



DATE: April 23, 2024

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Daniel Harrison, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: Recommendation to the City of Petaluma Planning Commission to Conduct a Public Hearing and Consider a Recommendation to Approve Site Plan and Architectural Review (SPAR) for the Proposed Mallison-Way Residence Project Located at 118 Kimberly Way; APN 008-630-043; City Record No. PLSR-2023-0016

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission conduct a public hearing and consider a recommendation to approve Site Plan and Architectural Review (SPAR) for construction of a new two-story, single-family residence and associated site improvements on an undeveloped parcel located at 118 Kimberly Way within the boundary of the South Hills Subarea of the General Plan and referred to as Lot 1 of Phase III of the Country Club Estates Unit 2a and 3a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

BACKGROUND

Project Summary

On September 12, 2023, applicant Jeff Farrell, Architect, submitted a SPAR application proposing new construction of a \pm 3,498 Square Foot (SF), two-story, single-family detached residence with an attached garage and a 450 SF deck on an undeveloped \pm 0.18-acre parcel located within the Country Club Estates Planned Unit Development (very low residential) and within the boundary of the South Hills Subarea of the General Plan. The undeveloped project site features an average slope of \pm 16.4 percent with few trees and little vegetation. The proposed two-story residence would be 24 feet in height above natural grade, as measured to the highest point of the roof, and would contain four bedrooms, an attached two-car garage, and a deck. The main floor would be approximately 1,743 SF and include a partially covered deck, with a lower level partially set into the hillside of approximately 1,292 SF, including ground floor living space and a 463 SF garage. Pursuant to the Implementing Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 16 - Hillside Protection, Site Plan, and Architectural Review (SPAR) is required for new development within the South Hills Subarea.

Project Location

The project site is located on an approximately 0.18-acre parcel in the southeast portion of the city within the Country Club Estates Planned Unit Development, which is a 43-lot single-family subdivision established in three Phases (II, III, and IV) in 1992 with an additional Phase (Phase V) approved in 2000. The subdivision is situated between McNear Avenue to the north and the City boundary and Petaluma Golf and Country Club to the south. The site is generally surrounded by single-family homes and open space areas (see **Figure 1**).

The undeveloped project site is oriented to the north/northeast and fronts Country Club Drive. A private drive extending from Kimberly Way, which connects to Country Club Drive further east of the site, provides access to the site. The lot measures 114.36' deep by 58.04' deep. The subject parcel is currently vacant and has an average slope of approximately 16 degrees as it drops down from a private access drive in the rear of the lot to Country Club Drive, with most of the site containing slopes over 15 percent. A 10-foot-deep public utility easement extends from the rear lot line and runs across the rear of the lot, precluding development within the easement area. The lot is accessed via a private drive access easement across 122 Kimberly Way, which is a flag lot. The site is laid out logically to accommodate the lot's slope and avoid unnecessary grading or encroachment into easements.

Figure 1: Bird's Eye View of Site



Source: Project Plans - Sheet C1, September 13, 2023

Prior Approvals

The 1992 City Council approvals that enabled the development of the Country Club Estates Units 2a and 3a Planned Unit Development included the following:

- City Council Resolution 92-287 N.C.S., approving the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
- City Council Resolution 92-299 N.C.S., approving the PUD standards and design guidelines, subject to conditions contained therein.
- City Council Resolution 92-300 N.C.S., approving the Tentative Subdivision Map for the Country Club Estates Unit 2a and 3a Subdivision.
- City Council Resolution 93-137 N.C.S., approving the Final Map for the Country Club Estates Unit 2a and 3a Subdivision.

In addition to the approvals discussed above, the project site was subject to a Lot Line Adjustment (City File No. LLA01007), which reduced the property size by approximately 733 square feet from 8,500 square feet to 7,767 square feet. The east side of the parcel was adjusted to accommodate the development of a new single-family home at the abutting parcel, presently addressed as 114 Kimberly Way. The proposed development is subject to all conditions of approval relating to these approval actions. The draft SPAR Resolution includes conditions explicitly related to the project (see **Attachment 1**).

