



County of Monterey Planning Commission

Item No.4

Monterey Room
168 W. Alisal St., 2nd Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Agenda Item No. 4

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PLN230299 - CARMEL RESERVE LLC (ONE CARMEL & FORMERLY SEPTEMBER RANCH PARTNERS)

Public hearing to consider a Design Approval for the installation of a 190,000-gallon dark green steel water tank. (Requiring Planning Commission review pursuant to Condition No. 28 of PLN110173-AMD1).

Project Location: 2.5 miles east of Highway 1 on the north side of Carmel Valley Road, between Canada Way & Valley Greens Drive, Carmel Valley

Proposed CEQA action: Consider the certified Final REIR for the September Ranch Subdivision Project (SCH# 1995083033) and Addendum

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 1) Consider the certified Final REIR for the September Ranch Subdivision Project (SCH# 1995083033) and Addendum; and
- 2) Approve a Design Approval for one dark green steel 190,000-gallon water storage tank (Requires Planning Commission review pursuant to Condition No. 28 of PLN110173-AMD1).

The attached draft resolution includes findings and evidence for consideration (**Exhibit A**). Staff recommends approval subject to 5 conditions of approval.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Agent: Wei Huang

Property Owner: CARMEL RESERVE LLC

APN: 015-171-017-000

Parcel Size: 243 acres

Zoning: Open Space with Design Control and Site Plan Review overlay districts or "O-D-S"

Plan Area: Carmel Valley Master Plan

Flagged and Staked: Yes

Project Planner: Kayla Nelson, (831) 796-6408, nelsonk@countyofmonterey.gov

SUMMARY

The subject property is 243 acres of open space within the One Carmel (September Ranch) subdivision located 2.5 miles east of Highway 1 on the north side of Carmel Valley Road, between Canada Way and Valley Greens Drive in Carmel Valley. The proposed project is a Design Approval to allow the construction of one dark green steel 190,000-gallon water storage tank. The tank is

identified as the “East Ridge Tank” and will serve Phase 1 buildout and fire protection of the subdivision entitled with the name “September Ranch” and currently named “One Carmel.” The water tank design requires Planning Commission review pursuant to Condition No. 28 of the subdivision entitlement (PLN050001/PLN110173/PLN110173-AMD1). All environmental impacts of the proposed water storage tank were previously analyzed as part of the environmental review for the subdivision and the comprehensive site review conducted in public hearings prior to entitlement. The previous review included the conceptual siting, volume, and use of the water tank. The purpose of this Design Approval is to comply with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) for the subdivision, which includes Condition No. 28. The condition was included in the MMRP adopted with certification of the Revised Environment Impact Report (REIR, Board Reso. No. 10-312) to ensure the potential visual and viewshed impacts of the water tank are still minimized once staking and flagging is installed, and colors and materials are proposed.

The parcel is zoned Open Space with Design Control and Site Plan Review overlay districts or “O-D-S” which allows water system facilities including wells and storage tanks to serve fifteen (15) or more service connections. The water tank is designed to serve up to 99 connections. This is an allowed use for the zoning district.

Based on staff analysis, the proposed project is consistent with all rules and regulations pertaining to zoning uses and any other applicable provisions of the 2010 Monterey County General Plan, Carmel Valley Master Plan, and Zoning Ordinance (Title 21).

DISCUSSION

Design Review

The proposed exterior finish of the water tank is brushed steel which will be painted a matte dark green to blend with the pine trees that naturally screen the tank from public and private views. The tank site was staked and flagged, and a site visit was conducted by staff to verify the visual integrity of the proposed development. The water tank was found to be subordinate to the natural features of the area. Staking and flagging were not visible when driving from either direction along Carmel Valley Road or visible from Jack’s Peak County Park; therefore it is out of the public viewshed. As proposed, the project assures protection of the public viewshed, is consistent with neighborhood character, and assures visual integrity. (**Exhibit A**).

Development Standards

The development standards for the “O” zoning district are identified in Title 21 Section 21.38.060. The setbacks for accessory structures are met, as the nearest property line is 200 feet away. Site coverage is well below the maximum for the parcel (0.05%). The height of the proposed tank is 25 feet 6 inches which exceeds the 15 feet height limitation for non-habitable accessory structures. However, pursuant to Title 21 Section 21.62.030.B, towers, poles, water tanks, and similar structures may be erected to a greater height than the limit established for the district in which they are located, subject to securing a Use Permit. The use is part of the entitled development of the subdivision and the size of the water tank has not changed (Board Reso. No. 10-312).

