

Planning Commission Staff Report

March 23, 2016

Item 6. a.

- SUBJECT:** PUD-99
- APPLICANT:** Pamela Hardy, Ponderosa Homes II, Inc.
- PROPERTY OWNERS:** John G. and Jana C. Altieri, et al.
- PURPOSE:** Application for Planned Unit Development (PUD) Development Plan to construct 19 single-family residences and related site improvements
- GENERAL PLAN:** Medium Density Residential; Open Space-Public Health and Safety/Wildland Overlay
- ZONING:** PUD-MDR (Planned Unit Development – Medium Density Residential) District
- LOCATION:** 1851 Rose Avenue
- EXHIBITS:**
- A. [Recommended Conditions of Approval](#)
 - B. [Proposed PUD Development Plan, Tree Report, Updated Geotechnical study, Investigation of Potential Waters of the United States, Noise Assessment, Golf Ball Net Study, Visual Simulations](#), and [GreenBuilding Checklist](#)
 - C. [Alameda County Fair Association Board of Directors Meeting Minutes of May 12, 2015](#)
 - D. [Public Comments](#)
 - E. [Location Map/Notification Map](#)

BACKGROUND

In February 1989, the City Council approved a PUD rezoning and development plan for the construction of 21 single-family homes on an approximately 12.3-acre site located at 1851 Rose Avenue (PUD 88-11). The PUD approval expired during the Great Recession. In 2005, approximately 3.28 acres of the original 12.3-acre site were developed as part of the adjoining property to the east (Roselyn Estates). The project site is now approximately 9.02 acres in area.

SUBJECT PROPERTY

The project site is irregularly shaped. It is bounded on the east by single-family homes (Roselyn Estates), on the south by the Alameda County Fairgrounds, and on the west and north by the Arroyo Del Valle. Figures 1a and 1b show the project site and surroundings.

The project site is currently occupied by an existing residence and several accessory structures. The house and accessory buildings are located on the eastern portion of the site. The majority of the site is undeveloped and contains the remnants of an old walnut orchard. The site is generally flat except for the slope bank along the arroyo.

Figure 1a: Project Site and Surroundings



Figure 1b: The Existing House and the Site



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant, Ponderosa Homes, proposes to demolish the existing residence built in the 1950s and accessory buildings, and construct 19 single-family homes and related improvements. The 19-lot residential development is summarized below:

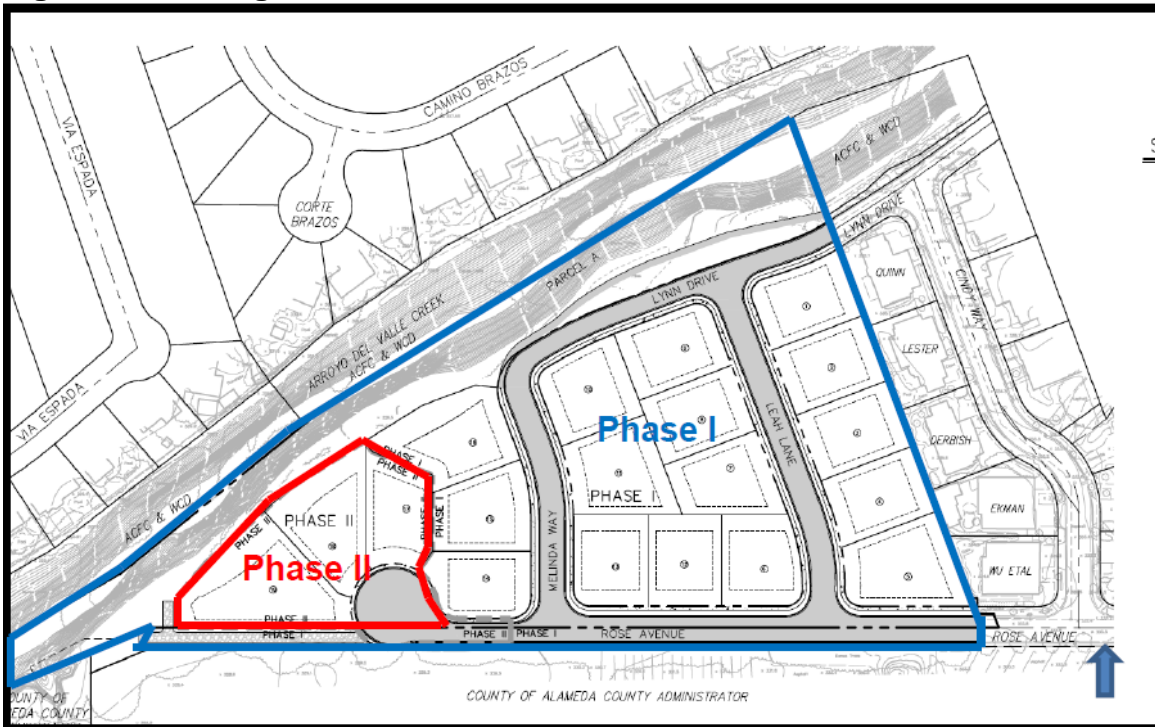
- Components of the proposal:
 - Range of Lot Sizes: 9,881 sq. ft. – 18,913 sq. ft.
 - Range of Home Sizes (living area): 3,937 sq. ft. – 4,458 sq. ft.
 - Range of Garage Sizes: 650 sq. ft. – 847 sq. ft.
 - Range of FARs¹: 23% - 45%
 - Building Height²: 32 ft.

