

Developed Areas (May 2014 or later) in order to provide the most access while protecting the sensitive environment.

- A 25-space public parking lot and public restroom facility (128 SF) developed on the east side of the site.
- Hours of Operation for the public access facilities and improvements (public trail, 25-space public parking lot, and public restroom) are seven days per week, from sunrise to sunset.

Project History

The table below summarizes key project milestones and events.

Date	Project Event/Milestone
07/17/2008	Original application submitted
2014/2015	Project reactivated
05/22/2018	Revised application sent on referral to prominent agencies
11/7/2018	Preliminary Design Review Committee public meeting
02/20/2020	Application deemed complete
08/27/2021 through 9/27/2021	Mitigated Negative Declaration Public Comment Period
10/18/2021	Notice of Board of Zoning Adjustments Public Hearing

Prior Review

The Table below summarizes prior actions undertaken for the Project.

Date	Authority	Action Taken
11/07/2018	Design Review Committee	The Design Review Committee (DRC) supports the overall design concept and exception to maximum building height, provided that the project reduce building massing and add landscaping. The Design Review Committee requested final review and approval on the project as a condition of approval.

General Plan and Area Plans

The project site is not subject to any Area Plan. The Sonoma County General Plan designates the project site as Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial. This land use category allows for visitor serving uses such as restaurants, lodging, developed campgrounds, resorts, marinas, golf courses, and similar types of use. The following General Plan policies provided below are applicable to the project.

Commercial Land Use Policies:

- Objective LU-15.2: Limit new uses within the floodway of the Russian River, as designated on the Federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), to recreation and visitor serving commercial uses without permanent structures.
- Objective LU-15.3: Maintain a balance of commercial development between local serving and visitor oriented uses. Guerneville shall remain the primary commercial center of the area.



Open Space and Resource Conservation Policies:

- Objectives OSRC-4.1 and OSRC-4.2: Maintain night time lighting levels at the minimum necessary to provide for security and safety of the use and users to preserve night time skies and the night time character of urban, rural and natural areas. Ensure that night time lighting levels for new development are designed to minimize light spillage offsite or upward into the sky.
- Objective OSRC-6.2: Establish Rural Character as a primary criterion for review of discretionary projects, but not including administrative design review for single family homes on existing lots outside of Urban Service Areas.
- Objective OSRC-8.2: Provide standards for land use and development in streamside conservation areas that protect riparian vegetation, water resources and habitat values while considering the needs of residents, agriculture, businesses and other land users.

Noise Standards:

- Objective NE-1.4: Mitigate noise from recreational and visitor serving uses.
- Noise is required to be controlled in accordance with Table NE-2 as measured at the exterior property line of any affected residential or sensitive land use:

TABLE NE-2: Maximum Allowable Exterior Noise Exposures

Hourly Noise Metric ¹ , dBA	Daytime (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.)	Nighttime (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.)
L50 (30 minutes in any hour)	50	45
L25 (15 minutes in any hour)	55	50
L08 (4 minutes 48 seconds in any hour)	60	55
L02 (72 seconds in any hour)	65	60
¹ The sound level exceeded n% of the time in any hour. For example, the L50 is the value exceeded 50% of the time or 30 minutes in any hour; this is the median noise level. The L02 is the sound level exceeded 72 seconds in any hour.		

Water Resources:

The Water Resources Element of the General Plan includes goals and policies for managing groundwater as a valuable and limited shared resource. The County uses a four-tier classification system to indicate general area of groundwater availability: Class 1 = Major Ground Water Basin, Class 2 = Major Natural Recharge Areas, Class 3 = Marginal Groundwater Availability and Class 4 = Low or Highly Variable Water Yield. Water Resources Element Policy WR-2e requires preparation of groundwater studies to verify the quality and quantity of groundwater and assess cumulative impacts associated with discretionary projects located in the Class 3 and 4 areas of the county. Permit Sonoma also requires preparation of groundwater studies for discretionary projects located in the Sonoma Valley, Petaluma Valley, and Santa Rosa Plain priority groundwater basins.



Zoning

The table below summarizes the development standards that apply to the site as outlined in the Sonoma County Zoning Ordinance, and the existing and proposed development conditions.

