

RESOLUTION NO. 2000 - 393

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT X7D-151
FOR SPRING RIDGE LLC

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on June 21, 2000, on this conditional use permit application to establish a winery at 555 Portola Road, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered the staff report dated June 13, 2000, as well as public testimony at the hearing, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission made the findings required to approve a conditional use permit as follows:

- A. The proposed use or facility is properly located in relation to the community as a whole and to land uses and transportation and services facilities in the vicinity.

The winery is adequately served by a private road given the low level of usage. That road then connects directly to Portola Rd., an arterial road. Traffic is not introduced on local or residential streets. The winery building is hardly, if at all, visible from public roads. The vineyards are visible from off-site.

- B. The site for the proposed use is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the proposed use and all yards, open spaces, walls and fences, parking, loading, landscaping and such other features as may be required by this title or in the opinion of the commission be needed to assure that the proposed use will be reasonably compatible with land uses normally permitted in the surrounding area and will insure the privacy and rural outlook of neighboring residences.

The site is large, 228 acres, and the vineyard and winery occupy only a small percentage (6%) of the property. There are no apparent conflicts with adjoining properties. There is ample room for the winery building and attendant employee parking.

- C. The site for the proposed use will be served by streets and highways of adequate width and pavement type to carry the quantity and kind of traffic generated by the proposed use.

The private road is well maintained with proper drainage ditches and culverts. It is wide enough for one car with places for passing. One large culvert will be installed at a major gully partially on the Spring Ridge LLC property and partially Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District property. The culvert will be designed to carry the load of a fire engine and will also be adequate for the weights of trucks that will be used by the winery.

- D. The proposed use will not adversely affect the abutting property nor the permitted use thereof.

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space has not objected to the project although specific agreements between the two parties are yet to be reached with respect to replacement of the culvert that is partially on each property.

- E. The site for the proposed use is demonstrated to be reasonably safe from or can be made reasonably safe from hazards of storm water runoff, soil erosion, earth movement, earthquake and other geologic hazards.

There are no apparent signs of erosion or sedimentation at this time of the year. The operator of the vineyard indicates they have not had such problems. He attributes this to several factors. First, the property had been used for dry farming for hay for 40 years and it appears the land had been well cared for. Second, the vines are laid out parallel with the contours which retards erosion. Shallow discing between the rows on contour helps keep water on the hillside. Also, early in the spring, grasses take hold between the rows and reduce erosion potential, although some mowing is done between the rows when plants are young.

- F. The proposed use will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this title and the general plan.

The general plan has statements that support agricultural pursuits as well as preserving the natural environment.

While the general plan recommends the preservation of natural areas, in this case, the prior use, that is, dry farming for hay, was a conversion of a more native or natural environment to one that was altered by man. Therefore, the vineyard is using an area that had already been disturbed by man.

The general plan recommends the preservation of open space. This application, by providing 13.5 acres of vineyards on about 6% of the parcel area, helps provide open space.

The general plan encourages agricultural use of suitable lands. The vineyard is an agricultural use on land that is very productive for growing grapes.

The general plan encourages the preservation of the rural atmosphere of the town. Agricultural activities are characteristic of urban areas.

With respect to this property and this proposal, the commission finds that the proposed vineyards are consistent with the general plan. The commission also finds that any expansion of the winery could raise significant questions as to consistency with the general plan, particularly due the property's high visibility and the potential modification of natural land forms and vegetation.

- G. When this title or the town general plan specifies that a proposed use shall serve primarily the town and its spheres of influence, the applicant shall have demonstrated that a majority of business of the proposed use will come from the area immediately or within a reasonable period of time. In making such a demonstration, all similar uses in the town and its spheres of influence shall explicitly be taken into consideration by the applicant.

Not applicable to this use.

and,

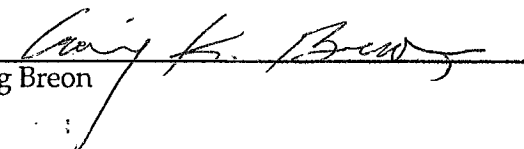
WHEREAS, the Planning Commission did consider and approve a duly noticed Negative Declaration at the meeting,

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the conditional use permit application as described in the staff report titled "Conditional Use Permit Application, X7D-151, Spring Ridge LLC" is hereby approved with the following conditions:


1. The location of the vineyards shall be consistent with the plan titled "Existing Vineyard and Winery Access, Spring Ridge Property, Portola Valley, CA," dated 4/17/00.
2. Only grapes grown on the property may be used in the making of wine.
3. Irrigation water, when needed, is to be applied by drip irrigation.
4. Chemicals, such as sulfur, may be used in small quantities and only in the vineyard areas.
5. Customers may not come to the winery for tasting or purchasing of wine.
6. Erosion shall be minimized through good practices and sediments shall not be deposited beyond the limits of the property.
7. Pulp from the wine production, including seeds, skins and stems are to be plowed back into the vineyards.
8. There will be no signage on the property with respect to the winery other than interior signs to direct persons to the winery building. Such signs to be reviewed by the Town Planner and referred to ASCC if necessary.
9. The culvert that is the subject of Site Development Permit X9H-417 shall be repaired.
10. This permit may be reviewed annually by the planning commission to determine if the project is in conformity with the provisions of the permit and applicable town ordinances. This review need not be a noticed public hearing; however, the holder of the permit and the adjoining property owners shall be notified. Costs attendant to the annual review shall be covered by a fee and deposit made by the holder of the permit.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at the regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Town of Portola Valley on June 21, 2000.

By:


Craig Breon

Attest:


Leslie Lambert, Planning Coordinator