¹ Excluding 600 sq. ft. of garage area.

² Building height is measured from the finished grade adjacent to the house to the highest point of the roof excluding chimneys.

The existing driving range at the Alameda County Fairgrounds is located to the south of the project site. Golf balls have been exiting the fairgrounds and landing in the western portion of the project site. The applicant proposes to construct this 19-lot development in two phases. Phase I development would start if the project is approved. Phase II development would not occur until the driving range ceases operation. Figure 2 shows the proposed phased development.

Figure 2: Phasing Plan



Phase I (Lots 1-16) development includes:

- Construct 16, two-story homes.
- Construct two house models with three elevation variations for each: Berkeley, Craftsman, and Kensington.
- Construct two public streets: Leah Lane would provide access for Lots 1-9 and Melinda Way would provide access to Lots 10-16. Both streets would be 32-feet wide with parking on both sides of the street.
- Extend Rose Avenue to the west of Melinda Way and terminate Rose Avenue along the side of Lot 14.
- Extend the existing trail from the Roselyn Estates development to the west and connect to the sidewalk of Melinda Way.
- Erect an approximately 45-foot tall golf ball fence/net structure behind Lots 14-16 to prevent errant golf balls at the Fairgrounds' driving range from entering the backyards of homes. The golf ball fence/net structure will be maintained by the applicant or its agent.
- Plant screen trees behind Lots 14-16.
- Install on-site improvements, including curbs/gutters, sidewalks, bio-retention areas, and landscaping.
- Install off-site improvements, including water and sanitary sewer line extensions connecting the project to City infrastructure on Valley Avenue via Alameda County Fairgrounds.
- Construct a gravel road along the south side of the remainder parcel for access to the proposed stormwater system.
- Retain the arroyo that is located within the project site and limit development to the outside of the creek bank.
- Extend the existing six-foot tall precast wall located on the south side of Rose Avenue at the fairgrounds.
- Create a 1.49-acre remainder parcel for the Phase II development. The remainder parcel would be owned by the Altieris until it is ready to be developed.

Phase II (Lots 17-19) development includes:

- Construct three homes with the same models as Phase I.
- Extend Rose Avenue to provide access to Lots 17-19. Rose Avenue would end in a cul-de-sac.
- Remove the golf ball fence/net structure.
- Remove the screen trees, if desired by the owner of Lot 17.

A homeowners association (HOA) would be established for this 19-lot development. The HOA would take ownership and maintenance responsibilities for the arroyo that is located within the project site, bio-retention areas, street trees, etc. The specific responsibilities of the HOA would be detailed in the Conditions, Covenants & Restrictions (CC&Rs).

An arborist report prepared for the project surveyed a total of 239 trees comprising 13 species within the development area. The report recommends preservation of 16 trees including 12 heritage-sized trees and removal of 223 trees, including 126 heritage-sized trees. The

trees to be preserved are located along the southern bank of the arroyo. The report is attached as Exhibit B.

