

MINUTES
CALISTOGA PLANNING COMMISSION
August 11, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom

1 **Chair Cooper** called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He read a special message
2 concerning the conduct of the virtual meeting in accordance with provisions related
3 to COVID-19.

4 **A. ROLL CALL**

5 Commissioners present: Chair Scott Cooper, Vice Chair Tim Wilkes, Commissioners
6 Alissa McNair, Doug Allan and Jack Berquist. Staff present: Planning Director Zach
7 Tusinger, Associate Planner Samantha Thomas and Planning Secretary Claudia
8 Aceves.

9 **B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

10 **C. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

11 Donna Higgins shares her concerns regarding the project at 1514 Washington Street,
12 which will go before the Commission at a future meeting.

13 **D. ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA**

14 The meeting agenda was adopted as presented.

15 **E. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

16 Director Tusinger reports there were comments submitted related to items G1 and G3,
17 which were posted on the website and emailed to commissioners.

18 **F. CONSENT CALENDAR**

19 1. **Approval of Draft Minutes from the June 23, 2021 meeting.**

20 The consent calendar was adopted unanimously.

21 **G. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

22 1. **Mount View Hotel and Amaro Restaurant Parking Lot to Patio Permanent**
23 **Conversion – Design Review DR 2020-8 and Use Permit UP 2020-9 (Continued):**

24 Consideration of design review and use permit applications to permit the permanent
25 conversion of an existing surface parking lot at 1457 Lincoln Avenue (APNs 011-205-
26 014 & -018) to hotel, restaurant patio, and outdoor theater space. This proposed action
27 is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15303
28 of the CEQA Guidelines.

29 Director Tusinger provides the staff report noting that the item originally went before
30 the commission last October. He says that under the city's Temporary Support and
31 Recovery Program (TRSP), the owners of Mount View Hotel converted the parking lot
32 into a dining patio for the in-house restaurant Amaro and are requesting the
33 permanent conversion. He shows pictures and a site plan of the converted space, also

34 mentioning that they have instituted a dinner and movie program for hotel guests. He
35 notes that the key issue in the permanent conversion was the replacement of 13 lost
36 parking spaces, which the city determined should be covered under the Tier 2 in-lieu
37 parking rates. He adds the conditions of approval have been modified, including
38 language regarding the payment of fees. He says the applicant has requested for a
39 payment plan requiring City Council approval, noting that additional impact fees also
40 apply related to the expansion and as conditioned, would be due when the TSRP
41 expires in June 2022.

42 **Vice Chair Wilkes** asks for clarification on the method of calculation regarding the
43 parking spaces to be replaced and concern over the ADA space. Director Tusinger
44 responds that it was also reviewed by the city building official, who has not expressed
45 concern over the relocated ADA space. He also says the fire chief has required a fire
46 lane to remain through the project, which can't be occupied with fixtures. He says the
47 gross square footage of the entire footprint is what was used in the calculation.

48 **Commissioner McNair** asks for clarification of total number of parking stalls. Director
49 Tusinger walks through the site plan and indicates that the parking spaces were
50 reconfigured. Commissioner McNair also asks about the proposed parking space that
51 appears to be in the fire lane and Director Tusinger says it is a loading zone that won't
52 be counted as a parking stall.

53 **Commissioner Berquist** also confused by the number of spaces asks if the applicant
54 is asking for a reduction of fees by keeping three stalls and Director Tusinger says
55 there are two newly relocated stalls to be considered replacement spaces that may
56 potentially reduce the fees to be paid.

57 **Commissioner Berquist** asks if there have been complaints about the movie
58 operations and Director Tusinger responds no.

59 **Commissioner Allan** asks to clarify that the loading zone space is being used as a
60 credit toward the offset of how many parking spaces need to be paid and Director
61 Tusinger says in the final analysis it would not be. **Commissioner Allan** asks that a
62 typo be corrected in the conditions of approval.

63 **Chair Cooper** asks if a new application is required if the applicant wants to revert to
64 a parking lot in the future and Director Tusinger says it would likely be an easy process
65 not requiring a formal design or use permit.

66 Applicant, **Michael Woods**, comments on the changes they've made since the
67 October meeting, including the payment plan they put together, as he says it is
68 necessary for the hotel to move forward.