Regulatory Context

General Plan

The project site has a General Plan Land Use Designation of Very Low Density Residential (RVL), which allows for a residential density range between 0.6 and 2.5 dwelling units per acre (see **Figure 2** below). The project site is less than one-quarter of an acre and allows for a residential density of 0.15 to 0.65 units. As described in the General Plan, densities are stated as the number of housing units per acre of developable land, provided that at least one dwelling unit may be built on each existing legal parcel designated for residential use. As such, the subject parcel allows one single-family dwelling.

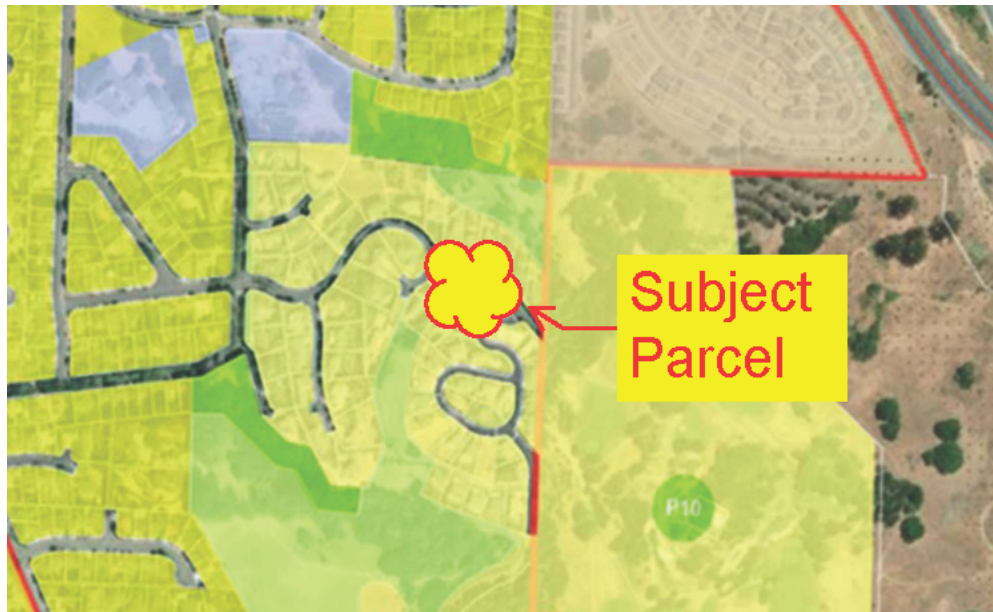
The site is also located within the South Hills Planning Subarea of the General Plan, which is characterized by constrained, steep, grassy slopes, open land, wildlife, large oak trees, natural streams, and low housing density. This Subarea serves as a transition between Petaluma's denser downtown and the rural residential uses, agricultural activities, and grazing land beyond the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

Zoning

The project site is located within the Country Club Estates Unit 2a and 3a Planned Unit Development, which was approved by the City Council in 1992. The stated objective of the PUD is to promote development sensitive to the environment and natural topography. The PUD guidelines recognize the unique features of individual lots and set forth development standards that reinforce the preservation of the natural environment as a priority. **Figure 3** below shows