A Vesting Tentative Map application has also been submitted to subdivide the existing 9.02-acre site into 18 parcels--16 residential lots (Phase I), one reminder parcel (for the future Phase II development), and one common area parcel (Parcel A). The Vesting Tentative Map would be subject to review and action by the Planning Commission following the processing of the proposed PUD development plan.

ANALYSIS

General Plan Compliance

The General Plan Land Use designation for the Arroyo Del Valle is Open Space – Public Health and Safety and Wildland Overlay. The non-creek portion of the subject site is designated Medium Density Residential (MDR) in the General Plan. The MDR designation allows a density of 2 to 8 dwelling units per acre (DU/AC). The General Plan states that major arroyos are not to be counted as part of residentially designated gross developable acreage. Excluding the arroyo area, the site has approximately 7.01 gross developable acres, resulting in a density of 2.7 DU/AC, which is consistent with the General Plan.

Proposed Development Plan

Lot Size

During the planning process of previous developments along Rose Avenue west of Fair Street, the City Council and Planning Commission have directed that development along Rose Avenue maintain the existing rural character of the area through the creation of large single-family lots of at least 10,000 square feet in size. As proposed, all lots, except for one, meet the 10,000 square foot minimum lot size. The smallest lot is approximately 9,881 square feet, 119 square feet shy of 10,000 square feet.

One of the purposes of a PUD is to provide greater flexibility in the design of integrated developments than is otherwise possible through strict application of zoning regulations. The intent of the proposed PUD development plan is to encourage the design of a well-planned residential development through creative planning. For example, there are lots within the Nolan Farm development and Roselyn Estates that are slightly under 10,000 square feet in size. As such, a proposed PUD development plan with only one lot just 119 square feet shy of 10,000 square feet is acceptable to staff, particularly when considering that almost one acre of the parcel is not developable due to the arroyo.

Site Development Standards

The proposed development standards are similar to the previously approved developments along Rose Avenue. Table 1 shows the proposed development standards compared to some of the previously-approved developments along Rose Avenue and R-1-10,000 zoning district.

Table 1: Comparison of Site Development Standards

	R-1-10,000	Nolan Farm	Calico Lane	Roselyn Estates (PUD-38 and PUD-94)	Proposed Development
Front Setback					
Living Area/House	23	20	20	20	20
Covered Porch	12	12	15	15	15
Garage (Front Facing)	23	20	23	20	25
Garage (Side Entry)	15	n/a	15 (If one story)	15 (Lot 8 of PUD-38 only)	n/a
Rear Yard Setback					
Living Area/House	20		20	20	30 (Lots 1-5) 20 (Lots 6-17) Creek setback (Lots 18-19)
Side Yard Setback	5 min./20 combined	10 min./20 combined 5/15 Affordable lots only		10 min./20 combined	10 min./20 combined (lot 16: to the creek setback line)
Height	30 ft. max	30ft.-10 in. ¹	22 (one-story) ¹ 30 (two-story) ¹	24 (one-story) ¹ 32 (two-story) ¹	32
FAR	40% (max.) ²	40% (max.) ²	40% (max.) ³	40% (max.) ³	45% ²

- 1) Height is measured from the lowest finished grade adjacent to the house to the highest point of the roof excluding chimneys.
- 2) FAR for R-1-10,000 District exclude garage area.
- 3) Excluding up to 600 square feet of garage area.

The Nolan Farm, Roselyn Estates, and Calico Lane developments varied from the R-1-10,000 standards in regard to the setbacks, minimum lot size, building height measurement, and FAR calculation. The proposed PUD would have similar setbacks and building height as these developments on Rose Avenue.

Site Layout and Site Improvements

The proposed development would extend Lynn Drive to the west, following the alignment of the Arroyo. As it turns southerly to connect to Rose Avenue, it becomes Melinda Way. Leah Lane would be located to the east of Melinda Way, connecting Rose Avenue with the extended Lynn Drive.

Separated sidewalks (i.e., sidewalks which are separated from the street by a planting strip, including trees) are proposed. Separated sidewalks are common in residential areas, and are a fundamental principle of good design. The proposed separated sidewalks would be compatible with the street design of the surrounding residential developments.

