

**CITY OF WATSONVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION**

EXHIBIT “A”

Application No.: PP2023-5966

APN: 014-032-17

Applicant: Ed Rinehart

Hearing Date: 01/16/2024

ZONING MAP AMENDMENT FINDINGS (WMC §14-12.807)

Approval of a Zoning Map Amendment requires the approving body to make the following findings. Project-specific supportive evidence is included under each finding.

- a) The proposed amendment is consistent with the policies embodied in the General Plan;**

Supportive Evidence

The proposed project is consistent with the following General Plan goals, policies and implementation measures concerning land use compatibility, design, and site improvement, per the staff analysis below.

- **Land Use Element Goal 4.7 Land Use Suitability** - Ensure that the orderly development of land for the needs of the existing and projected population within in the City limit and Sphere of Influence is based on the land's overall suitability, including: the accessibility of existing and proposed public facilities, services, and utilities, physical and financial constraints; and/or growth inducing impacts.

Supportive Evidence: The majority of the parcel at 1926 Freedom Boulevard is in the General Commercial Land Use Classification and the Thoroughfare Commercial (CT) Zoning District. The proposed project, a car and truck rental business, is an allowed use in the General Commercial land use classification and is permitted with issuance of a Special Use Permit in the CT zoning district. With a General Plan Land Use Map Amendment and a Zoning Map Amendment to change the rear of the parcel to General Commercial and CT and the approval of a Special Use Permit with supporting findings, the site is suitable for the proposed development. The proposed project will also provide a service that is not readily available within city boundaries, because there are currently only two small car rental businesses in Watsonville (Hertz Car Rental at 50 Aviation Way and Enterprise Rent-A-Car at 1150 Main Street), and neither of those offer box truck rentals.

- **Land Use Element Policy 4.G Land Use Suitability** - The City shall encourage the development of urban uses on those lands best suited for urban uses and discourage it on lands unsuited for urban uses.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed project, a car and truck rental business, is an allowed use in the General Commercial land use classification and is permitted with issuance of a Special Use Permit in the CT zoning district. With a General Plan Land Use Map Amendment and a Zoning Map Amendment to change the rear of the parcel to General Commercial and CT and the approval of a Special Use Permit with supporting findings, the site is suitable for the proposed development.

- **Land Use Element Goal 4.2: Neighborhoods** - Conserve and improve the living environment of existing Watsonville neighborhoods.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed project would improve the current conditions of the parcel and thereby improve the living environment of the existing neighborhood as the proposed project would include a ten-foot-wide landscaping strip between the new six-foot-tall wood fence at the rear of the car and truck rental lot and Quinn Avenue that will provide stormwater retention and include drought-tolerant shrubs such as ceanothus. The landscaping will protect the existing neighborhood from the new commercial use on the property and improve the aesthetics along Quinn Avenue. The proposed project would also include sidewalk, curb and gutter improvements.

- **Urban Design Element Goal 5.1 Visual Resources** - Preserve and enhance the built and natural visual resources within Watsonville.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed development includes a significant amount of new landscaping, including 24 new trees, three of which will be located in the landscape strip along the Freedom Boulevard frontage. The redevelopment of the site to accommodate the new car and truck rental business will enhance the visual resources on a commercial lot that has been vacant since 2006.

- **Urban Design Element Goal 5.2 Community Appearance** - Blend new development and recognized values of community appearance and scenic qualities, and ensure that new development enhances, rather than detracts from its surroundings.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed development will remodel the existing office building, which has been vacant since 2006, and include a new trash enclosure and car wash canopy. The project also includes a significant amount of new landscaping, including 24 new trees, three of which will be located in the landscape strip along the Freedom Boulevard frontage. The redevelopment of the site to accommodate the new car and truck rental business will enhance the visual resources on a vacant commercial lot that has been vacant for many years due to airport land use restrictions.

- **Urban Design Element Goal 5.6 Urban Design** - Achieve high standards of street, site and building design that are both efficient, and aesthetically pleasing.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed development will remodel the existing office building, which has been vacant since 2006, and include a new trash enclosure and car wash canopy. The project also includes a new stormwater bioretention area to manage drainage in an efficient and aesthetically appealing way, and a significant amount of new landscaping, including 24 new trees. The design of the site, building, and landscaping meet all required efficiency standards and are aesthetic improvements for the existing vacant lot.

- **Urban Design Element Policy 5.B Design Consistency** - The City shall review new development proposals to encourage high standards of urban design and to ensure that elements of architectural design and site orientation do not degrade or conflict with the appearance of existing structures.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed development will remodel the existing office building, which has been vacant since 2006, and include a new trash enclosure and car wash canopy. The remodeled building will be required to meet building code standards and the trash enclosure will comply with Watsonville Public Improvement Standard No. S-602. The development will improve the appearance of the one existing vacant office building on the lot.

- **Urban Design Element Implementation Measure 5.B.3: Enhancement** - The City shall utilize the development standards, zoning ordinance regulations for each district, and the design review guidelines to ensure that new development is an asset to the existing neighborhood and community with regard to parking, landscaping, open space, and project design.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed project complies with the development standards, zoning ordinance regulations, and design review guidelines for the CT zoning district. The proposed project significantly exceeds the required parking and the landscaping requirements to make sure that the new development is an asset to the existing neighborhood.

In summary, the proposed project, with implementation of conditions of approval, would be in harmony with the overall intent of the City's General Plan goals and policies, including those pertaining to commercial land uses, land use compatibility, design, and site improvement.

The proposed project, a car and truck rental business, is an allowed use in the General Commercial land use classification.

- b) The proposed use is compatible to the extent possible with the actual and general planned use of the adjacent properties.**

Supportive Evidence

The project will involve remodeling the existing office building, construction of a new trash enclosure and car wash canopy. Site improvements include: a new stormwater bioretention area to manage drainage in an efficient and aesthetically appealing way; a significant amount of new landscaping, including 24 new trees, three of which will be located in the landscape strip along the Freedom Boulevard frontage; and a ten-foot-wide landscaping strip between the new six-foot-tall wood fence at the rear of the car and truck rental lot and Quinn Avenue that will provide stormwater retention and include drought-tolerant shrubs such as ceanothus. The proposed remodel includes new windows, new Hardie lap siding, and a new asphalt shingle roof. The remodel materials are similar to and complement existing commercial and residential buildings on the surrounding properties. In addition, the photometric plan demonstrates that the new pole lighting will not create light trespass of more than 0.5 foot candles at any property line bordering a parcel with residential uses. The surrounding uses are similar to the proposed project in design and intensity and thus the proposed project is compatible with and preserves the character and integrity of adjacent development and neighborhoods and mitigates or avoids adverse effects to adjacent development and neighborhoods.

The site is subject to the requirements of Airport Safety Zone 2, which significantly limits the intensity of uses allowed on the site. The project involves a new car and truck rental facility, which is a low intensity use that will not exceed the maximum intensity of 40 people per acre. The business will have a handful of employees and only a small number of customers on site at any given time. Therefore, the project will not generate pedestrian or vehicular traffic which will be hazardous or conflict with the existing and anticipated traffic in the neighborhood.