Standard	Ordinance	Existing Condition	Proposed Project
Lot Area	Minimum size for new lots is 8,000 SF	Three separate legal lots totaling 9.61 acres: 072-130-005 (5.68 acres) 072-130-007 (1.27 acres) 072-130-009 (2.66 acres)	No change in overall acreage. Project results in a single 9.61 acre lot.
Land Use	Recreation and Visitor-Serving Commercial District	Vacant/undeveloped	Resort hotel and improved public river access
Residential Density	NA	No residences exist on the property.	No change.
Front Setback	45ft to the centerline of highway	No existing structures	Gate House 90± ft. Tree House Suites 270± ft. Lobby/Meeting Rooms 390± ft. Restaurant/Spa 330± ft. Restroom 53± ft.
Side Setback	5ft	No existing structures	Hotel building 135± ft. (east side) Tree House Suites 90± ft. (west side)
Rear Setback	10ft	No existing structures	No change
Height	Max 35 ft.	No existing structures	Max 53 feet Exceptions to maximum building height require Design Review or BZA approval.
Lot Coverage %	50%	0%	7%
Parking Spaces	Resort Facility requires 226 spaces: 1 space per hotel room; 1 space for manager; 1 space per 60 SF of dining area; 1 space per 75 SF for meeting rooms. Existing Public Parking Easement requires 25 spaces. 1 Bicycle Space is required per 5 spaces of required vehicle parking	0	201 total parking spaces: 176 spaces and 15 stacked spaces for Resort Facility; 25 spaces for public parking lot. 40 Bicycle spaces. Parking Standards may be reduced with Design Review or BZA approval.



Other Development Regulations or Guidelines

Recreation and Visitor-Serving Commercial (K) Zoning District:

The project site is zoned K (Recreation and Visitor-Serving Commercial). The K Zoning District encourages a compatible blend of recreation and tourist-commercial uses to maintain and enhance Sonoma County's recreational resources. Sonoma County Zoning Code Section 26-10-030 (Allowed Land Uses) and Section 26-28-150 (Lodging) allows resorts with a maximum of two hundred (200) rooms in the K Zoning District provided the site is located in an urban service area and a use permit is obtained. The Zoning Code definition for "Lodging: Hotel, motel, and resort" includes on-site ancillary restaurants, meeting facilities, personal and spa services, recreational facilities, and accessory retail uses.

Increased Building Height:

In the K Zoning District, the maximum building height is 35-feet. However, the Section 26-10-040.C of the Zoning Code allows for increased building height with a use permit in commercial zones. A building with increased allowed height may not exceed the maximum allowed building intensity in the applicable zone. Maximum building intensity is calculated by multiplying the maximum permitted building height by the maximum square footage of lot coverage permitted on a lot.

Scenic Resources (SR) Combining District:

The project site is located within a designated Scenic Corridor for State Route 116 as outlined in the Open Space and Resource Conservation Element of the General Plan. Article 64 of the Zoning Code sets forth development criteria for new development located within Scenic Corridors established outside of the urban service area boundaries for the purpose of preserving the visual character and scenic resources of lands in the county.

Design Review:

The Design Review requirements listed under Sec. 26-82-050 of the Zoning Code set forth minimum development standards and approval requirements applicable to commercial projects, industrial projects, and planned developments. Applications for design review are evaluated with an emphasis on site planning, circulation, architectural design, quality and type of materials, colors, and landscaping. The Sonoma County Design Review Committee conducts preliminary design review on significant new development projects and recommends approval to other decision-making bodies, such as the Board of Zoning Adjustments. After the project is approved, conditions of approval often require final Design Review Committee review prior to grading and building permit issuance.

Local Area Development Guidelines for Russian River Corridor (LG/RRC) Combining District:

The property is subject to the Local Area Development Guidelines for the Russian River Corridor. The Local Guidelines implement General Plan Land Use Element policies and programs to protect and enhance the unique character of specific communities and areas, as designated by the Board, while allowing for land uses authorized in the General Plan Land Use Element. The 2010 Russian River Corridor Design Guidelines address a wide range of objectives and issues, including:



- Ensure buildings are sited and designed to create a welcoming frontage that provides visual interest and encourages street vitality and safety.
- Preserve existing views of the Russian River from the scenic corridor.
- Preserve and incorporate natural features, such as mature trees and creeks, into the site design as a valuable project asset.
- Design riverfront development to capitalize on its unique location by providing riverside amenities such as viewing areas, decks, balconies, large windows, and river access.
- Design new development proposed to be located between the Russian River and the Scenic Corridor to preserve existing views of the river, to the extent feasible.
- Maintain as much of the existing vegetation as possible during site preparation to minimize soil erosion.
- Ensure that building scale and massing reflect the existing character of the surrounding area.
- Ensure that scale and proportions of architectural elements and detailing are appropriate for the building’s architectural style.

Tree Protection Ordinance:

The Tree Protection Ordinance listed under Sec. 26-88-010(m) of the Zoning Code requires development permits to minimize the destruction of protected tree species that have a diameter at breast height (d.b.h.) greater than nine inches. “Protected Tree” in the Zoning Code means Big Leaf Maple, Black Oak, Blue Oak, Coast Live Oak, Interior Live Oak, Madrone, Oracle Oak, Oregon Oak, Redwood, Valley Oak, California Bay and their hybrids. Construction activities are required to implement tree protection methods by adhering to the construction and project design standards provided in the ordinance. The ordinance does not prohibit tree removal. If trees are proposed for removal, they must be replaced at a ratio specified in the ordinance (“mitigation”) in the form of either preserving existing trees onsite, installing replacement trees, or paying in-lieu fees that are used to acquire and protect native trees on public lands. Applicants are required to use the Arboreal Value Charts provided in the Tree Protection Ordinance to determine arboreal values and applicable mitigation requirements.