69 **Vice Chair Wilkes** comments that he went to a movie and couldn't hear it, which could
70 be improved. **Mr. Woods** responds that the screen placement was due to the fire lane

71 resulting in six rooms behind the screen. He adds that guests in those room get a
72 complimentary dinner and movie.

73 **Commissioner Allan** asks how the applicant enforces the theater operations for
74 guests. **Mr. Woods** responds that they don't do outside advertising and only do the
75 movies on the weekend and if there are no dinner sales for guests, there is no movie.

76 **Commissioner Allan** comments that the in-lieu parking fees are there to go toward a
77 solution to a problem that will continue if more parking spaces are cut and Mr. Woods
78 says he agrees, but paying the fees was an economic issue for him due to the
79 pandemic.

80 **Commissioner McNair** asks if the applicant needs the entire length of the parking lot
81 to be utilized or if there is availability to keep some parking and **Mr. Woods** confirms
82 it is an all or nothing proposition.

83 Public comment by **Donna Higgins** asks where the applicant currently tells hotel
84 guests to park.

85 Amaro restaurant owner, **Rick Kaiser**, recaps the October meeting and proposes that
86 the overall conversation should be about a citywide parking solution.

87 **Mr. Woods** addresses Ms. Higgins' question saying the hotel guests haven't had
88 issues finding alternate parking nearby.

89 **Steve Rasmussen** comments that the city should be actively supporting the removal
90 of parking on Lincoln Avenue and should be addressing a long-term parking solution.

91 **Vice Chair Wilkes** clarifies that an ordinance exists to mitigate the parking issue and
92 what needs to be focused on the proposal's merits, adding that he is satisfied after
93 speaking to the fire chief regarding his fire lane concerns.

94 **Chair Cooper** says it makes sense to open the streets not foreseeing the pandemic
95 to end anytime soon.

96 **Commissioner McNair** agrees it is more pleasant to walk by and sees the benefit of
97 a permanent conversion.

98 **Commissioner Berquist** says he was at first concerned about the movie operations
99 but agrees the patio is nicer than the parking lot and believes a long-term solution is
100 how to solve the parking.

101 **Commissioner Allan** agrees that more parking should be on the roadmap.

102 **Chair Cooper** asks Director Tusinger about a traffic study on the horizon and he says
103 there are no timeframes on that.

104 **Director Tusinger** clarifies that the in-lieu parking fees do not go in the general fund,
105 but into its own dedicated account.

106 A motion by **Vice Chair Wilkes** that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution
107 approving the permanent conversion of existing patio space at 1457 Lincoln is
108 seconded by **Commissioner McNair** and approved unanimously (5-0).

109 **2. Calistoga Depot Gourmet Grocery, Wine Sales, Walkaway Food Business,**
110 **Tasting Room, and Brewery – Use Permit 2021-5:**

111 Consideration of a use permit application to permit the reuse of existing space at the
112 Calistoga Depot at 1458 Lincoln Avenue (APN 011-211-012) for a gourmet grocery,
113 wine sales, walkaway food business, tasting room, brewery with patio, and retail. This
114 proposed action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
115 under Sections 15301 and 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines.

116 Director Tusinger presents the staff report providing background history on the Depot.
117 He says the space is used for a variety of retail and restaurant purposes, noting the
118 proposed uses include retail, restaurant, beer, wine and spirit tasting, and brewery
119 and demonstration distillery components highlighting the Depot's history. He provides
120 the floor plan and site plan, indicating that public works identified a potential impact
121 on city sewer system due to the brewery, so a hold and haul system was proposed.
122 He addresses the considerations including the new tasting room ordinance in effect
123 this year. He says all conditions of approval related to prior entitlements remain in
124 effect and describes the minor exterior changes proposed. He notes there is no
125 existing onsite parking lot, but credits 80 parking spaces from previous uses. Based
126 on the new square footage, however, they will pay Tier 1 parking fees for five
127 additional parking spaces. He notes there will be bike parking spaces for the Vine
128 Trail.

129 **Vice Chair Wilkes** asks how many bike spaces there will be, and Director Tusinger
130 says one for every 10 spaces, so 9 bike racks.

131 **Chair Cooper** asks about the non-existent parking lot and if the city would try and
132 make one and Director Tusinger responds there is no proposal for physical parking.

133 **Commissioner McNair** asks for clarification on the multiple types of tasting and
134 whether it is one tasting room and Director Tusinger responds that staff sees it as one
135 room, but commissioners would need to make that determination.

