

SETBACK VARIANCE APPLICATION FINDINGS

FEB 13 2015

Required Findings

In order to approve a Variance, the Planning Commission must make the findings listed on the next page pursuant to City Code, Section 17.42.020.

Please submit written statements in support of the following findings:

1. Conditions apply to the property that do not apply generally to other properties in the same zone or vicinity, which conditions are a result of lot size or shape, topography, or other circumstances over which the applicant has no control.

Finding:**Introduction:**

The proposed development will replace two existing buildings serving the Rancho de Calistoga Mobile Home Park. The buildings are aging, deficient, and are no longer able to fully serve the Park community's current needs.

The existing Social Hall building is located 9'-6" from the NE property line. This side of the property abuts multiple private residential properties, and requires a 20' setback according to current City code.

The removed buildings will be replaced with a proposed new building that will be organized into 2 separate wings: A Social Hall Wing, and an Office Wing.

The proposed building was designed to address current and future Park community needs in an upgraded environment, respond to existing site conditions, and meet the City's development standard.

Unique Site Conditions – Protected Trees:

The Owners and Designers studied the existing site conditions, and determined that any development work must not negatively impact any of the existing mature oaks present on site. In order to provide the required building areas while preserving the existing oaks, the building wings were best positioned in an L-shape configuration. The Social Hall Wing was kept away from the required 20' setback along the NE property line, and was located between a cluster of oaks and the existing Manager's house. The Office Wing was carefully inserted between 2 clusters of oaks.

In order to provide sheltered, graceful entries, the building wings were fronted with porches, sheltered with roofed colonnades. Though kept back as far as possible from Cedar Street, the colonnades' corner columns are proposed to be set 24'-6" and 17' from the property line north of the street.

Note: the property line north of Cedar Street is located 16' from the actual street curb / edge of pavement.

2. The variance is necessary for the preservation of a property right of the applicant substantially the same as is possessed by owners of other property in the same zone or vicinity.

Finding:

To illustrate how the requested variance relates to similar relevant conditions, we reviewed the property line – street curb relationship at other neighborhood streets (see graphics):

- At Brannan Street, a 48' wide street is routed within a 60' ROW. Thus, the property line lies approximately 6' outside of the street curb.
- If the same logic was to apply at the subject development site, then a 36' ROW would have been sufficient at Cedar Street, placing the property line 6' outside of the street curb, or 10' closer to the street than it currently is.

Therefore, we believe that the requested variance would equalize the rights of the Subject Property Owners with those of other property owners in surrounding neighborhoods.

3. *The authorization of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the purposes of this title, be injurious to property in the zone or vicinity in which the property is located, or otherwise conflict with the objectives of City development plans for policies.*

Finding:

The design team reviewed the conditions at Cedar Street within the context of the City of Calistoga, and made the following observations:

- **No Connectivity Potential:** from a review of the City's tax lots map, it appears that Cedar street was previously designed as a connector street, that may be extended to the SE and connect with Cedar Street near Wilson Street. However, this original plan was never developed. Instead, Cedar Street dead-ends near the SE corner of Rancho de Calistoga Mobile Home Park, and a pedestrian & bicycle path links this gap, winding its way around a vineyard and crossing Cyrus Creek with a pedestrian bridge.
- **Number of Properties Served:** as a result, besides serving the Rancho de Calistoga Mobile Home Park, Cedar Street only provides vehicular access to a total of 3 additional properties.
- **Street Parking:** unlike other City streets in the surrounding neighborhoods, Cedar Street was not designed with parallel parking lanes. Instead, 2 parking lots with perpendicular parking stalls were constructed near the development site, with a total of 19 parking stalls including an ADA stall. The stalls on the north side of Cedar Street overlap both the Public Right-of-Way, and the Subject Property, protruding 8' onto the property.
- **Width of paving:** unlike other City streets in the surrounding neighborhoods, the paving width at Cedar Street is 24'. Wider paved streets in the neighborhood, including Brannan Street (48') and Mitzi Drive (40'), are wider because they include parallel parking lanes on one or two sides, as shown in the attached graphics.

Due the observations listed above, it is apparent that the City does not require the option to expand the paving width at Cedar Street to accommodate increased traffic, parallel parking lane, or both. Therefore, we believe that the current Public Right-of-Way width of 60', is well over what is practically necessary at Cedar Street along the Subject Property. Therefore, the incursion of colonnade columns 5'-6" and 13' into the ROW is not materially detrimental to the purpose of the street, or injurious to any properties in the vicinity.

4. *The variance requested is the minimum variance that will alleviate the hardship.*

Finding:

The Owners and designers of the Rancho de Calistoga Mobile Home Park worked hard to locate the buildings as far from the street curb as possible, without compromising the site and building design.

The proposed building wings will be positioned with their walls set diagonally (not parallel) with Cedar Street, and with landscaped areas fronting the buildings. The building elements closest to the street will be the end columns at two corners of the entry colonnades. They will be set back 24'-6" and 17' from the property line. This design is a great improvement over the existing conditions, where the existing office building is positioned with its 24'-long front wall parallel to Cedar Street, and set back 26'-6" from the front property line.

We believe that this variance request to place the colonnade corners 24'-6" and 17' from the property line north of Cedar Street - or 40'-6" and 33' from the curb - is the minimum possible adjustment that will alleviate the hardship presented by the existing conditions.

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