Floodway (F1) and Floodplain (F2) Combining Districts:

The project site is classified as being within a 100-year flood hazard on the General Plan’s Public Safety Element. The 100-year flood zone or Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) is defined as the area that will be inundated by the flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. These areas are depicted on County zoning maps with the F1- Flood Zone and F2- Flood Plain Combining Zones. County zoning regulations apply for the F1 and F2 Combining Zones:

- F1 (Floodway) Section 26-56.030: Except as specifically allowed in this article, no building or structure shall be constructed, erected, moved, converted, altered or enlarged in the floodway, nor shall any other condition be allowed which would tend to cause significant stream channel alteration or adversely affect the carrying or storage capacity of a floodway, or otherwise constitute a threat to life and property. Ordinary maintenance and repair of existing nonconforming structures shall be permitted subject to the provisions.
- F2 (Floodplain) Section 26-58.010: The F2 district shall be applied to properties which lie within the one hundred (100) year flood hazard area as shown on the most recent FEMA maps and accompanying report. The boundaries of the one hundred (100) year floodplain as indicated on the zoning maps should



be considered approximate. The provisions of this article may be waived by the decision making body where it is demonstrated through engineering analysis, field determinations or other appropriate data, that the precise one hundred (100) year floodplain boundary differs from that shown on the FEMA maps, and provided further, that FEMA approval and sign-off is first secured.

Riparian Corridor with 50-foot and 25-foot setbacks (RC 25/50) Combining District:

The County has enacted General Plan policies that designate Riparian Corridors throughout the County, and provides for the protection and conservation of the riparian corridors, which includes both the stream or river and land alongside the stream or river. The project site is subject to 50-foot setbacks from the top of bank of the Russian River, which borders the property to south, and Hulbert Creek, which lies along the eastern property line. Section 26-65-005 of the Zoning Code prohibits new development within the Riparian Corridor setback unless a use permit for a Streamside Conservation Plan is adopted that provides for the appropriate protection of the biotic resources, water quality, floodplain management, bank stability, groundwater recharge, and other applicable riparian functions.

Valley Oak Habitat (VOH) Combining District:

The VOH zoning overlay covers the most of the project property, however the project does not result in removal of any valley oak trees.

Timberland Conversions:

Section 26-18-250 of the Zoning Code exempts minor timberland conversions of less than 3 acres of timberland from a minor timberland conversion zoning permit, provided the timberland conversion is for the purpose of constructing a structure in compliance with a valid building permit where the conversion is limited to the cutting and removal of the minimum number of trees necessary to accommodate the structure and related improvements.

ANALYSIS

General Plan Consistency

The project parcel has a Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial land use designation in the Sonoma County General Plan. This land use category is intended to accommodate visitor-serving uses such as resorts with on-site ancillary uses. The proposed resort is consistent with the visitor-serving commercial land use policy and final Design Review Committee review and approval of the project will ensure the resort maintains rural character and reduces impacts caused by nighttime lighting. Additionally, the project is consistent with open space and resource conservation policies of the General Plan in that implementation of the proposed Streamside Conservation Plan will ensure the protection of riparian vegetation, water resources and habitat values.

The noise study prepared for the project (Illingworth and Rodkin, 2016), finds that the project will not exceed General Plan noise standards if noise reduction measures are incorporated into the project. Project conditions of approval require all noise reduction measures proposed by Illingworth and Rodkin are met, including construction of a noise barrier (fence or wall) along the westerly project property boundary, varying in height



from six to eight feet, to reduce driveway/parking lot noise impacts on the adjacent Dubrava Village homes. The project has also been conditioned to require field inspection by Permit Sonoma staff and a qualified acoustical consultant to verify all project noise reduction measures have been met.

Lastly, the project site is within a Class 1 – Major Groundwater Basin and located outside of any priority groundwater basin. However, no private wells will be constructed onsite, as the project will be served by public water from the Sweetwater Springs Water District. Project conditions of approval require a Water Conservation Plan be submitted for all buildings and landscaping prior to building permit issuance, subject to Permit Sonoma review and approval. The Water Conservation Plan must include all reasonably feasible measures to reduce water demand to the maximum extent feasible and enhance water resource recovery to maintain sustainable water supplies. Measures that must be evaluated include installation of low-flow fixtures, best available conservation technologies for all water uses, rainwater and stormwater collection systems and graywater reuse. All proposed landscaping must comply with the Sonoma County Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance.