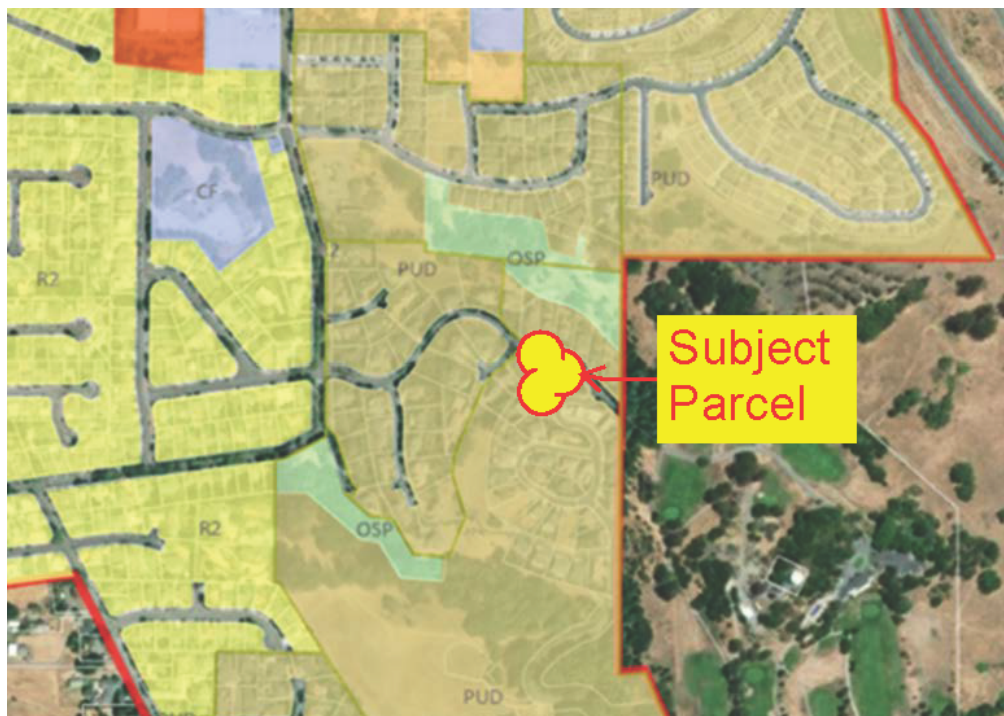
zoning designations for the project site and surrounding zoning districts, including the Riverview PUD and Lomas PUD to the north and Country Club Estates 1b PUD to the west.

Figure 2: General Plan Land Use



Source: City GIS, March 26, 2024

Figure 3: Zoning District



Source: City GIS, March 26, 2024

Project Description

Site Plan

The Mallison-Way Residence project proposes developing a detached single-family residence with a detached garage and associated site improvements. The project proposes constructing a new two-story, 3,035-square-foot single-family home on Lot 1 of Phase III of the Country Club Estates Unit 2a and 3a PUD. The residence would contain four bedrooms, an attached two-car garage, a partially covered upper deck, and a covered lower deck. The two-story primary structure would be constructed at 24.0 feet above the natural grade at its highest peak and would be all-electric.

Vehicular access to the proposed residence would be provided via a new curb cut and driveway extending from the private driveway to the attached garage, extending a total length of approximately 36 feet through the project site. The driveway would slope downward toward Country Club Drive at an approximately 16-degree average slope and would measure 20 feet in width with 1-foot shoulders on either side. As proposed, the project also includes pedestrian access from Country Club Drive. Pedestrians could access the residence via a new gravel path extending from Country Club Drive. This pedestrian path will feature timber steps, decorative stone cobbles, and native landscaping.