Home Design

The proposed “Craftsman”, “Kensington” and “Berkeley” models would be compatible with the style of homes found in the existing developments along Rose Avenue. Figure 3 shows the front elevations of Plan 1. Staff finds the stucco, siding, and stone wall materials, composition shingles, garage doors, window shutters, and porch posts to be compatible with the design of adjacent neighborhoods. Window treatments are traditional in appearance and would enhance the building exteriors. The applicant has provided architectural detailing and accent relief on the building elevations to break up the two-story facades and provide visual relief. Staff believes that the proposed color schemes would be compatible with the house colors in the existing homes in the vicinity.

Figure 3: Front Elevations of Plan 1





Staff generally believes that the building designs are attractive and that the architectural styles, finish colors, and materials will complement the surrounding development.

Please refer to Exhibit B for additional elevations.

Grading and Urban Stormwater Runoff

The subject site slopes gradually down to the arroyo. Minor grading is proposed to prepare the home foundations and to direct stormwater runoff to the proposed bio-retention basins. No retaining walls are proposed between lots.

Stormwater runoff would be collected and conveyed through bio-retention basins located on the north side of the extended Lynn Drive, and on the south side of Rose Avenue. Stormwater would be conveyed through underground piping to a proposed energy dissipater outfall into the arroyo. Staff finds the proposal is acceptable.

Sewer Infrastructure

Wastewater from existing development in the area flows east towards a sanitary sewer main near Fair Street. To avoid the need for a pump station to move wastewater from the project site to the existing Fair Street main, the applicant would install a new sanitary sewer line from the project site through the Fairgrounds, to existing lines on Valley Avenue. Because this new line would also carry wastewater from other residential areas in the vicinity of the project site, pro-rata contributions for the infrastructure have already been collected and would be used for construction of the new infrastructure.

Geotechnical and Creek Bank Stability Analysis

The northerly portion of property lies within the Arroyo Del Valle channel bottom and embankment. A geotechnical engineering consulting group analyzed the slope stability of the creek bank and geotechnical hazards of the project site. The consultant concluded that the project site is suitable for the proposed development and provided recommendations and guidelines for the foundation and retaining wall designs.

Staff has reviewed the report and found it is acceptable; however, staff requests that additional testing to be performed in the proposed bio-retention area located between the arroyo and the proposed Lynn Drive to determine the existence of any soil that could compromise the integrity of the bio-retention area and the slope bank. Staff has included a condition of approval to address this item.

Arborist Report and the Proposed Landscape Plan

An arborist report was prepared by HortScience. It surveyed a total of 239 trees, representing 13 species within the development area. The report stated that 13 trees are dead; 182 trees are in poor condition; 39 trees are in fair condition; and five are in good condition. Of the 239 surveyed trees, 138 trees are heritage-sized trees. The report recommends preservation of 16 trees (12 of which are heritage-sized trees) and removal of 223 trees (126 of which are heritage-sized trees).

The 2005-2025 General Plan states the following regarding tree removal:

Policy 2: Preserve heritage trees throughout the Planning Area.

Program 2.1: Strongly encourage preservation of heritage trees; where preservation is not feasible, the City will require tree replacement or a contribution to the Urban Forestry Fund. Allow no net loss of trees.

The proposed landscape plan shows that 68 street trees and approximately 38 front yard trees would be planted in the project. The proposed planting includes various species, such as marina, southern magnolia, purple-leaf plum, Bradford pear, live oak, valley oak, white alder, European hornbeam Leyland cypress, and Saratoga laurel. The proposed street trees would be 24-inch box size and other trees would be either 24-inch box or 15-gallon size.

In the past, the Planning Commission and/or City Council have attempted to discourage tree loss in developments by adding an extra requirement to contribute the value of the removed trees to the City's Urban Forestry Fund. The Urban Forestry Fund is used to plant new trees in the City as well as to promote conservation and public education about urban forest. Staff normally tries to mitigate tree removal by requiring additional trees be planted on the site beyond what is normally required in production home developments (i.e., street trees and other trees installed in the front yards). In some developments, tree mitigation is required at a 6:1 ratio for each tree removed with a certain percentage of those trees being box-sized.