Zoning Consistency

The proposed 120-room resort project is located within the Guerneville Urban Service Area boundary and is allowed in the K (Recreation and Visitor-Serving Commercial) Zoning District with a use permit. The proposed project is a compatible blend of recreation and tourist-commercial uses to maintain and enhance Russian River recreational resources. The project meets Zoning Development Standards with regard to building setbacks and maximum lot coverage. Exceptions to maximum building height, parking requirements, and Riparian Corridor setbacks are discussed further below. The project is not subject to the 200-foot Scenic Corridor setback and no Valley Oak Trees are proposed for removal. The project proposes to convert 2.35 acres of coast redwood forest (timberland) to a non-forest use and is exempt from a minor timberland conversion zoning permit, as only the minimum number of trees will be removed to accommodate the resort structures and related improvements.

To evaluate the project’s consistency with the Tree Protection Ordinance, the applicant prepared an assessment of construction impacts to trees on the project site (McNair & Associates, dated February 10, 2018). This report documents probable tree impacts occurring as the result the current project design. Per the Tree Inventory and Construction Impact Assessment matrix, up to 76 coast redwood trees (ranging in size from 10” to 48” DBH) may require removal. The 76 tree removal number is based upon an assumption that full removal could happen at each cluster designated for partial removal due to their close proximity to proposed buildings (adjacent) and the inability to preserve the remaining trees in the clusters. Tree protection measures will be implemented to ensure tree preservation and long-term viability. The tree protection measures are intended to protect root zones, while allowing construction close to the tree clusters. The project proposes to meet mitigation requirements in the Tree Protection Ordinance through a combination of the planting of replacement trees and payment of in-lieu fees.

Increased Building Height:

The Zoning Code states the maximum allowed building height of 35 feet (for Commercial Zones) may be increased with a use permit provided that a building with increased allowed height does not exceed the maximum allowed building intensity in the applicable zone. Per Sec. 26-10-040 (K) of the Zoning Code, Maximum Building Intensity is calculated by multiplying the maximum permitted building height (35 feet) by the maximum square footage of lot coverage permitted on a lot (50%). The maximum building intensity for the project is 7,325,710 cubic feet (35 feet multiplied by 209,306 sq. feet). The proposed building height is 53 feet (four levels)



or the equivalent of 13.25 feet per floor. Therefore, the proposed building intensity for all proposed buildings is 1,163,576 cubic feet, well below the maximum building intensity of 7,323,710 cubic feet.

Preliminary Design Review:

On November 7, 2018, the Design Review Committee (DRC) reviewed the project for conformance with Zoning and General Plan policies, including the Russian River Corridor Design Guidelines. The DRC supports the overall design concept provided that the applicant address the underlying design concerns and/or recommendations provided below (see complete DRC Record of Action under Attachment 9). Project conditions of approval require the applicant obtain Final Design Review Committee review and approval prior to any grading or building permit issuance for the project. Final Design Review Committee review will ensure the concerns raised during the November 7, 2018 DRC meeting are addressed.

DRC November 7, 2018 Comments

SITE PLAN

- 1. Consider incorporating corridor breaks between bungalow buildings to break up horizontal massing and provide for improved circulation.*
- 2. DRC supports building encroachment within riparian corridor with riverfront access improvements working to benefit the greater community as proposed*

Staff comment: The applicant has revised the site plan to include corridor breaks between the bungalow buildings (Tree House Suites) and proposes to relocate and improve the public access trail and public parking lot, and construct a new public restroom and bicycle racks as to improve public access to the Russian River.

ARCHITECTURE

- 3. DRC may support request for height limit exception from 35 to 53 feet provided that façade elevations undergo revision to reduce appearance of bulk and massing as seen from the Russian River to south and from the hotel frontage approach to the north.*
- 4. Consider stepping West Wing building back upper floors from west exterior to reduce massing*
- 5. Consider adding more articulation to north and south facades to break up continuous vertical planes.*

Staff comment: The square footages for levels 2-4 of both Hotel Buildings and the Tree House Suite buildings remain the same. Therefore, the facades have not been stepped back to reduce the appearance of bulk and massing. The Board of Zoning Adjustments may need to consider requiring the applicant reduce the number of rooms or the size of rooms on the upper levels in order to address the DRC's design concerns regarding bulk and massing.

PARKING DESIGN

- 6. DRC supports request for reduction of five (5) required on-site parking spaces if traffic study clearly upholds findings and site plan is appropriately revised to accommodate more landscaping as recommended.*

Staff comment: The applicant submitted an addendum to the final traffic study prepared for the project which finds that 176 parking spaces (including 15 stacked spaces) and the 25 spaces for public parking will accommodate the project.



