



County of Monterey Planning Commission

Item No.3

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Agenda Item No.3

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PLN240141 - CARMEL VALLEY MANOR (NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RETIREMENT HOMES, INC.)

Public hearing to consider modifications to the Carmel Valley Manor, consisting of demolition of three residential units, seven guest units, a wood shop, four carport structures, and construction of 19 residential units, eight guest units, a 12-bed memory care facility, additions to the existing fitness center and meeting house, and associated site improvement, including development on slopes in excess of 25%, and the removal of 61 protected Oak trees.

Project Location: 8545 & 8543 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel

Proposed CEQA action: Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15074.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution to:

- 1) Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15074;
- 2) Approve a Combined Development Permit consisting of:
 - a. Administrative Permit and Design Approval to allow demolition of three residential units, seven guest units, a wood shop, four carport structures, and construction of 19 residential units, eight guest units, a 12-bed memory care facility, additions to the existing fitness center and meeting house, and associated site improvement; and
 - b. Use Permit to allow development on slopes in excess of 25%; and
 - c. Use Permit to allow the removal of 61 protected oak trees; and
- 3) Adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan

The attached draft resolution includes findings and evidence for consideration (**Exhibit A**). Staff recommends “approval” of the project subject to 27 Conditions of Approval.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Agent: Joel Panzer (Maureen Wruck Planning Consultants, LLC)

Property Owner: Northern California Retirement Homes Inc.

APNs: 169-061-012-000 & 169-061-017-000

Parcel Sizes: 22.5 ac. (169-061-012-000), 1.3 ac. (169-061-017-000) - 23.8 acres combined

Zoning: LDR/2.5-D-S-RAZ (Low Density Residential/2.5 acres per unit max. gross density - Design Control - Site Plan Review - Residential Allocation Zoning)

Plan Area: Carmel Valley Master Plan

Flagged and Staked: Yes

Project Planner: Steve Mason, Associate Planner

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SUMMARY

The Carmel Valley Manor facility (“Manor” or “Facility”) is located on the north side of Carmel Valley Road, approximately 5 miles inland from the Highway 1 intersection. The facility, which opened in 1963, is a not-for-profit full-service retirement community within a campus-like setting. It was established through approval of Use Permit No. 624 in 1960. Said Permit granted “...the establishment of a rest home... (and) uses and activities which are related to and supplement the rest home.” All the development and related uses proposed with this Carmel Valley Manor project are allowed within the “uses and activities” as noted within the Use Permit.

The Manor currently accommodates approximately 230 residents and employs a combination of 145 full-time and part-time workers. Residential options include independent living units, as well as varying degrees of assisted living options, including a memory care center for those requiring full-time assistance. Independent living options currently include 22 residential units within duplex and triplex buildings, 124 apartment units, and 7 single family dwellings. A fully-assisted-living health care center accommodates 60 beds (36 “skilled-nursing” and 24 “assisted-living” beds), and there are 7 short-term visitor (“guest”) units onsite.

Non-residential structures include a main pavilion building with a reception area, dining rooms, administrative offices, meeting rooms, library, craft shop, sundries shop, and a chapel. “The Meeting House,” featuring a distinctive pyramidal design, is utilized for plays, musical performances, and similar functions. Recreational facilities include a fitness center with a swimming pool, a croquet court/putting green, a dog run, and a community garden. Additional amenities include physical therapy rooms and infirmary rooms.

Proposed demolition would include:

- three Residential units
- seven Guest units
- four Carport structures
- Woodshop building

Proposed new construction would include:

- 19 Residential units
- eight Guest units
- Assisted-living memory care facility (12 beds)
- Expansion of the existing fitness center (1,980 square feet)
- Minor addition (1,650 square feet) to existing public event building (“Meeting House”)
- Additional parking and miscellaneous site improvements, including relocation of the dog run and the community garden

Net/resultant changes:

- 16 additional (independent living) residential units (169 total onsite)
- one additional guest unit (eight total onsite)
- 12 Assisted-living “beds” (72 total onsite - 36 “skilled nursing”, 24 “assisted living” and 12

- “memory care”)
- 60 additional parking spaces (334 total onsite)

Water

The Manor has adequate water credits, previously purchased from the Malpas Water Company, to serve the facility as proposed and on an on-going basis. The project is not considered by the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD) as an intensification of water use due to the fact that existing water credits will be utilized and that no new water meters will be added (**Exhibit G**). CalAM will continue to serve the property potable water.