136 **Commissioner Berquist** wonders about the impact from the micro-brewery in terms
137 of trucking wastewater.

138 **Commissioner Allan** asks about the in-lieu parking fees for the five spaces and
139 Director Tusinger says the Tier 1 rates would apply.

140 Applicants **Patrick Egan, Brian Maloney** and **Michael Madden** introduce themselves
141 and provide a presentation on their proposed project sharing that the Boisset family

142 company is fans of history mentioning their many businesses endeavors in the Napa
143 Valley and beyond and how they showcase history in their businesses.

144 **Vice Chair Wilkes** asks if they will be selling branded merchandise from this facility
145 and others and **Mr. Egan** confirms.

146 **Commissioner Berquist** asks if wines will be all Napa Valley and Mr. Egan says that
147 is the intention with some Sonoma County wine but will also consider the demand.

148 **Commissioner McNair** asks about seating observing there is only outside seating
149 and asks about the offsite noise with fermentation activities. **Mr. Maloney** says the
150 major noise would be the glycol chiller that runs refrigeration, and they would be
151 running at a small scale around 300 gallons.

152 **Commissioner Allan** asks **Mr. Maloney** if he would be the brewer and why they don't
153 contract the brewing to eliminate the equipment and water collecting and **Mr. Maloney**
154 responds they would hire a local brewer with more experience. He adds that they have
155 a passion for high quality artisanal beers. **Mr. Egan** adds that they believe in creating
156 and showcasing the product and bringing authenticity to the Depot.

157 **Commissioner Allan** adds that he appreciates moving the tanks to the back of the
158 property and it appears as a better plan.

159 **Donna Higgins** asks if a use permit to open a brewery is not required and Director
160 Tusinger responds that if you're opening a brewery in conjunction with a restaurant
161 you don't need a use permit.

162 **Vice Chair Wilkes** says this project will bring in lots of pedestrian traffic and is
163 enthused by the potential of the train cars and that part of town adding that he is not
164 concerned about parking.

165 **Commissioner Allan** comments that the way it is situated near Indian Springs will
166 bring it all together.

167 **Chair Cooper** says the project will be the anchor point for the entire town and supports
168 it.

169 **Commissioner Berquist** says he is impressed and believes the project is unique and
170 respectful of the past and believes the town will embrace it.

171 **Commissioner McNair** echoes their sentiments and agrees it will be a powerful
172 anchor to this part of town that is lacking something like this and is happy it services
173 locals and tourists.

174 **Vice Chair Wilkes** adds that he thanks Danny Merchant for bringing this opportunity.
175

176 A motion by **Commissioner Berquist** that the Planning Commission adopt a
177 resolution approving Use Permit 2021-5 with conditions as amended by the updated
178 brewery plans is seconded by **Vice Chair Wilkes** and approved unanimously (5-0).

179 **3. 1400 Lincoln Internally Illuminated Sign – Sign Permit SP 2021-4:**

180 Consideration of a sign permit design review application requesting permission to
181 install a LED sign at Mark + Michiko located at 1400 Lincoln Avenue (APN 011-211-
182 006). This proposed action would be exempt from the California Environmental Quality
183 Act (CEQA) under Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines.

184 Director Tusinger introduces new Associate Planner Samantha Thomas, who
185 presents the staff report. She describes the appearance of the sign and its proposed
186 location underneath the existing canopy. She says the applicant worked with the sign
187 maker to make the sign as natural as possible and graphics would be similar to the
188 rest of their branding. She says the sign would be shut off during non-business hours
189 noting the applicant felt the lighting was necessary as it is sometimes difficult to read
190 white. She adds that the size is 4.5 square feet and staff finds it in accordance with
191 the General Plan.

192 **Commissioner Berquist** asks about the hours of operations and **Planner Thomas**
193 says the applicants are unsure and getting an understanding of the town to attract the
194 most tourists.

195 Applicants, **Mark and Michiko Weiner**, add that they are analyzing Calistoga's
196 activities, but would likely not stay later than 7 p.m. as they have a small family. They
197 add that the illumination is mostly to give contrast to the white and demonstrate the
198 sign turned off and on.

199 **Chair Cooper** comments that the sign looks tasteful.

200 **Commissioner Cooper** asks if the idea is to have it illuminated at all hours and **Mark**
201 **Weiner** responds yes because the daylight washes things out. **Michiko Weiner** adds
202 that the sign is dimmable.

