

**CALISTOGA PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

To: Calistoga Planning Commission
From: Zach Tusinger, Planning & Building Director
Meeting Date: January 27, 2021
Subject: **Vault Wine & Artifacts application DR 2020-5 and Use Permit application UP 2020-6, at 1124 Lincoln Avenue**

1 **ITEM**

2 Consideration of design review and use permit applications to modify the façade of an
3 existing structure and permit an existing antiques business to also allow wine tasting at
4 1124 Lincoln Avenue (APN 011-254-005).

5 **PROJECT SETTING**

6 The property at 1124 Lincoln Avenue is currently improved with a one-story commercial
7 building. The subject storefront is currently occupied by ROAM antiques. The store is
8 operated by the project applicant Mario Sculatti and would be transformed into Vault
9 Wine & Antiques should the
10 applications be approved.

11 Surrounding uses include the
12 two service stations located at
13 the intersection of Foothill
14 Boulevard and Lincoln Avenue,
15 a vacant, undeveloped property
16 immediately next door to the
17 northeast, and Rags to Riches
18 Antiques is directly across the
19 street. This section of Lincoln
20 Avenue generally includes
21 several tasting rooms, retail
22 shops, bed & breakfast inns, and
23 restaurants.



1124 Lincoln Avenue's current appearance

24 **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

25 Applicant Mario Sculatti wishes to convert his existing antiques business into an
26 antiques and wine tasting concept. The applicant has indicated his intent that the
27 business be more than 50% retail sales of antiques, with wine tasting component as
28 well. In addition to the wine tasting, the applicant intends to provide visitors with
29 charcuterie upon request. The applicant would be utilizing a Type 02 duplicate winery
30 license.

31 In addition to the new use within the building, the applicant intends to refresh the
32 building's exterior. The current structure is plain with several doors, windows, and roll-

33 up glass garage doors. The applicant intends to reconfigure the doors and windows and
34 repaint the exterior stucco. Additional fencing and landscaping would make the concrete
35 area in front of the building more attractive and add outdoor seating, further activating
36 this stretch of Lincoln Avenue.

37 **ANALYSIS**

38 The project's consistency with the City's applicable plans, policies and codes is
39 evaluated below.

40 Calistoga General Plan

41 The project site is designated by the General Plan's Land Use Map as Downtown
42 Commercial, which allows the establishment of businesses for visitors and residents.

43 This project sits within the Lincoln/Foothill Gateway. The objectives of this area are to
44 convey a 'sense of arrival', minimize traffic congestion, and further develop and
45 incorporate this area as a part of downtown. In terms of land use, the Gateway is
46 intended to retain, enhance, and supplement the existing retail, commercial, artisan,
47 and lodging establishments in this area. Architecturally, redevelopment in the Gateway
48 should "celebrate the introduction to the Downtown Character Area."

49 According to the Urban Design Plan, it is:

- 50 • crucial to enhance the appearance of properties in this area
- 51 • important to encourage building improvements
- 52 • desirable that design concepts of the Historic Downtown be applied to this area,
53 but with a more contemporary design flavor

54 The Downtown Character Area overlay, which also applies to this property, encourages
55 and supports a diversity of land uses. While Vault would be one of eleven existing or
56 planned tasting rooms in the broader downtown, it would be a unique business in that it
57 is primarily a retail antiques gallery.

58 Allowing wine tasting at this location as an additional use, would be consistent with
59 General Plan Economic Development Objective ED-1.2, which encourages the
60 expansion of economic activity in Calistoga that builds on the community's strengths.
61 While there have been a couple new tasting room additions to the downtown area in
62 recent years, the last two have included a significant non-tasting component: retail in
63 the case of Picayune at 1329 Lincoln Avenue, and an art gallery in the case of CAMi at
64 1333B Lincoln Avenue.

65 The proposed business would provide an antiques shopping and wine tasting
66 experience for visitors and residents consistent with the above-described General Plan
67 provisions.

68 Zoning Code

69 The project site is zoned Downtown Commercial (DC). Wine tasting rooms are allowed
70 in the downtown upon obtaining a use permit. The City's grape sourcing regulations for

71 tasting rooms (Section 17.21.030.A.3) require that 75 percent of the wines poured be
72 labeled with a recognized American Viticulture Area (AVA) within Napa County or be
73 made from at least 75 percent fruit grown within the 94515 zip-code area. The applicant
74 would meet this criterion because more than 75% of the wines poured would be Napa
75 Valley wines. A condition of approval has been incorporated into the draft design review
76 and use permit resolution reiterating this grape sourcing criteria.

77 The proposed re-use of this existing commercial space in the downtown does not
78 require additional parking. As such, the Zoning Code's parking requirements have been
79 satisfied. The design of the structure as proposed is consistent with the Zoning
80 Ordinance. It complies with setbacks, height limitations, and would be required to
81 comply with the City's lighting standards as well. Vault will be required to apply for a
82 sign permit for any new signage.

83 June 24, 2020 Hearing

84 A public hearing for this item was first held in June of 2020. While surrounding property
85 owners were supportive, the Planning Commission had additional questions about the
86 application and was unsure of the applicant's ability to follow through with the plans.
87 Concerns were raised about the current state of the property, and the Commission did
88 not feel like the submitted plans were detailed enough. The Commission voted to
89 continue this item and the applicant agreed to clean up the property and return with
90 more refined plans at a later date.

91 In addition, the Planning Commission had concerns about the increase in tasting rooms
92 downtown. Staff has since brought Zoning Code revisions to the Planning Commission,
93 which the Commission has in turn recommended to the City Council. Those
94 amendments are expected to go before the Council for a hearing in February.

95 **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

96 The use permit application is Categorically Exempt from the requirements of the
97 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301 and 15303 of
98 the CEQA Guidelines.

99 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

100 As of January 20, 2021, four letters and emails regarding this application had been
101 received (from the original June 2020 hearing).

102 **FINDINGS**

103 To reduce repetition, all the necessary findings to approve the use permit application
104 are contained in the draft resolution.

105 **RECOMMENDATION**

106 Based on the information and analysis contained in this report, staff recommends that
107 the Planning Commission, after conducting a public hearing on the matter, adopt the
108 attached resolution approving Design Review DR 2020-5 and Use Permit UP 2020-6.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Resolution
2. Vicinity Map
3. Request Letter
4. Property Owner Letter
5. Plans & Images
6. Public Comment