



Monterey County
Planning Commission
Special Meeting (Field Trip)
Legistar File Number: PC 19-140

January 23, 2019

Introduced: 1/14/2019

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Current Status: Agenda Ready

Matter Type: Planning Item

PLN040183 - PARAISO HOT SPRINGS RESORT

Conduct a field trip for the Planning Commission to review the site for the Paraiso Hot Springs Resort project. This field trip is not a public hearing on this project, but questions to staff are welcome. The public hearing will be scheduled at a later date.

Project Location: 34358 Paraiso Springs Road, outside of Soledad, Central Salinas Valley Area Plan (Assessor's Parcel Numbers 418-381-021-000, 418-361-004-000, and 418-381-022-000)

Proposed CEQA Action: Not applicable to field trip portion - information only; Environmental Impact Report prepared and will be considered along with public hearings on the project.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission conduct a field trip to view the Paraiso Hot Springs Resort property.

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Agent: Anthony Lombardo

Property Owner: Paraiso Springs Resort LLC

APN: 418-381-021-000, 418-361-004-000, and 418-381-022-000

Parcel Size: Approximately 235 acres (approximately 47 acres of development area)

Zoning: Visitor Serving/Professional Office and Permanent Grazing, 40 acre minimum

Plan Area: Central Salinas Valley Area Plan

Flagged and Staked: No (Visual Simulations prepared)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

A summarized project description is found in **Exhibit D**, with a detailed description found in the Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report as Chapter 2. Attached to this report are some of the key figures that show the proposed development of the property: Subdivision Map, Project Plans, and the General Development Plan (**Exhibits B, C and E**, respectively).

The proposed project is a Combined Development Permit consisting of:

- a. "After The Fact" permission to demolish nine historic cottages removed from the Paraiso Hot Springs Resort, November 2003 (to clear Code Violation Case CE030404/PLN040488);
- b. Use Permit and General Development Plan for the reconstruction and expansion of the historic resort with the following amenities: a 103 room hotel consisting of single and two-story clustered visitor-serving hotel units; sixty (60) two-to-three bedroom timeshare units and seventeen (17) timeshare villas; lodge; visitor center; restaurants; culinary training center; wine pavilion; shops; tennis courts; swimming pools; golf

instruction center; racquetball pavilion; spa centers with massage, beauty, therapeutic services and outdoor/indoor fitness center; a wellness/education center with lecture and conference facilities; cultural center for music, art and literature; outdoor amphitheater; vineyards; laundry and maintenance facilities; water system; wastewater treatment system; and re-landscaping of the grounds including new trees, paths, hiking trails, pedestrian and vehicle bridges, gardens and pergolas. Architectural treatments, materials, colors, and landscaped grounds are intended to echo the Paraiso Hot Springs' former affiliation with Mission Soledad;

- c. Standard Subdivision (Vesting Tentative Map) to create 23 parcels and a condominium map for timeshare units;
- d. Use Permit for removal of 185 protected oak trees;
- e. Use Permit for development on slopes in excess of 30%;
- f. Grading of approximately 162,073 cubic yards;
- g. Off site road improvements to Paraiso Springs Road.

SUMMARY:

The field trip's purpose is for the Planning Commission to observe the physical aspects of the site to assist in their understanding of the project, which will be presented at a noticed public hearing. The field trip is open to the public. The Planning Commission Chair will facilitate the field trip and will decide the manner of allowing questions for attendees and also locations to be observed with suggestions from staff. The Chair may also solicit input from other attending Planning Commissioners to determine the format of the field trip.

This report has been prepared for the special Planning Commission meeting, field trip to the Paraiso Hot Springs Resort. Information about the project is included with this report to aid in the field trip. Detailed analysis of the project will be provided to the Planning Commission at a future meeting following the field trip.

Staff and the project applicant will make a presentation relating to the layout of the project and the components of the project at the project site. If weather allows, staff recommends that the Planning Commission look/stop at some of the locations proposed for development. If the weather precludes access to some areas of the site, discussion will occur indoors.