LANDSCAPING

- 7. Provide additional trees throughout parking lot landscape area.
- 8. Increase planter island widths at opportune locations throughout the parking interior and along the site frontage to accommodate more landscaping
- 9. Develop a more effective screening solution between the highway and parking area.
- 10. Reconsider use of big leaf maple trees for parking lot shading

Staff comment: The applicant submitted revised a landscaping plan, which provides for additional screening between the highway and the parking areas (Hybrid Madrones and Redwood trees). Evergreen hedges and different maples trees (Japanese Maples, Big Leaf Maples and Bowhall Maples) will be planted throughout the parking areas.

COLORS / MATERIALS

- 11. Confirm use of low reflectivity window schedule for façade exteriors with southern exposure.

Staff comment: Project materials include use of plaster siding and horizontal lap siding, stone veneer, metal clad window treatment and standing seam metal roofs. Project conditions of approval require Final Design Review Committee review and approval of the window schedule for the project.

LIGHTING

- 12. Minimize use of exterior lighting that could result in off-site light spillage, such as with light bollards and shielded light fixtures, especially closer to the Du Brava property line. No tall light poles should be used.

Staff comment: The applicant is not proposing to use tall light poles. Project conditions of approval require all exterior lighting is Dark Sky Compliant. Exterior lighting standards include the following requirements: low mounted, downward casting exterior lighting that is fully shielded to prevent glare; locating exterior lighting away from the periphery of the property to avoid spill over onto adjacent properties or into the sky; prohibiting flood lights; requiring all parking lot and street lights are full cut-off fixtures; and that any security lighting is motion-sensor activated.

OTHER

- 13. Consider options or supporting workforce housing rather than feeing out.
- 14. Consider conducting additional community outreach to clarify scope of current design proposal before proceeding with BZA hearing.

Staff comment: The applicant proposes to pay fees in accordance with Workforce Housing Requirements pursuant to 26-89-045 of the Zoning Code. The estimated Workforce Housing Fee for the project (based on 2021 Fee Schedule) is \$266,834.00. The applicant has conducted community outreach on the project, as summarized in the Neighborhood/Public Comments section below.

Floodway and Floodplain:

No buildings or structures are proposed to be located within the F1 Zone, except minimal retaining walls for the public access trail. The most-current FEMA map for the area (Community Panel No. 06097C0657E, effective on 12/02/2008), indicates that the entire project site is located in Flood Zone AE, which is defined as an area where



the base flood elevation has been determined. The FEMA FIRM map indicates the base flood elevation at the site to be approximately 57 feet (NAVD 88). The applicant prepared a site-specific floodway determination (Green Valley Consulting Engineers, 2007) for the project and determined that a base flood elevation (BFE) for the project would be approximately 54.2 feet (NGVD29) or 57 feet (NAVD88).

To ensure consistency with County flood protection regulations, a project condition of approval requires preparation of a final flood elevation study to certify flood elevations across the project site and ensure finished floor elevations of project structures are at least one foot above 100-year flood elevations (58.1 feet, unless a lower finished floor elevation is determined appropriate based on the final flood elevation study). In order to accept a reduced flood elevation determination the applicant would need to apply for a letter of map revision to FEMA. Project Conditions of Approval also require construction of the public access trail to meet required waterway setbacks, provide a floodway analysis, and comply with all requirements of County code and relevant resource agencies, including State and North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Boards, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and County Water Agency Flood Control Criteria regarding flood control design.

Riparian Corridor:

The Use Permit request includes a Conceptual Streamside Conservation Plan for encroachment into the Riparian Corridor 50-setbacks established for the Russian River and Hulbert Creek, which covers approximately 1.065 acres (46,426 sq. ft.) of the project site. The Conceptual Streamside Conservation Plan was prepared to mitigate for impacts to riparian habitat resulting from the Resort facility and public trail encroachments into the Riparian Corridor and includes:

- 4,490 SF of Riparian Corridor habitat loss due to resort building structures, patios, decks and walkways (consisting of 2,745 SF of impermeable areas and 1,746 SF of permeable areas); and
- Approximately 0.32 acres (13,939 SF) of Riparian Corridor habitat loss due to the public access trail and the pathway to the river from the hotel; and
- Mitigation for 0.42 acres (18,429 SF) of Riparian Corridor habitat loss at a 3:1 ratio for a total minimum mitigation area of 1.26 acres (55,080 SF) of riparian habitat restoration, including non-native vegetation removal and planting with native riparian vegetation.

It is anticipated that the final alignment of the public access trail will be close to the conceptual alignment and will not require any tree removal. Prior to grading and building permit issuance, Project Conditions of Approval require submission of a Final Streamside Conservation Plan for Permit Sonoma review and approval. Permit Sonoma is required to verify the riparian habitat restoration activities identified in the Final Streamside Conservation Plan are implemented prior to final occupancy of the Resort building permits.