From 2004-2013, a concerted effort was made to reduce water usage for maintaining the Manor’s landscaping and vegetation. This included replacement of 3.5 acres of irrigated turf with a mix of low-water-consuming species, including an emphasis on plants native to Mediterranean climate zones. Rotor and spray head sprinklers were exchanged for drip and micro spray irrigation, all grass lawns were removed, and the putting green/croquet court was resurfaced with artificial turf.

Sewer

The project will be served by an existing connection to the Carmel Area Wastewater District (CAWD) public sewer system.

Traffic

Traffic impacts expected to result from this project have been evaluated in the Transportation Study commissioned for the project (**Exhibit N**). This report estimates that the Carmel Valley Manor is currently generating 715 daily trips, and that the project would generate an additional 65 daily trips. Based on the Carmel Valley Master Plan standards (Policy CV-2.17.f), all intersections studied, which are not currently signalized, will continue to operate at an acceptable level of service and will not reach thresholds warranting signalization with implementation of the project. See **Exhibit A**.

Tree Removal

Sixty-one oak trees would be removed to accommodate the project, including four trees identified as “landmark” oaks of 24” or larger diameter at breast height (dbh). Pursuant to the recommendation of the report by the project arborist (LIB250134), these 61 removals would be mitigated with 43 oaks to be replanted onsite. A Use Permit is required to authorize this removal. As described in more detail in **Exhibit A**, the proposed removal of trees is the minimum necessary to accommodate the development and will not involve a risk of adverse environmental impacts.

Historical & Architectural Significance

The project site was formerly the location of the sprawling Noel Sullivan Estate (also known as “Hollow Hills Farm”). Following the passing of the Estate owner Noel Sullivan in 1956, the property was sold to the current owner, Northern Congregational Retirement Homes. Most of the original structures of the Sullivan Estate were destroyed by a fire in 1962.

The property is not listed on the Monterey County Historic Resources Registry, National Register of Historic Places, or the California Register of Historical Resources. The Project Historian has

determined that the Manor is historically significant under the California and Local Register criteria.

Although the hospital and care facilities have been modified over time as programmatic requirements have changed, and various residential units have been altered, the site retains strong historic integrity, as revealed by intact circulation patterns, the clusters of Modernist residential buildings connected by walkways, and the prominent Meeting House. The Carmel Valley Manor layout and original structures were designed by the world-renowned architectural firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM). All the original SOM-designed structures are centralized within an area known as the “Core Campus.” The Phase One Historic Assessment concluded that because of the intact nature of the campus designed by an important architectural firm, Carmel Valley Manor is historically significant under California Register Criterion 3 and Monterey County Register Criteria A1, A3, A5, B3, C1, and C2. These original Core Campus structures would be retained, with all proposed demolition and the majority of new construction occurring on the periphery of the property - outside of the Core Campus area.

The project was thoroughly evaluated to determine whether it would result in impacts on historical resources. The Project Historian, Historical Resource Review Board, and draft ISMND found that the additions and alterations to the historic Carmel Valley Manor are sensitive, will allow the property to maintain sufficient historic integrity and keep the subject property’s local historic listing, and will not have a significant impact on the resource. See **Exhibit A** for more details.

Slopes and Geotechnical Issues

Development is proposed on slopes in excess of 25%, with the majority to occur for nine new residential units labeled as the “Hillside Duplex” units on sheet AS-02 of the plan set (**Exhibit B2**). There is no feasible alternate site for these units, and the Geotechnical Engineering Report commissioned for the project (County of Monterey Library No. LIB250006) has concluded that the site is suitable for the entirety of the project. Grading will consist of approximately 7,800 cubic yards of cut and fill. All cut will be redistributed on site, thereby eliminating the need for vehicle trips for soil to be imported or exported.