Elevations

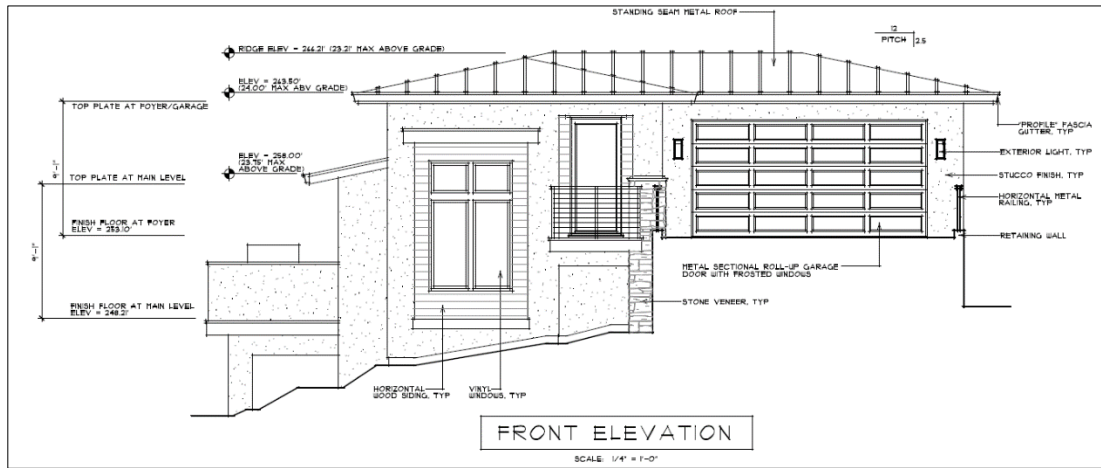
Exterior materials include stone veneer and stucco siding of varying light shades. Proposed window frames and guardrails feature a black accent color. The entry door located at the south elevation features a chestnut finish. Garage doors at the west elevation will be painted light gray to match the adjacent light gray stucco siding. Retaining walls are proposed to be stone veneers and are intended to blend in with the residence, creating a cohesive appearance. The exposed height of the retaining walls is 3 feet from grade. As proposed, the retaining wall along the northern elevation includes a 4-foot guardrail on top of the retaining wall. The guardrail is designed to match the retaining wall and stone veneer accent featured throughout all elevations of the residence (See **Attachment 3** - Color and Materials Board.)

The overall structure is designed to step with the natural slope of the lot. The primary entrance located at the south elevation is designed to be one story and is oriented towards the private driveway stemming from Kimberly Way, which is typical of other lots along the same drive. The second-floor area appears smaller than the first-floor area, which helps to reduce the overall massing of the structure by creating the appearance of a larger base and a smaller top. In addition, approximately one-quarter of the second-floor area is reserved for the partially covered deck, which reduces the massing of the structure by providing an open area that appears as one level from the street below and provides variation in the vertical building plane at the north elevation.

The placement of the open deck opposite the entry provides visual interest fronting Country Club Drive. This creates activity at the residence's established rear rather than turning the structure away from Country Club Drive. Each elevation is articulated with varying roof heights, window configurations, and exterior materials. The use of stone veneer at the base of the structure on the north and east elevations provides a break in the vertical plane by introducing a horizontal element. Stucco siding at all elevations varies in color, using light gray at the base, medium gray at the

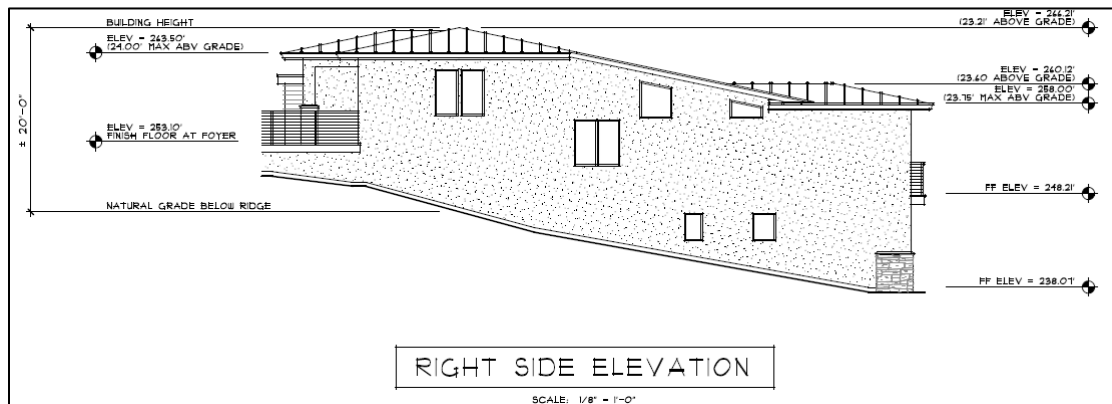
center, and dark gray at the top. The variation in building setbacks, roof heights, materials, and colors provided articulation at all elevations.