Health and Safety

Necessary public facilities will be provided to serve Phase 1 of the One Carmel subdivision. The project is located within the California American Water Company (Cal-Am) Monterey District service area. However, due to the moratorium on new water connections, the project was prohibited from utilizing water brought in from the Cal-Am system. Instead, the September Ranch Aquifer will supply water, which the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District approved on November 19, 2011. The Monterey Peninsula Water Management District shall monitor the water as it is routed to the Begonia Water Treatment Plant (System CA2710004) via an existing transmission line running parallel to the subdivision property on the north side of Carmel Valley Road then returned to the subdivision in equal quantity (Board Reso. 23-123). The water system will pump the water to the open space above the top of the developed area of Phase 1, where it will fill the proposed East Ridge water tank. The tank is designed to store 120,000 gallons of water for fire suppression, 55,850 gallons for emergency purposes, and 13,960 gallons for standard operational use. The previous reviews by Environmental Health Bureau, HCD (previously Resource Management Agency), Water Resources Agency, and Monterey County Regional Fire District found the location, capacity and use of the water tank acceptable. Conditions of approval that were added to the entitlement of the water distribution system are being adhered to under the operative permit for the subdivision, PLN110173-AMD1.

Environmental Review

On November 9, 2010, the Board of Supervisors certified a Final Revised Environmental Impact Report (Final REIR) for the September Ranch Subdivision Project (SCH# 1995083033, Resolution No. 10-312) and adopted a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP). An Addendum to the previously certified September Ranch Subdivision Project Final REIR was prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164 (CCR, tit. 14, sec. 15164) in 2023, in relation to amendments to the MMRP. The Addendum did not propose any changes in the location or design of the proposed water storage tank, or alter Condition No. 28. The September Ranch Final REIR and Addendum evaluated the potential environmental effects of the water distribution system required to support the buildout of the subdivision. Section 4.2 (Geology and Soils) of the FREIR addressed the project's impacts related to grading and trenching involved in the siting of the water tank. Sections 4.3 (Water Supply and Availability) and Section 4.4 (Hydrology and Water Quality) of the REIR addressed the suitability of the water system of which the tank is a part. Sections 4.1.2 (Land Use and Planning Project Impacts) and 5.1.1 (Cumulative Impact Analysis) of the REIR addressed the project's consistency with applicable General Land Use Policies, Residential Land Use Policies and Open Space Policies of the Carmel Valley Master Plan. This design approval was considered as part of the the REIR and by adhering with the MMRP adopting for the subdivision, it is consistent with the previously analyzed environmental impacts for the subdivision.

LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LUAC) REVIEW

The proposed project was not referred to the Carmel Valley Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC). The location and site review for the project was previously analyzed and measures were applied to reduce the potential impacts to public views (Board Reso. No. 10-312). Staff conducted a viewshed survey on March 25, 2024 and found that there was no potential for the water tank to be in the public viewshed. As proposed, the water tank cannot be seen from Carmel Valley Road, the East Picnic Area, or the Earl Moser Trail within Jack's Peak County Park.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

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

HCD-Engineering Services
HCD-Environmental Services
Environmental Health Bureau
Water Resources Agency
Monterey County Regional Fire District (MCRFD)
Public Works, Facilities and Parks

Prepared by: Kayla Nelson, Associate Planner, x6408

Reviewed and approved by: Mary Israel, Supervising Planner

The following attachments are on file with HCD:

Exhibit A - Draft Resolution, including:

- Recommended Conditions of Approval
- Site Plan & Elevations

Exhibit B - Vicinity Map

cc: Front Counter Copy; HCD-Environmental Services; HCD-Engineering Services; Environmental Health Bureau; Water Resources Agency; Parks; Monterey County Regional Fire Protection District; Kayla Nelson, Planner; Mary Israel, Supervising Planner; Carmel Reserve LLC, Property Owner; Wei Huang, Agent; Monterey Land Group; The Open Monterey Project; LandWatch (Executive Director); Lozeau Drury LLP; Planning Files PLN230299 and PLN110173-AMD1.