved PUD-54 and the architectural design guidelines for the Estates on Oak Ridge Subdivision and believes the subject proposal is consistent with the regulations. Staff believes that the architectural style and design of the home are appropriate for the Vineyard Avenue Specific Plan Area.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission approve P15-0620 subject to the draft conditions of approval listed in Exhibit A.

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