Figure 4: South Elevation (entry facing Kimberly Way)



Source: Project Plans, Sheet 1, September 13, 2023

Figure 5: North Elevation (facing Country Club Drive)



Source: Project Plans Sheet 1, September 13, 2023

Figure 6: West Elevation



Source: Project Plans Sheet 1, September 13, 2023

Figure 7: Rear Elevation



Source: Project Plans - Sheet A6.2, July 7, 2023

Floor Plan

The ground floor area is approximately 1,292 square feet. The upper floor is approximately 2,656 square feet inclusive of the first-floor living space (1,743 SF), attached two-car garage (463 SF), and covered lower deck (450 SF). The floor plan is logically designed and allows residents and visitors, including those with mobility restrictions, to easily flow through the space.

Colors and Materials

The project proposes colors and materials that are consistent with the transitional contemporary style of the new residence. The proposed materials include corrugated metal roofing painted in matte black, stucco finish in fossil, chestnut wood painted siding, black “bean” for the stair and deck railings, and aluminum window frames and window trim in black.

Landscaping, Lighting, and Fencing

The project proposes minimal landscaping of the site. It includes preserving all existing trees on site, including native shrubs. Other landscape features include planting one [1] Coast Live Oak, two [2] Japanese Maples, and a number of drought-tolerant shrubs, groundcovers, perennials, and low-water native California plants. The proposed lighting will be hooded and downward cast in accordance with City requirements. As proposed, the project does not include fencing.

DISCUSSION

The project is subject to the following standards of review:

- Petaluma General Plan 2025
- Implementing Zoning Ordinance, including:
 - IZO Chapter 16 (Hillside Protection)
 - IZO Chapter 17 (Tree Preservation)
 - IZO Section 24.050 (Site Plan and Architectural Review)
- Petaluma Municipal Code Chapter 17.14 (Residential Visitability and Universal Design)

Staff analysis is provided in *italics* below each applicable standard.

General Plan

Policy 1-P-2 Use land efficiently by promoting infill development, at equal or higher density and intensity than surrounding uses.

The proposed project represents an efficient use of land in that it proposes the development of a new single-family residence on an existing undeveloped property designated for low-density residential development. The project's density is consistent with the General Plan designation, and its design is consistent with surrounding properties. As such, the project is consistent with this General Plan policy.

Policy 1-P-3 Preserve the overall scale and character of established residential neighborhoods.

The project is consistent with the neighborhood's existing scale and character as it proposes a new single-family dwelling within a neighborhood consisting of other single-family dwellings. Development of the undeveloped lot with a new single-family dwelling will reinforce the neighborhood's residential character, consistent with this General Plan policy.

Policy 1-P-16

Allow development in hillside areas that preserve ridgelines and are site sensitive.

The project has been designed in accordance with applicable design guidelines, which require that development in hillside areas conform to the natural environment to preserve the scenic and natural resources that help define Petaluma. Architecturally, the proposed residence reflects the natural form of the hillside as it conforms to the slope of the hillside and does not significantly alter the hillside topography through grading and paving. The proposed building steps down with the natural topography, reducing the need to alter natural slopes and thereby preserving viewpoints, landforms, and natural vegetation, which respects viewpoints, landforms, and natural vegetation. As such, the project is consistent with this General Plan policy.

Implementing Zoning Ordinance

- Chapter 16 - Hillside Protection

General Provisions

Section 16.050 of the IZO provides a comprehensive list of general provisions applicable to all applications subject to the Hillside Chapter. A summary analysis under the general provisions section of the Hillside Protection Chapter is provided below.