Parking Regulations:

Pursuant to Article 86 (Parking Regulations) of the Sonoma County Zoning Code, the resort facility is required to provide 226 parking spaces to accommodate for the hotel component (121 spaces), the restaurant (56 spaces), and the meeting rooms (49 spaces). Additionally, the existing public parking easement requires the property provides 25 public parking spaces for access to the Russian River.



The project proposes a total of 201 parking spaces, including the 25 public spaces and a zone for 15 stacked parking spaces. The 25 public parking spaces will be reserved for public use while the public trail is open from Sunrise to Sunset. The remaining 176 parking spaces are for use by hotel resort guests and employees. The applicant requests to implement a shared parking concept and reduce the required parking (for the resort) by 50 spaces. Section 26-86-010.i of the Zoning Code allows the Board of Zoning Adjustments to reduce parking standards when it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that fewer spaces will adequately serve the project:

Parking standards may be reduced when it has been satisfactorily demonstrated (to the BZA) that fewer spaces will adequately serve the specific use or that the applicant has encouraged transit opportunities through one or more of the following:

- (1) Participation in a comprehensive travel demand management (TDM) program including, but not limited to, provision of flex-time, carpooling, and transit passes such that VMT generated by the project is reduced;*
- (2) Provision of transit stops and/or turnouts developed in cooperation with and approved by Sonoma County Transit;*
- (3) Provision of amenities for bicyclists, bus riders, carpoolers and pedestrians beyond (Code requirements).*

The applicant completed an Addendum to the Final Traffic Impact Study with an updated parking analysis for the project (W-Trans September 8, 2020). The Addendum uses methodologies contained in the updated Urban Land Institute (ULI) publication, Shared Parking, Third Edition, 2020, to determine parking demand for the resort and its affiliated uses during different time periods. The ULI shared parking methodology ties recommended parking supply to the maximum demand period.

Shared Parking for the Leisure Hotel land use includes the total number of rooms, restaurant square footage and meeting room space. The shared parking analysis projects a peak season (June to October) parking demand of 190 spaces. Overall parking demand is projected to be approximately 30 percent lower during the off-peak winter months (December to April). The parking demand projections include parking generated by the river access public parking lot.

On November 6, 2020, the Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW) accepted the Addendum, which concludes the resort's proposed 201-space parking supply is expected to accommodate the projected peak-season demand for 190 spaces. A project condition of approval requires the applicant submit a Final Parking Management Plan for review and approval by DTPW and Permit Sonoma, addressing plans for use of valet parking during special events and both peak and non-peak season uses. For more detailed analysis and the prescribed mitigation measures for the parking requirements, please see the Transportation Section of the CEQA Initial Study (Mitigated Negative Declaration) for the project under Attachment 11.

Required bicycle parking spaces call for one bicycle space for every 5 spaces required for automobiles, equating to at least 40 required bicycle parking spaces if utilizing 201 vehicle parking spaces if the shared parking concept is applied. If the shared parking concept is not found acceptable by the BZA, then additional bicycle parking spaces above the proposed 40 spaces may be required.



Environmental Analysis

The proposed project has been analyzed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations. Staff has determined that the project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. Based on application materials provided by the applicant and technical specialists, an Initial Study was completed.

As a result of the Initial Study, it was determined that project impacts could be mitigated to a less than significant level, and so a Mitigated Negative Declaration was drafted for the project. This document identifies mitigation measures and a monitoring program for the proposed project. The following table lists subsections of the Initial Study that may be potentially impacted by this project. Mitigation measures for these potential impacts are detailed in the Mitigated Negative Declaration, and have been incorporated into the conditions of approval.

Environmental factors listed below were considered by evaluating the project. The Initial Study includes a discussion of the potential impacts and identifies mitigation measures to substantially reduce those impacts to a level of insignificance where feasible:

- **No Impact: The project would not have the impact described.** The project may have a beneficial effect, but there is no potential for the project to create or add increment to the impact described.
- **Less Than Significant Impact:** The project would have the impact described, but the impact would not be significant. Mitigation is not required, although the project applicant may choose to modify the project to avoid the impacts.
- **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated:** The project would have the impact described, and the impact could be significant. One or more mitigation measures have been identified that will reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

Topic Area	Abbreviation*	No Impact	Less than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated
Aesthetic/Visual	VIS			X
Agricultural & Forest Resources	AG			X
Air Quality	AIR		X	
Biological Resources	BIO			X
Cultural Resources	CUL			X
Energy	ENE	X		
Geology and Soils	GEO			X
Greenhouse Gas Emission	GHG		X	