203 **Vice Chair Wilkes** comments on the 3,000 kelvins noting that it is the same as a 60-
204 watt light bulb and not an offensive white or blue color and believes objections are
205 misplaced.

206 **Chair Cooper** and **Vice Chair Wilkes** express their support.

207 **Commissioner Berquist** explains why he asked about the hours and didn't
208 understand lighting it in the day but after reflecting on the awning being darker thinks
209 it looks great.

210 **Commissioner McNair** says she is glad the sign is on a dimmer, and they can decide
211 what works best and is the least obtrusive.

212 A motion by **Commissioner McNair** that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution
213 approving sign permit SP2021-4 for Mark and Michiko at 1400 Lincoln Avenue is
214 seconded by **Vice Chair Wilkes** and approved unanimously (5-0).

215 **4. 1102 Pine Street Bed & Breakfast – Use Permit Renewal UP 2021-6 (Originally**
216 **UP 96-6):**

217 Consideration of a use permit renewal to establish a two-unit bed and breakfast at
218 1102 Pine Street (APN 011-257-023), originally approved by the Planning
219 Commission on February 12, 1997. This proposed action is exempt from the California
220 Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15332 of the CEQA Guidelines.

221 Associate Planner Thomas provides the staff report noting a correction in the packet
222 to a one-unit bed and breakfast instead of two. She says the bed and breakfast was
223 previously approved in 1997 and an amendment was approved in 2000 for structural
224 upgrades, not including additional bedrooms. She says the use lapsed and a new use
225 permit would be required to resume the use.

226 Applicant, **Carolee Arca**, says she wants to renew the use permit and feels it was
227 taken unjustly after renting the rooms on a month-to-month basis for the last few years.

228 **Chair Cooper** asks Director Tusinger if there is a protocol, and he responds that all
229 inns and bed and breakfasts have a standard 180-day condition before a use lapses,
230 adding that the city tracks uses with TOT receipts.

231 **Commissioner Allan** asks who is staying at the bed and breakfast and Ms. Arca
232 responds that she has not operated as a bed and breakfast for over a year, instead
233 renting month-to-month.

234 **Commissioner Allan** asks why they need the use permit to rent month-to-month or
235 why they didn't lease the house and **Ms. Arca** responds they had a hard time finding
236 a tenant.

237 **Director Tusinger** clarifies that it was since the bed and breakfast use lapsed in 2019
238 the applicant has been renting month-to-month and now wants to reinstate the use
239 permit and operate as a bed and breakfast again.

240 **Commissioner Allan** asks if it is to be marketed as the Czech Inn and **Ms. Arca**
241 confirms.

242 **Commissioner McNair** asks if this type of permit requires an onsite manager and if
243 the applicant lives on site. **Planner Thomas** confirms both questions.

244 **Commissioner Allan** comments that he is concerned about lack of housing and
245 believes this is better used as long-term housing instead of a one-bedroom bed and
246 breakfast, which he is unsure qualifies.

247 **Commissioner Berquist** asks if that is due to concern over other people wanting to
248 open a bed and breakfast and **Commissioner Allan** confirms.

249 **Director Tusinger** comments that this is unique because it is a residence in a
250 commercial district and that each application would have to be reviewed by
251 commissioners for approval.

252 **Chair Cooper** adds that the application process is prohibitive.

253 **Commissioner McNair** comments that this is a way of overseeing that there's not
254 people AirBnBing their homes.

255 **Vice Chair Wilkes** adds that Czech Inn does count as a bed and breakfast if they are
256 paying TOT taxes and the problem with Airbnbs is that they won't pay TOT taxes and
257 Director Tusinger adds that it is also because short-term rentals are not allowed in
258 town.

259 A motion by **Commissioner Berquist** that the Planning Commission adopt a
260 resolution approving a use permit renewal at 1102 Pine is seconded by **Vice Chair**
261 **Wilkes** and approved unanimously (5-0).

262 **H. MATTERS INITIATED BY COMMISSIONERS**

263 None.

264 **I. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

265 **Director Tusinger** reports that they will have a meeting on the 26th of August and
266 the 8th of September.

267 **J. ADJOURNMENT**

268 On a motion from **Chair Cooper** that is adopted unanimously (5-0), the meeting was
269 adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Claudia Aceves, Secretary