1. **Opportunities and Constraints.** *As required by 16.050(C), the applicant submitted an opportunities and constraints map as shown on Sheet C3 of **Attachment 4**. The opportunities and constraints map identifies the existing informal trails, surface water, flow from the hillside, storm drain, slope, and protected trees as areas that are not suitable for development. Further, the map demonstrates that the siting of the structure is intended to minimize view impacts by stepping the building with the hillside and providing vehicular access from Kimberly Way to minimize grading and visual impact.*
2. **Visual Analysis.** *As required by 16.050(D), the applicant provided visual analysis on Sheets A1, A2, and AC of **Attachment 2**. The visual analysis demonstrates stepped facades at the south elevation intended to blend with the site's topography. As shown by the front elevation, the residence appears as one story and preserves views beyond the structure.*
3. **Site Design.** *The site has been designed to minimize the amount of grading and reduce the potential for visual impact to the greatest extent possible.*
4. **Grading and Retaining Walls.** *The proposed project limits the amount of grading in areas outside of the building footprint and driveway. Retaining walls are proposed at the driveway and entry to the residence. Most of the residence is proposed to be constructed in the portion of the lot that is less sloped, i.e. less than 15% slope. Retaining walls will be, at their highest point, three feet above grade.*
5. **Roads and Driveways.** *The cut and fill on the site would remain mostly balanced and would not result in a large amount of cut from the site, though some will be required. The placement of the driveway at the southern portion will minimize the length of a steeply sloped driveway.*

6. **Landscape Planting and Tree Preservation.** *No trees are proposed for removal, and the proposed landscaping is minimal. The proposed landscape plantings complement the natural woodland ecology of the South Hills subarea.*

Single Lot Development

Section 16.060 (Single Lot Development) of the IZO provides the development regulations for hillside lots and specifically states that single lot development in the South Hills subarea of the General Plan requires Planning Commission discretion.

The maximum permitted height of a structure, graded for foundation only, is 30 feet as measured from natural grade. The proposed residence is approximately 24 feet tall and as such complies with this requirement.

The project also complies with the following findings required by Section 16.060(K) of the IZO.

7. The project meets or exceeds the objectives, standards, and guidelines of the Hillside Ordinance.

The project is consistent with the objectives, standards, and guidelines of the Hillside Ordinance, Section 16.060(H), in that it conforms to the natural topography of the site, which at some viewpoints makes it appear single story and minimizes grading to only those areas proposed for development. In addition, the architectural design of the structure is consistent with the guidelines of the Hillside Ordinance, specifically Section 16.060(I), in that it reduces the overall bulk and mass using grated stair railings, varied roof slopes and heights, simple building design, preserves existing vegetation to screen the residence and proposes colors and materials which conform to the natural hillside environment.

8. The design, scale, massing, height, and siting of development is compatible and complementary with the character and scale of the surrounding, developed neighborhood.

The proposed structure conforms to the 30-foot height limit specified in the Hillside Ordinance, is sited to avoid privacy conflicts via the fenestration pattern, the stepped-back design of the structure, and the siting of the usable open space, and proposes a transitional contemporary design compatible with the surrounding neighborhood's varied architectural styles. As such, the proposed residence is compatible and complementary with the surrounding neighborhood regarding scale, design, and siting.

9. The design and site layout of the hillside project is respectful of and protects the natural environment to the maximum extent feasible.

The residence is within the permitted buildable area, utilizes a stepped design to conform with the natural grade, avoids to the extent feasible grading of steeply sloped areas, and proposes to maintain the eastern portion in its current natural state and retain all existing trees on the lot. The structure's siting is considerate of the site's natural topography and is positioned closer to the other residential structures in the neighborhood. As such, the design and layout of the project respect and protect the natural environment, consistent with this finding.

10. Site grading has been designed to be as minimal as possible to achieve sensitive hillside design, minimize tree removal and provide safe site access and required parking.