Topic Area	Abbreviation*	No Impact	Less than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	HAZ	X		
Hydrology and Water Quality	HYDRO			X
Land Use and Planning	LU		X	
Mineral Resources	MIN	X		
Noise	NOISE			X
Population and Housing	POP		X	
Public Services	PS		X	
Recreation	REC		X	
Transportation and Traffic	TRANS			X
Tribal Cultural Resources	TCR		X	
Utility and Service Systems	UTL		X	
Wildfire	WILD		X	
Mandatory Findings of Significance			X	

For more detailed analysis and the prescribed mitigation measures for the topic areas that may have impacts that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation”, please refer to the corresponding sections of the CEQA Initial Study (Mitigated Negative Declaration) for the project:

- Section 1: Aesthetics/Visual: pages 39-43
- Section 2: Agricultural and Forest Resources: pages 43-45
- Section 4. Biological Resources: pages 50-56
- Section 5. Cultural Resources: pages 56-57
- Section 7. Geology and Soils: pages 57-60
- Section 10. Hydrology and Water Quality: pages 65-68
- Section 13. Noise: pages 70-74
- Section 17. Transportation: pages 77-81

NEIGHBORHOOD/PUBLIC COMMENTS

At the Sonoma County Design Review Committee meeting held on November 7, 2018, public comments raised the following concerns:

- Protect riparian habitat over tree restoration.
- Lighting impact from parking lot and upper floor of hotel rooms.



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- Hotel impact on local lodging
- Scenic corridor protection
- Public access easement
- Riparian Corridor setback

The DRC recommended that the applicant consider conducting additional community outreach to clarify scope of current design proposal before proceeding with BZA hearing. Since May 2018, the applicant has been conducting public outreach and participated in the following engagements:

Outreach Conducted by Applicant	Date
Russian River Chamber of Commerce Mixer	05/02/2018
Stakeholder Meeting with Guerneville Area Organizations and Community Leaders	06/04/2018
Meeting with Guerneville Neighborhoods Association	07/21/2018
Meeting with Dubrava Homeowners Association	08/25/2018
Guerneville Park Picnic with Neighbors	09/08/2018
Meetings with Russian Riverkeeper	2/6/2019 and 4/5/2019
Communication with Mike Nicholls, Lower Russian River MAC Chair	Mid-April 2019
Land-use Sub-committee Meeting of the Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council (MAC)	07/21/2020
Russian River Chamber of Commerce	05/04/2021
Dubrava Village Homeowner’s Association	05/22/2021
Lower Russian river Municipal Advisory Council presentation	06/17/2021
Russian River Chamber of Commerce	08/4/2021 postponed due to Covid; general outreach in August-September Chamber Newsletter.

General concerns raised during the applicant’s public outreach meetings include:

- Need for low-cost local housing for resort workers; work force housing, should improve housing for local community.
- Local program assisting low-income local workers
- Homeless encampments, theft, overflow parking, overnight parking, camping on grounds
- Sewage management, air and river water pollution
- Damage to Dubrava Village perimeter fence
- Storage of trucks and large equipment by the “caretaker” near the Dubrava Village property line
- Dumping of garbage on the Dubrava Village riverfront
- Issues of unmaintained large redwood trees compromised by large/non-native ivy growth on the Lok property
- Tree removal
- Issues with fire danger due to unsupervised “beach parties”, access to property by fire department and security of property prior to start of construction



- Some concerns expressed with the size and scope of development –development was “too big” and the height of the development was “too high”
- Concerns with the potential for increased traffic along Highway 116 and the potential safety impacts that would come along with the development
- Neighbors hope to have access to the resort and the amenities offered (potentially use of pool)
- Concerned about any noise from garbage or service trucks near the property line – and visual impacts with the fence

On January 15, 2019, the Russian River Chamber of Commerce submitted a letter of support stating that the project would meet the region’s growing demand for lodging, hospitality and overall experience in a natural setting; create jobs in the area; be a much needed boost to the local economy; increase TOT collections; turn a blighted property into one all can be proud of; and fill an important need for additional conference room space, currently not available.

The Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was published for a 30-day public review and comment period from August 27 through September 27, 2021. Public comments were received from 70 households. Ten of the public comments express support for the project and 60 oppose the project. Public comments are included under Attachment 7.

Of the 60 opposition comments, 50 expressed concerns about local traffic congestion , 49 expressed water supply/drought concerns, 50 expressed fire evacuation concerns and 48 expressed design/size concerns. Other concerns expressed are loss of open space, noise, homeless encampments, deficient sewer system, loss of 76 Redwood trees, impact on existing small business owners operating hotels and lodges, pollution of riparian habitats, and inadequate conservation plan. The State Lands Commission submitted a comment letter requesting clarifying information on the public parking lot assessment and for new mitigation measures to be added to the project to increase protection of submerged cultural resources.