The proposed landscape plan for both phases does not include any additional trees beyond what is typically required for a residential development. There is little room on each lot for additional tree planting. Staff has included a condition that requires the applicant to mitigate the removal of the heritage trees that are in fair and better than fair condition by making a payment to the Urban Forestry Fund. Also, should the applicant increase the size of some or all of the trees that are presently shown on the landscape plan, staff would support reducing the payment to the Urban Forestry Fund proportionately.

Noise Assessment

The City's General Plan requires new projects to meet acceptable exterior and interior noise level standards. For single-family residential development, private yard areas excluding front yards cannot exceed 60 day/night average decibels (dB L_{dn}) and indoor noise levels cannot exceed 45 dB L_{dn} .

A noise assessment study was prepared by Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. to analyze noise created primarily by activities from the fairgrounds. Ambient noise data in and around the project site were collected in November 2015. To ascertain noise generated by the fairgrounds during the Alameda County Fair, the consultant used data collected during the Alameda County Fair in 1998 for the adjoining Roselyn Estates development. As the activities during the fair have remained similar between 1998 and now (i.e., horse racing, bands and concerts, carnivals, fireworks, etc.), staff believes the previous data is still valid to use to assess existing noise conditions.

The noise study stated that the ambient noise from the activities at the fairgrounds during the fair would, during a worst-case situation, reach 57 dB L_{dn} , meeting the General Plan exterior noise requirements. Staff has included a condition requiring disclosure to future homeowners of the activities at the fairgrounds.

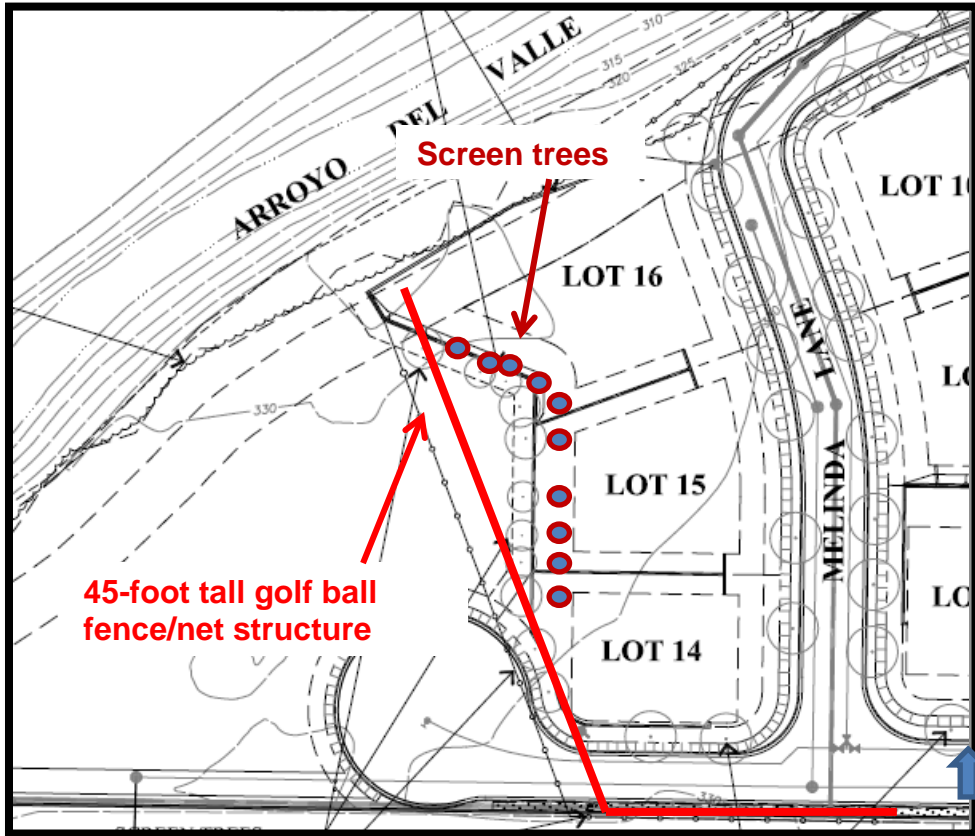
Driving Range Golf Ball Trajectory Study

The project site is approximately 390 feet from the tees at the driving range and golf balls have been landing on the western portion of the project site. To protect the proposed residential development from being hit by golf balls from the driving range, a fence/net structure to block the balls would need to be erected. A golf ball trajectory study was prepared by Tanner Consulting Group (TCG), attached as Exhibit B. TCG completed a statistical study of golf ball trajectories at the current tee location as well as at the range landing area. The study includes four golf ball fence/net structure design options with golf ball fence/net heights at 135 feet (Options 1 and 2), 45 feet (Option 3), and 80 feet (Option 4) based on the net location.

