



County of Monterey

Item No.2

Board Report

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

Legistar File Number: ZA 25-042

August 28, 2025

Introduced: 8/18/2025

Current Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Matter Type: Zoning Administrator

PLN230172 - California American Water Company (various Owners)

Public hearing to consider action on the removal of one 10,000-gallon water tank, construction of two water tanks (10,000-gallons and 60,000-gallons), modifications to an existing 50,000-gallon water tank, construction of a bypass pipeline with a pressure control valve, relocation of a fire hydrant on slopes in excess of 25%.

Project Location: 6, 7, 10, and 15 Oak Meadow Lane, Carmel Valley

Proposed CEQA action: Find the project Categorically Exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15301, and there are no exceptions pursuant to Section 15300.2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- a. Find that the project qualifies for a Class 1 Categorical Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15301, and that none of the exceptions to these exemptions set forth in CQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply; and
- b. Approve a Combined Development Permit consisting of: 1) Administrative Permit and Design Approval for the removal of one 10,000-gallon water tank, construction of two water tanks (10,000 gallons and 60,000-gallons), modifications to an existing 50,000 gallon water tank, construction of a bypass pipeline with a pressure control valve, and relocation of a fire hydrant; and 2) Use permit to allow development on slopes in excess of 25%.

The attached draft resolution includes findings and evidence for consideration (**Exhibit A**). Staff recommends approval subject to 10 conditions of approval.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Agent: Conor O'Toole, Denise Duffy & Associates, Inc.

Property Owners: Carvell John Randall TR and Bellis Carole Hutchins TR, Hoch Stephen & Tschirgi Judith E, Murray Constance TR, and Scott Linda Sue & Tagg Terryl M TRS

APNs: 187-031-020-000, 187-031-023-000, 187-031-025-000 and 187-031-027-000

Parcel Sizes:

Zoning: Low Density Residential, 5 acres per unit with a Design Control, Site Plan Review and Residential Allocation Zoning Overlay districts, or "LDR/5-D-S-RAZ" and Low Density Residential with Building Site Zoning-6, Design Control, Site Plan Review and Residential Allocation Zoning Overlay districts, or "LDR/B-6-D-S-RAZ"

Plan Area: Carmel Valley Master Plan

Flagged and Staked: No

Project Planner: Hya Honorato, Assistant Planner

honoratoh@countyofmonterey.gov, 831-755-5173

SUMMARY/DESCRIPTION

The proposed development is located within the Rancho Fiesta subdivision in Carmel Valley. The proposed project includes two different sites, the Upper Rancho Fiesta Tank site and the Lower Rancho Fiesta tank site, as well as the relocation of one fire hydrant and the construction of a bypass pipeline and pressure control valve. The Lower Rancho Fiesta Tank site is contained within an existing easement that was established at the same time as the subdivision and contains one existing 10,000-gallon water tank. The existing water tank does not meet seismic standards and needs to be replaced and upgraded in order to meet standards. In order to remove the existing water tank, a new water tank needs to be installed to ensure service is not disrupted. The new 10,000-gallon water tank proposed to be constructed will be at the same Tank site, east of the existing water infrastructure, partially buried and installed prior to the demolition of the existing water tank. The Upper Rancho Fiesta Tank site is also contained with an existing easement that was established at the time of the creation of the subdivision and contains one existing 50,000-gallon water tank. The proposed development includes modifications to this existing 50,000-gallon water tank to increase the capacity to 60,000 gallons and construct a second water tank with a capacity of 60,000 gallons. The easement and the proposed work are within an area that is sloped greater than 25%. The project includes grading of approximately 2,675 cubic yards.

Based on staff's analysis, the proposed project is consistent with the policies and regulations pertaining to zoning uses and any other applicable provisions of the 2010 Monterey County General Plan (General Plan), Carmel Valley Master Plan (CVMP) and applicable sections of the Monterey County Inland zoning ordinance (Title 21).

Site Development Standards

The subject parcels are zoned as Low Density Residential with Building Site Zoning-6, Design Control, Site Plan Review and Residential Allocation Zoning Overlay districts, or "LDR/B-6-D-S-RAZ" and as Low Density Residential, 5 acres per unit with a Design Control, Site Plan Review and Residential Allocation Zoning Overlay districts, or "LDR/5-D-S-RAZ". Pursuant to Title 21 section 21.14.030, both proposed project sites are within established easements for the water tanks and water system facilities including storage tanks and no increase in service connections is created, and is therefore an allowed use.

