

DRAFT
MINUTES EXCERPT
CALISTOGA PLANNING COMMISSION
November 13, 2013

1 The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

2 **A. ROLL CALL**

3 Commissioners present: Chair Jeff Manfredi, Vice-Chair Paul Coates,
4 Commissioners Scott Cooper and Walter Kusener. Commissioners absent: Carol
5 Bush (excused). Staff present: Planning & Building Director Lynn Goldberg, Senior
6 Planner Erik Lundquist.

7 **H. NEW BUSINESS**

8 **2. Schrader Cellars Office Use Permit (UP 2013-14):** Public hearing to consider a
9 use permit to allow the conversion of a triplex located at 1406 Fair Way to an
10 office

11 **Chair Manfredi** stated that he had visited the project site but had not met with
12 anyone.

13 **Senior Planner Lundquist** presented the staff report and noted that three letters
14 had been received regarding the item. The applicants plan to bar public visits to
15 their office in order to avoid having to improve the structure for disabled access.
16 A recommended condition of approval requires the payment of an affordable
17 housing in-lieu fee to partly address the loss of a housing unit, as required by the
18 Zoning Code. The fee would be approximately \$3000. The project meets all
19 development standards with the exception of the proposed parking arrangement.
20 He has met several times with the applicants to explore options to providing
21 compliant parking. The Zoning Code requires a 24-foot wide driveway for two-
22 way access, whereas the existing driveway is narrows to 10 feet at one point.
23 Therefore, staff recommends a one-way entry to the parking via Fair Way and
24 one-way exiting via Park Street, as shown in Attachment 6 to the staff report.
25 Due to the tight turning movements and proximity of the driveways to the
26 adjoining properties, staff also suggests that the driveways and back-up areas be
27 constructed of asphalt or concrete, rather than gravel. Surfacing the driveway
28 would also reduce ponding and noise. Staff does not support the applicants'
29 request to defer the landscaping until after the certificate of occupancy; perhaps
30 a minimal level of landscaping could be installed in the interim.

31 **Vice-Chair Coates** complained about correspondence regarding the project
32 being received at such a late date. It is difficult to consider it with insufficient time.

33 In response to questions from **Commissioner Kusener**, Mr. Lundquist confirmed
34 that there would be three parking spaces. He confirmed that a section of the
35 existing driveway does not comply with the required minimum width.

36 In response to questions from **Commissioner Cooper** about the possibility of
37 providing two-way access from Park Street, Mr. Lundquist noted that there are
38 several choke points that would have insufficient width.

39 **Chair Manfredi** opened the public hearing.

40 **Fred Schrader**, applicant, thanked City staff for helping them get to this point.
41 They are doing everything they can to restore the building.

42 **Carol Schrader**, applicant, feels that the property speaks to them and that it is
43 an important part of town.

44 **Doug Donmon**, Dimensions 4 Engineering, distributed photos of the property to
45 the Commission showing the renovation work to date. After the applicants initially
46 met with the City, they were under the impression that they would be able to use
47 the existing parking and driveway. After issues were raised by staff, they met on-
48 site and determined that a lot line adjustment would be needed to provide
49 adequate driveway width. Given that there are only going to be a few office
50 employees, the driveway won't really need to operate as a two-way driveway.
51 Requiring the establishment of a driveway across the adjoining property doesn't
52 seem fair. Staff is recommending a large amount of paving, which would have an
53 associated cost of approximately \$30,000. The total site improvement costs
54 would probably rise to \$50,000 once the frontage improvements are included.
55 Gravel surfacing of the driveway would work; it could be laid over base rock to
56 help minimize the noise. One of the reasons that their correspondence was
57 submitted today was because they received the staff report only a few days ago.
58 They would be willing to hydroseed the vacant area in the interim before
59 completing the full landscaping.

60 In response to a question from **Chair Manfredi** about the planned appearance of
61 the landscaping, Mr. Donmon explained that the applicants are working with a
62 landscaper but haven't finalized the landscaping plans since they didn't know
63 what the final access plan would be.

64 **Commissioner Kusener** believes that additional parking spaces would be
65 needed for visitors to the site, if not now, then for a future office tenant. The
66 street is very narrow and on-street parking is limited. Mr. Donmon reiterated that
67 only three employees are planned for the office. Mr. Lundquist confirmed that
68 three parking spaces are the minimum required by the Zoning Code, based on
69 the size of the proposed office.

70 **Vice-Chair Coates** observed that he has two parking spaces beyond the
71 minimum requirement for his office, which is not open to the public, and they are
72 seldom used.