Option 3 is proposed by the applicant (and is the option supported by staff) because it would be the least visually-obtrusive option. Option 3 entails delaying construction of Lots 17-19 and constructing a 45-foot tall golf ball fence/net structure behind Lots 14-16. The construction of Lots 17-19 would be delayed until the operation of the driving range at the fairgrounds ceases in approximately 18 years. To mitigate the visual impacts of the net, the applicant proposes to install screen trees near the rear property lines of Lots 14-16 (on future Lot 17) with a minimum size of 15 gallons. The golf ball fence/net structure will be constructed by the applicant and maintained by the applicant and its agent. The screen trees will be planted by the applicant and maintained by the HOA until Lots 17-19 are constructed. When the operation of the driving range ceases, the applicant or future developer will remove the fence/net structure. As the planted screen trees would be located on Lot 17, the owner(s) of Lot 17 could decide either to retain or remove the screen trees subject to the heritage tree requirement, if applicable. The development's HOA would no longer be responsible for the maintenance of these trees. Figure 4 shows the locations of the golf ball fence/net structure (Option 3) and screen trees.

Visual simulations from three viewpoints were prepared to assess the visibility of the netting. The visuals were prepared with the screen trees. The visuals show that the netting could be seen from areas on the north side of the arroyo, from Rose Avenue, and remotely from Valley Avenue. The appearance of the netting would be similar to that of the existing netting at the City's Callippe Preserve Golf Course. The visual simulations are attached in Exhibit B.

Figure 4: Golf Ball Fence/Net Structure and Screen Tree Locations



PUD DEVELOPMENT PLAN FINDINGS

The Pleasanton Municipal Code sets forth the purposes of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) District and the considerations to be addressed in reviewing a PUD development plan proposal. The Planning Commission must make the following findings that the proposed PUD development plan conforms to the purposes of the PUD District, before making its recommendation.

- 1. **Whether the proposed development plan is in the best interests of the public health, safety, and general welfare:**

The proposed project, as conditioned, meets all applicable City standards concerning public health, safety, and welfare. The subject development would include the installation of all required on-site and off-site utilities, with connections to municipal systems in order to serve the new lots. The project will not generate volumes of traffic that cannot be accommodated by existing City streets and

intersections in the area. The structures would be designed to meet the requirements of the California Building Code, California Fire Code, and other applicable City codes. The proposed development is compatible with the adjacent uses and would be generally consistent with the existing scale and character of the area. Adequate setbacks would be provided between the new dwellings and the existing structures on the adjacent properties. Therefore, the proposed PUD development plan is in the best interests of the public health, safety, and general welfare.

2. Whether the proposed development plan is consistent with the Pleasanton General Plan and applicable specific plan:

The proposed development includes the removal of the existing residence and accessory buildings and construction of a total of 19 new residential lots on an approximately 9.02-acre site. The proposed density of 2.7 dwelling units per acre conforms to the General Plan density range for the Medium Density Residential land use designation. The proposed project would further General Plan Programs and Policies encouraging new housing to be developed in infill areas that are adjacent to existing residential developments. Thus, the proposed development plan is consistent with the City's General Plan.

3. Whether the proposed development plan is compatible with the previously developed properties in the vicinity and the natural, topographic features of the site:

Surrounding properties include single-family homes, Alameda County Fairgrounds, and an arroyo. As conditioned, staff believes that the proposed residential lots and homes would be compatible with the surrounding uses, as the basic site layout and architecture would not be substantially different from that of surrounding neighborhoods. The subject property has relatively flat terrain except for the creek bank on the north side. Grading of the lots has been limited to the creation of pads for the future homes and to achieve the proper functioning of utilities and the creek bank on the north side of the project site. Therefore, the PUD development plan is compatible with previously developed properties and the natural, topographic features of the site.

