



Zoning Administrator

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PLN230258 - CALIFORNIA ARTICHOKE & VEGETABLE GROWERS CORP.

Public hearing to consider construction of an agriculture support fueling station consisting of six dispensing pumps, two 12,000-gallon above-ground diesel tanks, and one 10,000-gallon above-ground gasoline tank.

Project Location: 114 Molera Road, Moss Landing.

Proposed CEQA Action: Find the project Categorically Exempt pursuant to CEQA guidelines section 15303 and no exceptions apply pursuant to section 15300.2.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Zoning Administrator adopt a resolution:

1. Finding that the project qualifies for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15303 and there are no exceptions pursuant to section 15300.2; and
2. Approving a Coastal Development Permit to allow the establishment of an agricultural support fueling station consisting of six dispensing pumps, two 12,000-gallon above-ground diesel tanks, and one 10,000-gallon above-ground gasoline tank.

A draft resolution, including findings and evidence, is attached for consideration (**Exhibit A**). Staff recommends approval subject to 6 conditions.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Property Owner: California Artichoke & Vegetable Growers Corp.

Agent: Brian Murphy

APN: 135-141-002-000

Zoning: Coastal Agricultural Preserve

Parcel Size: Approximately 93 acres

Flagged and Staked: No

Project Planner: Fionna Jensen, Senior Planner
JensenF1@countyofmonterey.gov, 831-796-6407

SUMMARY

The project site, approximately 93 acres, is located west of Highway 1 and accessed via Molera Road. The subject property and the surrounding area are designated Agricultural Preserve. The subject property, operated by California Artichoke and Vegetable Growers Corporation, is currently in row crop production and is developed with a single-family dwelling, barn, and other limited outbuildings.

California Artichoke and Vegetable Growers Corporation, also known as Ocean Mist Farms, is one of the largest growers of fresh artichokes in the U.S.A. Ocean Mist Farms lacks fuel storage in Monterey County and therefore proposes to construct a fueling station with six dispensing pumps that will provide gasoline and diesel at a preferred price and shorten the distance currently traveled to fuel their equipment. The proposed project also involves installing two 12,000-gallon above-ground diesel tanks and one 10,000-gallon above-ground gasoline tank. The fueling station will only consist of the pumps and storage tanks, no canopy or other site improvements are proposed.

The proposed fueling station will be used to solely support and supply fuel to California Artichoke and Vegetable Growers Corporation and Toro Petroleum. The proposed project will be used primarily by Ocean Mist for their vehicles, tractors, and service trucks to fuel tractors on other ranches. Toro Petroleum, a wholesale petroleum marketer, will also occasionally use the proposed fueling tanks to fill their tanker trucks, which will be used to fill fuel storage tanks at local ranches in the surrounding Monterey County area. The proposed fueling station will serve Toro Petroleum's existing customers, which include Ocean Mist Farms, Dole Fresh Vegetables Co., Tanimura & Antle Inc., Merrell Farms, and other agricultural operations. While Toro Petroleum does provide serve non-agricultural operations throughout Monterey County, the proposed fueling station will only be used for their agricultural consumers in the Greater Salinas, Castroville, and Marina area. The proposed project will not be open to the public or other agricultural operations. No on-site employees are required to operate the fueling station. Hours of operation are limited to 5am to 5pm Monday through Sunday.

DISCUSSION

Staff has reviewed the project for consistency with the 1982 General Plan, North County Land Use Plan, North County Coastal Implementation Plan, and Title 20 (Zoning Ordinance).

Land Use

The parcel is zoned Coastal Agricultural Preserve, which allows agriculture support facilities. The proposed project will be used to support local agricultural operations by providing a central fueling location for their trucks, tractors, and other equipment. Therefore, the project is an allowed land use for this site, subject to the granting of a Coastal Development Permit.

As proposed, the project complies with the required site development standards for the Coastal Agricultural Preserve zoning district, which include allowable setbacks of 50 feet (front) and six feet (rear and sides), a maximum height of 35 feet, and site coverage of three percent. The proposed fueling station is sited approximately 140 feet from the front property line, 55 feet from the northern side property line, and over 0.3 miles from the southern side and rear property lines. The approximately 93 acre property is currently developed with a single-family dwelling, barn, and two storage outbuildings. With the implementation of the proposed project, the resulting site coverage will not exceed the allowed square footage (121,009 square feet). Further, the proposed fueling tanks and pumps will not exceed the allowed height of 35 feet.