DISCUSSION

The subject property is located on the northeastern slopes of the Santa Lucia Range, west of Arroyo Seco Road. The project site is at the terminus of Paraiso Springs Road, approximately seven miles west of the city of Greenfield and approximately eight miles southwest of the city of Soledad. The project site has been used as a resort since the late 1800's, but has been closed since 2003 other than a caretaker unit and use by the property owner. Many of the old resort structures still exist on the site.

The proposed project includes the demolition of the former resort, which has been closed for over 15 years, and construction of a new resort. The old resort had different configurations over the years, but consisted of up to 61 guest units. The old resort included cabins, mobile homes, yurts, a campground, hot springs pools and tubs, and other appurtenant structures and uses. Eighteen structures, nine of which were later determined to have been historical resources, were removed without permits in 2003.

A code enforcement case was opened for that unpermitted demolition; the proposed project includes permits necessary to clear the code enforcement case.

The proposed resort includes 103 hotel units, 77 timeshare units, resort facilities, spas, restaurants, conference facilities, hiking trails, outdoor amphitheater, a commercial area open to the public, a water system, and a wastewater treatment plant. Most resort facilities are for the use of those staying at the resort, with the exception of the commercial area, including a day spa. Grading of approximately 162,073 cubic yards is proposed. Wastewater will be treated and reused on site for irrigation of landscaping, including a vineyard.

The project also includes off-site road improvements to include a more consistent road cross section along Paraiso Springs Road, a county road. The resort will operate a shuttle system to reduce vehicle trips to the project site, including a shuttle utilized for employees from neighboring communities, such as Soledad and Greenfield. A shuttle system will also be provided for guests for use as transportation to San Jose International Airport and to other visitor serving locations in the county, such as Pinnacles National Park, wineries, and the Monterey Peninsula.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

The field trip is for the Planning Commission to gain an understanding of the site. No decision will be made at the meeting. As such, this activity is not subject to any CEQA related actions. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared and circulated by staff. Initially, a Draft EIR was circulated for public review in 2013. In response to comments received on that document, a Recirculated Draft EIR was prepared, which was circulated for public review from February 28, 2018, through April 26, 2018.

The EIR identifies conditions of approval and mitigation measures that, when implemented, would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level, except for impacts related to historic resources, which were identified as a Significant and Unavoidable Environmental Impact. Staff received comment letters from individuals and agencies. Staff is preparing a Final EIR, which consists of responses to comments submitted on the RDEIR, as well as changes to the RDEIR. The Final EIR will be provided to the public and the Planning Commission prior to any public hearing on the project application.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The following agencies have reviewed the project, have comments, and/or have recommended conditions:

Environmental Health Bureau
RMA-Public Works
RMA-Environmental Services
Water Resources Agency
Mission-Soledad Rural Fire Protection District
City of Soledad
Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission
Monterey Bay Air Resources District

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Reviewed by: Brandon Swanson, Interim RMA Chief of Planning
Approved by: John Dugan, AICP, RMA Deputy Director

The following attachments are on file with the RMA:

- Exhibit A - Vicinity Map
- Exhibit B - Vesting Tentative Map (subdivision map)
- Exhibit C - Project Plans
- Exhibit D - Project Description
- Exhibit E - General Development Plan

cc: Front Counter Copy; Planning Commission; John Dugan, RMA Deputy Director; Brandon Swanson, Interim Chief of Planning; Craig Spencer, Interim RMA Planning Services Manager; Mike Novo, Management Specialist; Historic Resources Review Board; John Thompson, Applicant/Owner; Anthony Lombardo, Agent; The Open Monterey Project (Molly Erickson); LandWatch (Executive Director and John Farrow); Local Agency Formation Commission; City of Soledad; Mission-Soledad Rural Fire Protection District; Monterey County Historical Society; Louise Miranda Ramirez, Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation; Carlene Bell, Soledad Mission Board; Charles DeWeese; Graig Stephens, Soledad Historical Society; Judy & Frank Berti; Joe & Misty Panziera; Lois Panziera; Cynthia Pura; Yvette & Dennis Blomquist; Victor & Shayna Selby; Alex J Lorca, Fenton & Keller; James McCord, Alliance of Monterey Area Preservationists; Hanna Muegge, Monterey Bay Air Resources District; Donna Galletti, Monterey County Sheriff's Office; Project File PLN040183