Grading on the site will be minimal and is limited to the areas proposed for development including circulation improvements and the proposed residence. The proposal includes retaining walls at a maximum of 3 feet in height. The location of the driveway (abutting from the private drive aisle) minimizes necessary site grading. As such, the project is consistent with this finding.

▪ Chapter 17 - Tree Preservation

The project preserves all existing trees on-site and will implement applicable protection measures for all protected trees located near the building envelope during construction, as outlined in the conditions of approval in the draft resolution. As such, the project is consistent with the tree preservation standards set forth in Chapter 17 of the IZO.

▪ Chapter 24 - Site Plan and Architectural Review

The project is subject to the standards for Site Plan and Architectural Review as listed below.

- a. The architectural style is appropriate for the project, and compatible with the character of the neighborhood.

The project proposes using colors and materials that work harmoniously with the building's overall design and complement the site's hillside environment. The contemporary-style residence includes vertical siding, varied roof slopes, a neutral color pallet, black trim window casings, gooseneck lighting, a permeable paver driveway, and a corrugated roof.

The proposed residence features a pitched roof, wooden siding, an exterior staircase, a deck, and stucco, which are design elements that are characteristic of the neighborhood and appropriate for the hillside lot in that the combination of materials breaks up the building plane and reduces the building mass. As such, the architectural style of the residence is appropriate and compatible with the overall neighborhood. Therefore, the project is consistent with this finding.

- b. The siting of the structures on the property is appropriate for the site and as compared to the siting of other structures in the neighborhood.

The residence is located on a 0.18-acre lot within a low-density residential neighborhood characterized by single-family homes on smaller lots. The design of the structure is consistent with the stepped pattern of the house immediately east of the site as well as other houses in the vicinity. The siting of the structure is within the building envelope established as part of the PUD, avoiding development within the Public Utility Easement that runs through the parcel. The proposed siting is consistent with the applicable setbacks while responding to the site's natural topography. As such, the project is consistent with this finding.

- c. The size, location, design, color, number, lighting, and materials of all signs and outdoor advertising structures is in accordance with all applicable requirements of this Zoning Ordinance and appropriate for the site and compatible with the character of the neighborhood.

The project does not propose any signs or advertising structures, as it is a residential development, and therefore, it is not subject to this SPAR finding.

- d. The bulk, height, and color of any proposed structure is appropriate for the site and as compared to the bulk, height, and color of other structures in the neighborhood.

The bulk and height of the structure have been designed similarly to the bulk and height of other structures in the immediate neighborhood, which feature one and two-story residences with varying roof heights and attached garages with main levels above. The residence utilizes light façade colors and a darker roof, similar to surrounding residences and compatible with the surrounding natural setting. Massing in conjunction with its siting on the hillside lot minimizes visual obstruction. As such, the project is consistent with this finding.

- e. Landscaping in accordance with applicable City standards and that is appropriate for the site and compatible with the character of the neighborhood will be provided on the site. Existing trees shall be preserved wherever possible and shall not be removed unless approved by the Planning Commission.

The project does not propose any removal of trees or shrubs, and the work site avoids all tree trunks. The only trees near the proposed building site are relatively small and will be preserved using standard protective measures such as protective fencing within the dripline. The proposal includes the preservation of all existing trees on site, as well as native shrubs. Other landscape features include the planting of one [1] Coast Live Oak, two [2] Japanese Maples, and a number of drought-tolerant shrubs, groundcovers, perennials, and low-water native California plants. The project's landscaping will provide a visual buffer between the residence and Country Club Drive. As proposed, the project is consistent with this finding.

- f. Ingress, egress, internal circulation for bicycles and automobiles, off-street automobile and bicycle parking facilities, and pedestrian ways are designed so as to promote safety and convenience and conform to applicable City standards. Any plans pertaining to pedestrian, bicycle, or automobile circulation have been routed to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee for review and approval or recommendation.