DISCUSSION:

See **Exhibit A** for additional details on the issues summarized above, as well as the project scope, development standards, and response to public comments.

CEQA:

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21083 and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15063(a) and 15063(b)(2), Monterey County as Lead Agency completed environmental review to determine if the project may have a significant effect on the environment. An Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for this project has been prepared and circulated for public review, from March 2, 2026, through April 1, 2026 (State Clearinghouse Number 2026030053; **Exhibit C**). Comments received on the IS/MND are attached as **Exhibit D**, and the County’s response to these comments is attached as **Exhibit D1**. The IS/MND identified potentially significant impacts to biological resources, geology and soils, noise, and transportation/traffic. The Applicant has agreed to implement five mitigation measures designed to reduce all potentially significant impacts to a level of “less than significant”. These mitigation measures

are incorporated as conditions of approval (**Exhibit B1**).

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

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

- HCD - Environmental Services
- HCD - Public Works
- County of Monterey Environmental Health
- Monterey County Parks Department
- Monterey County Regional Fire Protection Department

Land Use Advisory Committee

The project was referred to the Carmel Valley Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) for review at their July 21, 2025, meeting, which also included a LUAC visit to the project site. The LUAC voted 5-0, with 1 member abstaining, to support the project as proposed (**Exhibit F**). A member of the public commented during this meeting about the proposed rooflines being visible, the traffic resulting from the project, and exterior lighting.

Historic Resource Review Board

The project was referred to the Historic Resource Review Board (HRRB) for review. A site visit was conducted by the HRRB Site Review Subcommittee on June 27, 2025, and the HRRB considered the project at two duly noticed public meetings on January 8, 2026, and February 5, 2026. Modifications recommended by the HRRB on June 27, 2025, and January 8, 2026, were incorporated into the project scope. During the last meeting, the HRRB recommended approval and found that the project is consistent with the purposes of Monterey County Code Chapter 18.25 and will neither adversely affect the significant architectural features of the designated resource nor adversely affect the character of historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value of the designated resource and its site (**Exhibit I**)

Prepared by: Steve Mason, Associate Planner - (831) 759-7375
Reviewed by: Fionna Jensen, Principal Planner - (831) 796-6407
Approved by: Melanie Beretti, AICP, Chief of Planning - (831) 755-5285

The following attachments are on file with HCD:

Exhibit A - Discussion

Exhibit B - Draft Resolution including:

- Conditions of Approval
- Plan Set

Exhibit C - CEQA Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Exhibit D - CEQA Comments and Response

Exhibit E - Establishing Use Permit - Resolution No. 4019 (July 26, 1960)

Exhibit F - Carmel Valley LUAC Minutes (July 21, 2025)

Exhibit G - MPWMD "Will Serve" Letter & Water Use Permit

Exhibit H - Site Photos

- Exhibit I - HRRB Resolution (February 5, 2026)
- Exhibit J - Phase I Historic Assessment
- Exhibit K - Carmel Valley Manor Architectural and Historic Preservation Design Guidelines
- Exhibit L - Historic Review of the proposed Master Plan Project
- Exhibit M - Carmel Valley Manor Master Plan Phase Two Historic Assessment Report
- Exhibit N - Transportation Study (February 23, 2026)
- Exhibit O - Transportation Study (January 8, 2025)
- Exhibit P - Tree Impact Assessment Report
- Exhibit Q - Vicinity Map
- Exhibit R - Transportation Study Addendum Letter (April 29, 2026)

Note: Please contact the Planner if you would like to receive a copy of the project Geotechnical Report (LIB250006) and/or Hydrology-Drainage Report (LIB250120).

cc: Front Counter Copy; Planning Commission; Fionna Jensen, Principal Planner; Craig Spencer, HCD Director; Monterey County regional Fire Protection District; HCD - Engineering Services; HCD - Environmental Health; HCD - Environmental Services; Maureen Wruck Planning Consultants, c/o Joel Panzer, Agent; Northern California Retirement Homes Inc., c/o Jay Zimmer, Applicant; The Open Monterey Project (Molly Erickson); LandWatch (Executive Director); Carmel River Steelhead Association c/o Brian LeNeve, Project File PLN240141.