

MINUTES
CALISTOGA PLANNING COMMISSION
October 9, 2019

A. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Vice Chair Tim Wilkes, Scott Cooper, Alissa McNair, Walter Abernathy. Absent: Chair Paul Coates (excused). Staff present: Senior Planner Zach Tusinger.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1 Carolee Arca, 1102 Pine Street, recounted the operational history of the Czech Inn and
2 stated that she had been operating the B&B under a use permit approved in the late
3 1980s until recently, when she began renting the rooms on a month-to-month basis. She
4 has been advised by the City that she no longer needs to make TOT payments because
5 she had not been operating as a B&B for more than 180 days and the inn's use permit is
6 no longer in effect. She would have appreciated receiving notification from the City that
7 this was the case and would like to keep the license in the event that they sell the
8 property. She had been told by staff that she could re-apply for a B&B use permit, but
9 objects to paying the application fee. She asked the Planning Commission to reinstate
10 the use permit, and they'll ensure it doesn't lapse again. She's unsure of her next step.

D. ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA

12 The meeting agenda of October 9, 2019 was adopted after the Commission agreed to
13 switching the order of the two public hearing items.

E. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

14 Senior Planner Tusinger reported receiving and distributing a letter regarding Item G.2.

F. CONSENT CALENDAR

16 **1. Minutes Approval:** Draft minutes for the August 28, 2019 meeting

17 The consent calendar was adopted as presented.

G. PUBLIC HEARINGS

19 **1. Berry Street Bed and Breakfast - Use Permit UP 2019-14:** Consideration of a use
20 permit application to establish a 3-unit bed and breakfast inn at 1322 Berry Street

21 This item was heard second, after Item G.2. **Vice-Chair Wilkes** reported a potential
22 conflict of interest due to his home's proximity to the subject site, and left the
23 meeting. **Commissioner Cooper** was selected to chair the meeting.

24 Senior Planner Tusinger presented the staff report, noting that the property had
25 operated as a B&B until 2010. No significant exterior changes are proposed except
26 for adding parking spaces, and redesigning the parking to allow cars to egress the
27 site in a forward manner. An on-site property manager will be required. One letter in
28 opposition to the application has been received.

29 **Commissioner Cooper** opened the public hearing.
30

31 **Dario Sattui**, applicant, would like to resume the B&B use of the property. While he
32 understands the concern about not optimizing the property for residential purposes,
33 he is committed to providing affordable housing for his employees just outside of
34 Calistoga. They will have one or more B&B managers living on-site.

35 **Commissioner Cooper** appreciates Mr. Sattui's efforts to provide housing for local
36 hospitality workers.

37 **Donna Higgins** asked the Commission to deny the use permit application and
38 maintain the property as a single-family residence. It is located in the R-3 Zoning
39 District, which is intended to increase the diversity and affordability of the city's
40 housing stock, and the owner should be encouraged to provide a duplex or triplex
41 instead, to ease the city's housing shortage. In its review of the recent proposal for an
42 apartment complex on 4th Street, the Commission noted the need for housing in
43 proximity to the downtown. She noted that a large B&B was currently for sale in the
44 vicinity and the town is not desperate for tourism. She commended Ms. Arca for
45 renting the rooms of her former B&B to long-term occupants instead of to tourists.

46 Mr. Sattui believes that there is no opposition to his application from the project site's
47 immediate neighbors.

48 **Commissioner Cooper** closed the public hearing.

49 Mr. Tusinger confirmed Ms. Higgins' representation of the R-3 Zoning District, while
50 reiterating that B&Bs are a conditionally-permitted use, subject to certain conditions.
51 The applicant would not be precluded from adding multi-family units to the property at
52 a later date. Staff had received several phone calls from recipients of the public
53 hearing notice, but to his knowledge, none of the adjoining property owners oppose
54 the application.

55 **Commissioner Cooper** believes that a precedent has been set for use of the
56 property as a B&B.

57 A motion by **Commissioner McNair** to adopt the resolution approving UP 2019-14
58 was seconded by **Commissioner Abernathy** and approved unanimously.

59 2. **Height Increase for Addition to Single-Family Home - Use Permit UP 2019-15:**
60 Consideration of a use permit application to allow an addition greater than 25 feet in
61 height to a single-family home at 226 High Street

62 Senior Planner Tusinger explained that a use permit is required due to the property's
63 location in the RR-H Zoning District. He reviewed the basis for determining the
64 addition's height on sloped property based on the Zoning Code's methodology. A
65 letter supporting the use permit was submitted from the closest property owner. In
66 response to questions from **Vice Chair Wilkes**, Mr. Tusinger confirmed that the letter
67 was from the neighbor to the north, who would be most affected by the addition, and
68 that the right-of-way shown on the site plan was extant, but unlikely to ever have a
69 road constructed on it.

70 **Vice Chair Wilkes** opened the public hearing.

71 **Steven Pinsky**, co-applicant, explained that the right-of-way/driveway leads up to a
72 City water tank.

73 **Eric Beckstrom**, project architect, reiterated that the need for the additional height is
74 to accommodate the sloping topography. In response to questions from
75 **Commissioner McNair** about the need for the increased height, Mr. Beckstrom
76 explained that the addition's ceiling height would be one foot greater than the
77 adjoining room and the exterior cladding would be different in order to distinguish it
78 from the existing home. However, the resulting height would still be much shorter
79 than the nearby detached garage. He provided further details on the proposed design
80 in response to Commission questions.

81 **Commissioner Cooper** noted that since the addition is on a downslope, it doesn't
82 interfere with any of the neighboring views.

83 **Vice Chair Wilkes** closed the public hearing.

84 **Commissioner McNair** believes that views in the immediate vicinity will be
85 unaffected due to intervening vegetation and the arrangement of existing buildings.
86 However, the purpose of the RR-H regulations is to prevent intrusions into views from
87 across the valley. Normally, in order to prove an exception to the rules, a need has to
88 be demonstrated. The addition could be accommodated within the normal 25-foot
89 height limit; her concern is about off-site views.

90 Senior Planner Tusinger noted that the matter before the Commission was not a
91 variance application, with its required findings of hardship. The additional height is
92 permissible through a use permit.

93 **Vice Chair Wilkes** agrees that the concern is about views from across the valley.
94 Using a darker color on the addition, as proposed, will help mitigate its potential
95 aesthetic impacts.

96 A motion by **Commissioner Abernathy** to adopt the resolution approving UP 2019-
97 15 was seconded by **Commissioner Cooper** and approved unanimously.

98 **H. MATTERS INITIATED BY COMMISSIONERS**

99 **Commissioner Abernathy** would like to receive occasional reports from staff regarding
100 the disposition of applications that the Commission has acted upon. Mr. Tusinger agreed
101 to provide a report at an upcoming meeting.

102 **I. DIRECTOR REPORT**

103 Mr. Tusinger advised the Commission that there were no agenda items ready for the
104 October 23, 2019 meeting and recommended that it be canceled. The Commission
105 concurred.

106 **J. ADJOURNMENT**

107 The meeting adjourned at 6:05 pm.