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONCERNS RAISED

Traffic

The Traffic Impact Study (W-Trans, December 11, 2018) found that all traffic study intersections will operate acceptability at LOS D or better. The left turn queues on Highway 116 at the project driveway will be within available two-way left-turn lane storage. A Class I bicycle pathway will be installed along the entire project frontage and 40 bicycle parking spaces will be provided. A new transit shelter with a bench will be installed at the front of the property. The Addendum to the Final Traffic Impact Study (W-Trans, September 8, 2020) presented Shared Parking methodology and a Shared Parking analysis for applying the Urban land Institute (ULI) Shared Parking methodology to the project to meet the projected peak–season parking demand.

Height and Massing of Hotel Buildings

DRC requested plan revisions to reduce building massing. DRC may support request for height limit exception from 35 to 53 feet provided that façade elevations undergo revision to reduce appearance of bulk and massing as seen from the Russian River to south and from the hotel frontage approach to the north. DRC also wants the applicant to consider stepping West Wing building back upper floors from west exterior to reduce massing and adding more articulation to north and south facades to break up continuous vertical planes.



Tree Removal

A Tree Impact Graphic Plan from the Arborist Construction Impact Review (MacNair, February 10, 2018, updated February 10, 2020) highlights the locations of the 43 coast redwood clusters. Of the 43-coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) clusters within the development envelope, there will be no impact to four (4) of the clusters; twenty-eight (28) of the clusters will require special tree protection measures so as to not damage the root zones; five (5) of the clusters will require partial removal and six (6) of the clusters will be removed. Potentially 76 trees could be removed if partial cluster removal turns out to be impossible or unsuccessful. The Streamside Conservation Plan will offset the loss of coast redwood habitat.

Riparian Corridor Impacts

The Riparian Corridor covers approximately 1.065 acres. Approximately 0.06 acre will be impacted by buildings and 0.04 acre impacted by walkways, decks and patios. Approximately 0.25 acre will be impacted by the construction of the ADA-compliant public access trail and the connector path from the hotel to the river. Therefore, the total impact to the Riparian Corridor will be 0.42 acre. No trees will be removed. The remaining 0.64 acre will not be directly affected.

The Streamside Conservation Plan will provide the mitigation for the encroachment into the Riparian Corridor. The applicant has agreed to a 3:1 mitigation ratio (3 acres of mitigation for each impacted acre). Invasive species will be removed from the unaffected area of the Riparian Corridor and native riparian species will be planted.

Noise

Noise will be produced by traffic on Highway 116 plus project traffic and parking, outdoor use areas, mechanical equipment. Amplified music, amplified speech and non-amplified music will exceed the nighttime threshold. The noise will be mitigated by a noise barrier along the shared property line with Dubrava Village.

Scenic Corridor Protection

Several design elements protect the Scenic Corridor. The hotel has been set back more than 30% of the lot depth. The hotel buildings are located outside of the Scenic Corridor and set within coast redwood trees for compatibility with its surroundings. Existing vegetation screens views from Highway 116. The tone and hedge wall visually separates the resort from Highway 116. New landscaping integrates the hotel with the setting.

Water

Concern has been expressed about being in the midst of a very severe drought and considering a “luxury” hotel of this size and how the addition of another big water user can be justified. One concerned commenter is not against a hotel, just not at this time. On March 22, 2021, Sweetwater Springs Water District issued a Water Will Serve Letter stating that the District has adequate domestic water supplies to furnish the proposed project. The letter also stated that the District has sufficient storage for fire flows for Type IA, IB, IIA and IIIA building materials. The consulting engineer for Sweetwater Springs Water District (District) states the District has a water shortage contingency plan with mandatory usage reductions included, but so far have only issued the Phase I voluntary conservation request. The District has water rights that date back to 1885 (pre 1914 Water Rights). According to the consulting engineer, the District stands in good shape from the perspective of water rights and water usage.

Sewer Capacity

Concern was expressed whether the sewer could handle the project. River Sanitation has confirmed that they have capacity for the project.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Preceding Review Authority Recommendation

The Design Review Committee (DRC) supports the overall design concept provided that the requested plan revisions to reduce building massing and accommodate additional landscaping come back for further consideration after BZA decision.

Staff Recommendation

The Permit Resource and Management Department (Permit Sonoma) recommends that the Board of Zoning Adjustments adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approve the Use Permit and Design Review request subject to the Conditions of Approval.

ATTACHMENTS

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Conditions of Approval
2. Proposal Statement
3. Vicinity Map
4. Aerial
5. Zoning Map
6. Project Plans
7. Public Outreach Summary conducted by Applicant
8. Public Comments
9. Design Review Committee Record of Action, dated November 7, 2018
10. Sweetwater Water District Will Serve Letter
11. Guernewood Park Resort Initial Study/Mitigation Negative Declaration, Published August 27, 2021
12. Draft Board of Zoning Adjustments Resolution