The residence will be accessed by a new driveway that will connect to the existing public right of way on Country Club Drive and a pedestrian pathway that connects the home to Country Club Drive. Two covered parking spaces will be provided within the attached garage with two additional uncovered parking spaces provided in tandem with the driveway. The proposed driveway has been designed consistent with applicable City standards. As such, the project is consistent with this finding.

- g. The design is of good character and has been prepared by a professional designer, such as an architect, landscape architect or other practicing urban designer or person with equivalent skill and qualifications.

The design is thoughtful of the existing surrounding development and the greater vicinity and was prepared by architect Farrell-Faber & Associates. As such, the project is consistent with this finding.

Petaluma Municipal Code Chapter 17.14 (Residential Visitability and Universal Design)

The applicant has sought and received approval from the building official for an exemption from certain visibility requirements as permitted under Section 17.14.150 of the Petaluma Municipal Code. This exemption was granted after the applicant clearly demonstrated that adhering to the accessible primary entrance requirement would create an undue hardship. Compliance was determined to be a hardship as it would necessitate significant grading and tree removal, that would negatively impact the natural environment (PMC 17.14.150(C)(5)), and strict adherence to the standards would not be financially feasible (PMC 17.14.150(C)(2)). Though the project does not currently meet the Residential Visitability and Universal Design regulations, the applicant has demonstrated adaptability of the project site for future visitability and universal design through the following measures.

The proposed stair left, accessed via the attached garage, allows a mobility-restricted visitor to access the entire main living level. As a result, the guest will have access to the kitchen, common area, bathroom, and outdoor patio space. This adaptable approach reduces grading and ensures the preservation of all existing trees surrounding the project site. This exemption from the requirement is justified and consistent with Section 17.14.150 of the PMC.

Public Outreach

Neighborhood Meetings

The applicant previously held a virtual neighborhood meeting on February 13, 2023. Four members of the public were in attendance and expressed their support for the project. The meeting was also attended by the two (2) project applicants, the architect of record, and the project planner.

Public Noticing

Public notice of the scheduled April 23, 2024, Planning Commission hearing was published in the Argus-Courier on April 12, 2024, and mailed to all property owners and occupants within 1,000 feet of the project site on the same date. Additionally, consistent with local outreach policy and as required by IZO Section 24.100.B, one onsite public hearing sign was posted on the site's Country Club Drive frontage, providing notice of the April 23, 2024, hearing.

Public Comments

As of the publishing of this staff report, no comments have been received.

CASE STUDIES

There are no case studies associated with this staff report.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15303 (New Construction), which applies to the construction of one single-family residence located in a residential zone. The project site is designated in the General Plan for single-family residential development and is within the Country Club Estates Unit 2a and 3a PUD, which allows for the development of single-family residences.

If a project qualifies for the use of a categorical exemption, then the lead agency must determine whether the project is subject to any of the exceptions to the use of a categorical exemption, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. None of the exceptions to the use of a categorical exemption apply as (a) the project is not located in an area where it may impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern; (b) will not result in cumulative impacts; (c) does not involve an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances; (d) will not result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway; (e) is not located on a hazardous waste site pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code, and (f) will not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. As none of the exceptions to the exemption apply, the project would not be precluded from using the Class 3 categorical exemption. Therefore, no further environmental analysis is needed.

A Notice of Exemption (NOE) will be filed with the County Clerk and State Clearinghouse and will be available for public review for 35 days.

FURTHER RECOMMENDATION

There are no further recommendations beyond the recommendation made in this staff report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 Draft Planning Commission resolution approving Site Plan and Architecture Review

Attachment 2 Project Plans, received November 2, 2023

Attachment 3 Colors and Materials Board, received November 2, 2023

Attachment 4 Opportunities and Constraints Map, received November 2, 2023

Attachment 5 Country Club Estates Unit 2a and 3a Planned Unit Development Guidelines

Attachment 6 Country Club Estates Unit 2a and 3a, Phase III, Planned Unit Development Plan