Biological Resources

A Biological Resources Assessment (see **Attachment D**) identified the project parcels as having three natural habitat communities throughout the area and that there were no special status plant or animal species observed around the proposed development areas. The report noted that two special status species, the burrowing owl and the Crotch bumble bee, have the potential for being within the project site as well as raptors and other avian species have the potential to nest in trees and shrubs within or adjacent to the project site. It was also noted in the report that the California Red-legged Frog is mapped within the Lower Rancho Fiesta Tank project site but has a low potential to occur within the project site. Recommendations were made within the report to include minimizing potential environmental impacts to special status species as well as protecting trees during construction. Consistent with General Plan Policy OS-5.4, the project has been sited in an area to avoid any

potential impacts to special status species that may occur on site. The proposed project will be sited adjacent to existing infrastructure and areas previously disturbed for the construction of the existing water tanks and associated water pipes. The County's standard conditions for the notice of report, tree and root protection, and a pre-construction nesting survey will be applied to the project (See **Exhibit A**).

Geological Hazards

The Monterey County GIS records identified a fault in proximity to the proposed well location. Further investigation has been reported (see **Attachment E**) and confirmed that the fault, identified as the Pfeiffer Fault, is no longer active and does not pose a hazard or threat to the proposed project or surrounding area.

Development on Slopes

Pursuant to General Plan Policy OS-3.5, development on slopes that exceed 25% is prohibited unless a Use Permit is obtained and the appropriate authority finds that there is no feasible alternative that would allow development to occur on slopes less than 25%, and/or the proposed development better achieves the goals, policies, and objectives of the Monterey County General Plan and applicable land use plan than other development alternatives.

The proposed project involves approximately 6,990 square feet of development on slopes in excess of 25 %. In this case, there is no alternative that would provide access to the two proposed 60,000 water tanks. The site is within an existing water tank easement that was established at the same time as the subdivision that the water tanks are designated for. The location is ideal as it is at the uppermost section of the neighborhood and relies on gravity feed to help maintain the proper water pressure for the Lower Rancho Fiesta Tank as well as the fire hydrant. Other sites were assessed and no other feasible alternatives were identified for the proposed water tanks. Additionally, the proposed water tanks would connect to existing infrastructure, thereby reducing the amount of additional ground disturbance and impacts to slopes greater than 25%. The GIS records show that the Rancho Fiesta neighborhood is within a very high fire hazard zone and the placement of the water tanks are essential to minimize loss of life and maintain the safety of the neighborhood inhabitants. Therefore, the proposed development better achieves the goals, policies, and objectives of the County of Monterey General Plan and Carmel Valley Master Plan.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

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

- HCD-Engineering Services
- Environmental Health Bureau
- HCD-Environmental Services
- Monterey County Regional Fire Protection District

LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The project was referred to the Carmel Valley Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) at a duly noticed meeting on April 7, 2025. The LUAC unanimously voted to support the project as proposed.

CEQA

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15301 categorically exempts maintenance or minor alterations of existing private facilities and equipment that involve no expansion of use. The project consists of the alteration and maintenance to two existing water tanks as well as two additional water tanks that does not result in any new water connections, and moving the location of a fire hydrant within previously disturbed areas. The water tanks will remain located within an already established water tank easement within a residential neighborhood. Therefore, the project qualifies for a Class 1 categorical exemption. None of the exceptions under CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply to this project. The project does not involve a designated historical resource, a hazardous waste site, development located near or within view of a scenic highway, unusual circumstances that would result in a significant effect or development that would result in a cumulative significant impact.

Prepared by: Hya Honorato, Assistant Planner, x5173

Reviewed and Approved by: Jacquelyn M. Nickerson, Principal Planner

The following attachments are on file with HCD:

Exhibit A - Draft Resolution including:

- Recommended Conditions of Approval
- Site Plans, Floor Plans & Elevations

Exhibit B - Carmel Valley LUAC Minutes

Exhibit C - Vicinity Map

Exhibit D - Biological Resources Assessment (LIB240118)

Exhibit E - Preliminary Geological Investigation (LIB250225)

cc: Front Counter Copy; Monterey County Regional Fire Protection District; HCD-Environmental Services; HCD-Engineering Services; Environmental Health Bureau; Hya Honorato, Assistant Planner; Jacquelyn M. Nickerson, Principal Planner; California American Water Company, Property Owners; Conor O'Toole (Denise Duffy and Associates, Inc.) Agent; The Open Monterey Project; LandWatch (Executive Director); Lozeau Drury LLP; Planning File PLN230172