4. Whether grading in conjunction with the proposed development plan takes into account environmental characteristics and is designed in keeping with the best engineering practices to avoid erosion, slides, or flooding, and to have as minimal an effect upon the environment as possible:

As described above, the site would be graded to create the needed building pad areas. Erosion control and dust suppression measures will be documented in the improvement plans and will be administered by the City's Building and

Engineering Divisions. The site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The flood hazard maps of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) indicate that the proposed residential development on the subject site is not located in a flood hazard zone.

5. Whether streets, buildings, and other manmade structures have been designed and located in such manner to complement the natural terrain and landscape:

The project site is in a developed area of the City. The proposed homes will be compatible in size and scale with the existing homes in the neighborhood. The arborist report prepared for the proposed development surveyed a total of 239 trees and recommends the removal of all except for 16 trees that are located on the creek bank. Staff has included a condition requiring the payment into the City's Urban Forestry Fund to mitigate the removal of the trees.

6. Whether adequate public safety measures have been incorporated into the design of the proposed development plan:

Two public streets would provide access to and from the site. The existing Lynn Drive and Rose Avenue would be extended to connect the proposed development with the existing residential neighborhoods. The new homes would be equipped with automatic residential fire sprinklers. The homes would be required to meet the requirements of applicable City codes, and State of California energy and accessibility requirements.

7. Whether the proposed development plan conforms to the purposes of the PUD District:

The proposed PUD development plan conforms to the purposes of the PUD district. One of these purposes is to allow for creative design of projects that takes into account site constraints. The proposed project would help to implement the purposes of the PUD ordinance. Through the PUD process the proposed project has provided the applicant and the City with a development plan that optimizes the use of this site in a reasonably sensitive manner.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A sewer lift station was originally proposed as part of the project. Roselyn Homeowners Association (RHOA) questioned the ownership and location of the lift station, and raised concerns regarding the funding of the lift station. The RHOA also commented on the proposed outfall into the creek and creek bank maintenance, vehicles speeding on Rose Avenue, use of well water for irrigation, and house design. The proposal has

been revised a few times since the letter was received. The current proposal does not include the sewer lift station; the proposed development would establish its own HOA and maintain the arroyo within the project site. Staff believes that RHOA's comments have been addresses through project revisions and/or conditions of approval.

Public notices were sent to all property owners and tenants within a 1,000-foot radius of the project site, including the project site. Bertram Robarts, resident at 2157 Camino Brazos, contacted staff and indicated he opposes the proposed residential development as it would bring additional traffic to the area, impact existing schools, and may result in an increase in crime. Debra and John Griffith, residents at 2380 Via Espada emailed staff, opposing the

proposed development. The Griffith stated that they bought their property for the privacy, quiet location and the beauty of the creek and walnut trees all along the back side. The proposed development would ruin their neighborhood and replace their views with more homes.

Staff has not received other comments or concerns from any of the adjacent owners or tenants.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

A Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) was prepared for the Housing Element update in 2011. The project site was part of Housing Element update. The proposed development is substantially consistent with the 2011 Housing Element update, which was analyzed in the SEIR. No new information or changed circumstances have occurred that would require supplemental environmental review, pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15162. Therefore, no environmental document accompanies this report.

CONCLUSION

Staff believes that the proposed project is in keeping with the existing residential developments on Rose Avenue. The homes are attractive and the architectural style, finish colors, and materials will complement the surrounding developments. Staff, therefore, believes that the proposed development merits a favorable recommendation from the Planning Commission.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission forward Case PUD-99 to the City Council with a recommendation of approval by taking the following actions:

1. Find that the anticipated environmental impacts of the proposed development are adequately evaluated in the Environmental Impact Report prepared for the 2011 Housing Element update and that none of the conditions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 calling for preparation of subsequent environmental review have occurred;
2. Make the PUD findings for the proposed development plan as listed in the staff report;
3. Adopt a resolution recommending approval of the PUD development plan to construct 19 detached single-family homes and related site improvements on separate lots, subject to the conditions of approval listed in Exhibit A, and forward the application to the City Council for public hearing and review.

Primary Author:

Jenny Soo, Associate Planner, 925-931-5615 or jsoo@cityofpleasantonca.gov

Reviewed/Approved By:

Steve Otto, Senior Planner

Adam Weinstein, Planning Manager

Gerry Beaudin, Community Development Director