Visual Resources

The North County Land Use Plan protects those views to and along the ocean shoreline from Highway 1, Molera Road, Struve Road and public beaches. The project site is directly east of Molera Road and approximately 1.12 miles west of Highway 1. Views seaward of Highway 1 are primarily of agricultural fields. The ocean shoreline is not visible from this portion of Highway 1 due to distance and topography. The project site's barn and accessory structures are visible from Highway 1, but visibility is limited and minimal due to distance. The proposed project will blend in and be subordinate to the nearby development and be sited west of the development, thus further decreasing the potential to be visible from Highway 1. Since the project site is east of Molera Road, the proposed project will not interfere with this road's seaward public views. Security lighting will be down-lit and installed in a manner that only illuminates the intended area.

Cultural Resources

Monterey County GIS identifies the subject property as being within a high archaeological sensitivity area. In accordance with the North County Coastal Implementation Plan, a Phase I Archaeological Report was prepared. Per this report, the project site has been moderately to highly disturbed as a result of historic and recent agricultural activities, and surrounding development. The Project Archaeological conducted a pedestrian survey and did not observe site indicators of the precolonial or historic era. There are no previously recorded resources within the subject parcel or 750 feet of the subject parcel. Therefore, impacts on archaeological resources are limited and will be further controlled with application of Condition No. 3, which requires that work be stopped if previously unknown resources are discovered during ground disturbance.

Traffic

The project site is accessed via Molera Road, which directly connects to Highway 1. To ensure that implementation of the proposed project will not have direct impacts to Highway 1, a Trip Generation Report was prepared (**Exhibit C**). A maximum of six to eight vehicles are expected to use the fueling station each day. Therefore, the proposed project will conservatively generate approximately 16 total daily trips. The project will contribute one daily trip in the morning peak hour and one daily trip in the evening peak hour. Per the Traffic Engineer, the project will have no impact on Molera Road or Highway 1, and therefore is a compatible use for the site. The proposed project has been conditioned to require that the Applicant/Owner constructs a commercial driveway connection to Molera Road (Condition No. 6). Commercial driveways are required to be at least 25 feet wide and accommodate the maximum legal vehicle size.

Hazard Prevention

The proposed gasoline tank is a UL2085 double wall Fireguard tank, and the diesel tanks are UL142 double wall tanks. The tanks will be sited on a concrete pad. The County of Monterey Environmental Health Bureau (EHB) reviewed the application and confirmed that no additional containment measures are required. EHB applied two conditions of approval requiring the preparation of a Spill Prevention Control Countermeasure and issuance of an Above Ground Petroleum Storage Act Permit (Condition Nos. 7 and 8).

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

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

Environmental Health Bureau
HCD-Engineering Services
HCD-Environmental Services
North County Fire Protection District

LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The proposed project was not referred to a LUAC because it does not meet the Board of Supervisor adopted referral criteria: Design Approval subject to a public hearing, lot line adjustment in the Coastal Zone or of Williamson Act land, Variances, or preparation of an environmental document.

Prepared by: Fionna Jensen, Senior Planner x6407

Reviewed and Approved by: Anna Ginette Quenga, AICP, Principal Planner

Attachments:

Exhibit A - Draft Resolution, including:

- Conditions of Approval
- Project Plans
- Operations Plan

Exhibit B - Vicinity Map

Exhibit C - Trip Generation Assessment

cc: Front Counter Copy; Anna Ginette Quenga, AICP, Principal Planner; Fionna Jensen, Senior Planner; HCD-Engineering Services; Environmental Health Bureau; HCD-Environmental Services; South Fire Protection District; Brian Murphy, Agent; California Artichoke & Vegetables Growers Corp., Owner; The Open Monterey Project (Molly Erickson); LandWatch; Laborers International Union of North America (Lozeau Drury LLP), Christina McGinnis, Keep Big Sur Wild; Project File PLN230258