73 **Carolynne Wilkinson Clair**, owner of the adjoining Hideaway Cottages, thinks
74 that the applicants' restoration of the house is marvelous. She has no objections
75 to the project as neighbors, but there are only 21 to 28 inches between the
76 driveway and one of their cottages. Restrictions on operating hours for the office

77 use are difficult to enforce and traffic using the driveway could disturb their
78 guests. Therefore, she requests that the driveway adjoining their property not be
79 used. The driveway has not been used for many years. She would like the
80 Commission to consider the impact of the driveway's use on their rental units.
81 You can't adequately mitigate the problem of passing vehicles.

82 **Doug Cook**, manager of the nearby Chelsea Garden Inn, is happy to see that
83 something is being done with the property and he doesn't have an objection to
84 the office use. He would like to see the vacant part of the property landscaped as
85 soon as possible. In response to a question from **Commissioner Kusener**
86 about whether his customers complain about noise from the Inn's gravel
87 driveways, Mr. Cook acknowledged occasionally receiving complaints when
88 they're used during early or late hours.

89 **Carol Schrader** stated that they will not be using the driveway early in the
90 morning. One of the employees will live in the adjoining house on Park Street, so
91 they won't be parking on the property. She plans to install a beautiful heritage
92 garden on the property; however, they don't want to develop the landscaping
93 plan until they know what the parking arrangement will be.

94 **Chair Manfredi** closed the public hearing.

95 **Commissioner Cooper** believes it's important to promote the hospitality
96 business and therefore explore driveway alternatives that avoid using the existing
97 driveway because of noise.

98 In response to questions from **Commissioner Kusener**, Ms. Clair responded
99 that she was aware of the intent of the applicants to convert the structure to an
100 office when she sold them the property. However, she wasn't aware of the
101 specific design. She believes the cottage units were constructed in the mid-
102 1940s. The driveway is very narrow and consideration should be given to limiting
103 access to Park Street.

104 **Vice-Chair Coates** wonders why Ms. Clair didn't condition the sale of the
105 property to preclude the driveway's use. Given the hours of operation, there
106 would be very little impact, especially if the driveway were asphalted. However,
107 he doesn't have a problem with it having a gravel surface. The driveway has
108 historically been used, and it's not fair to expect the applicants not to use it.

109 **Chair Manfredi** believes that the driveway is a driveway. He likes the access
110 approach proposed by staff. There wouldn't be any office traffic on weekends.
111 Having the secondary Park Street access could address future demands.
112 However, he doesn't support a 24-foot driveway to accommodate two-way
113 access from Park Street because it would take too much property; that would
114 excessive.

115 **Ms. Clair** questioned whether the property's sale could have been conditioned to
116 preclude the driveway's use. She noted the existing driveway apron on the
117 southeast side of the house could be used to access parking.

118 **Commissioner Cooper** would like to receive project correspondence earlier in
119 the future.

120 **Vice-Chair Coates** supports staff's access recommendation, except for the
121 asphalt surfacing requirement.

122 **Commissioner Kusener** supports staff's access recommendation, but with
123 gravel surfacing for the driveways.

124 **Mr. Lundquist** confirmed that the driveway could be surfaced with 6-inch deep
125 compacted gravel that is ¾-inch in diameter or less.

126 **Ms. Clair** suggests having the parking enter on Park and exit on Fair Way to
127 minimize noise impacts.

128 **Mr. Lundquist** stated that it would be easier to access parking space No. 1 if the
129 entrance was from Fair Way.

130 **Mr. Cook** questioned the safety of exiting on to Fair Way; it is very busy with
131 traffic and visibility is limited.

132 **Mr. Donmon** believes it is safer to exit on Park Street.

133 **Howard Clair, Hideaway Cottages,** thinks both exit points are difficult. Their
134 primary concern is early morning noise, which could lead to guest complaints.

135 **Vice-Chair Coates** believes that seeding the vacant area of the property makes
136 sense since winter is starting soon.

137 **Commissioner Cooper** is not concerned about delaying the formal landscaping,
138 since the vacant part of the property has been in that state for a long time.

139 **Commissioner Kusener** supports allowing interim landscaping.

140 **Mr. Lundquist** clarified the revised wording of condition of approval No. 14 to
141 allow gravel surfacing of the driveways.

142 A motion by **Commissioner Kusener** and seconded by **Vice-Chair Coates** to
143 adopt a resolution approving UP 2013-14 with the amendment to Condition No.
144 14 was approved by a vote of 3 to 1 (Cooper dissent).

145 **Ms. Clair** expressed concern about the deprecating comments made regarding the
146 condition of the property when it was under their ownership.