



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 3/7/2024

File #: 24-289

To: Zoning Administrator
From: Planning and Building Department
Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Cameron Moore Zoning Clearance Certificate, Special Permit, and Lot Line Adjustment

Assessor Parcel Numbers: 209-301-012, 209-301-013, 209-301-016, and 209-301-017

Record Numbers: PLN-11603-ZCC and PLN-2020-16893

Redcrest area

A Zoning Clearance for 10,000 square feet of new outdoor light-deprivation cannabis cultivation and a Special Permit for a setback reduction from Humboldt Redwoods State Park (PLN-11603-ZCC); and a Lot Line Adjustment between three parcels, resulting in two parcels (PLN-2020-16893). 1,000 square feet of propagation space is proposed. The cannabis will be partially dry farmed, with supplemental water for irrigation provided by rainwater catchment. Approximately 30,700 gallons of water will be required annually for irrigation. A total of 52,800 gallons of water storage is proposed. Drying and bucking of mature cannabis will occur onsite within the greenhouses. Further processing will take place at an off-site licensed processing facility. There will be a maximum of two employees on site. Power for the project will be provided by solar. A generator will be kept on site for emergency purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Zoning Administrator:

1. Adopt the resolution (Resolution 23-__). (Attachment 1) which does the following:
 - a. Finds that the Zoning Administrator has considered the adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Commercial Medical Marijuana Land Use Ordinance and the Addendum that was prepared for the project; and
 - b. Finds the Lot Line Adjustment exempt from further environmental review pursuant to Section 15305(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines; and
 - c. Finds that the proposed project complies with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance; and
 - d. Approves the Zoning Clearance Certificate, Special Permit, and Lot Line Adjustment

subject to the recommended conditions of approval (Attachment 1A);

DISCUSSION:

Project Location: The project is located in the Redcrest area, on the south side of Holmes Flat Road, approximately 0.75 miles from the intersection of State Highway 254 and Holmes Flat Road, on the properties known as 766, 800, and 888 Holmes Flat Road, Redcrest.

Present General Plan Land Use Designation: Agricultural Exclusive (AE); Avenue of the Giants Community Plan and Humboldt County General Plan; Density: 20 acres per unit; Slope Stability: Low to Moderate Instability (C).

Present Zoning: Agriculture Exclusive with a Flood Hazard Area combining zone (AE-F).

Environmental Review: An Addendum to a previously adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared for consideration per §15164 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The Lot Line Adjustment is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15305(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

State Appeal: Project is NOT appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

Major concerns: None.

Executive Summary

Cameron Moore seeks a Zoning Clearance Certificate for 10,000 square feet of new outdoor light-deprivation cannabis cultivation. Cultivation will take place in five 2,000 square-foot greenhouses. Also proposed is a 1,000 square-foot propagation nursery greenhouse. The applicant anticipates there will be two cultivation cycles occurring annually. Cultivation will occur in an area that occupies less than 20% of the prime agricultural soils on the parcel. Drying and bucking of mature cannabis will occur onsite within the greenhouses. Further processing will take place at a licensed processing facility. One employee will be required for daily project operations, and one additional employee will be required during the peak part of the season. Power will be provided by two 3,000-watt solar panel trailers. A generator will be kept on site for emergency purposes only. Artificial lighting used for propagation will adhere International Dark Sky Association standards as set forth in the CMMLUO. Ventilated structures will be used to mitigate and buffer noise and disturbance to natural surroundings and habitat.

The project will operate within the requirements of a Site Management Plan per the State Waterboard guidelines. No fertilizers or pesticides will be stored onsite. Weed control methods of hand-pulling, mulching, and weed eating will be used on site. The proposed cultivation site is not affected by any known pests or pathogens. Waste materials will be stored in appropriate storage containers and self-hauled weekly to a licensed waste transfer station. A portable toilet with a hand washing station will be on-site for employee use.

Water Resources: The cannabis will be partially dry farmed, with supplemental water for irrigation

provided by rainwater catchment. Rainwater will be captured from the roof of the existing metal pole building on site. The catchment area square footage of the main roof of the building is approximately 31,250 square feet. The project area received approximately 28.8 inches of rainfall in 2020 (a substantial drought year) as recorded by the PRISM Climate Group. The rain catchment potential of the building's roof is approximately 561,039 gallons in a substantial drought year. Approximately 30,700 gallons of water will be required annually for irrigation. A total of 52,800 gallons of water storage is proposed. Plants will be watered every six to seven days after they are established in the final planting destination. 700 gallons of water will be used for each 2,000 square-foot greenhouse. Compost teas will be brewed then foliar sprayed. No inputs or cleaning products will be applied through the irrigation system. Water conservation and containment measures will be implemented including the use of hand and drip irrigation to prevent excessive water use and the maintenance of a stable vegetated buffer between the cultivation area and any riparian zone.

Public Lands: The project site is bordered by the Humboldt Redwoods State Park to the south of the subject properties. The cultivation area is proposed approximately 100 feet from the park, and no designated recreational facilities are within 600 feet of any proposed cultivation sites. This Special Permit will allow for a reduction in the required 600-foot setback from said public lands. The adjacent public lands are subject to the *Humboldt Redwoods State Park General Plan 2001 (HRSPGP)*. The *HRSPGP* identifies agriculture as one of multiple activities on parcels adjacent to the park that may cause impacts. The *HRSPGP* identifies road work and the potential for clear cutting occurring near the park boundary, erosion, wind damage, elimination of wildlife corridors, loss of scenic beauty, and reduction of habitat for plants and animals as potential impacts that require monitoring. The project as proposed demonstrates that it won't conflict with the *HRSPGP* because the project will minimize impacts to biological resources through measures to reduce light and sound impacts, as well as maintain buffers from surface water features and rely on dry farming and rainwater catchment for irrigation water. Further, the project maintains compliance with the Commercial Medical Marijuana Land Use Ordinance by maintaining a minimum 600-foot setback to developed trails and recreational areas within the park. As a result, there will not be any new erosion, wind damage, elimination of wildlife corridors, loss of scenic beauty or reduction of quality habitat for plants and animals. The project was referred to Humboldt Redwoods State Park (HRSP). HRSP responded with a question regarding cannabis annual site inspections, which was addressed by staff. No concerns regarding the setback reduction associated with the project were expressed.

Biological Resources: According to the California National Diversity Database the site is mapped with a non-specific historical record of maple-leaved checkerbloom. The nearest Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) activity center is approximately 0.7 miles north of the project site, and the nearest positive observation is approximately 0.68 miles north of the project site. Mapped marbled murrelet mapped critical habitat is located approximately 100 feet south of the proposed cultivation site on the adjacent parcel owned by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (Humboldt Redwoods State Park). Due to the proximity of habitat, the project has been conditioned to limit noise exposure to 50 decibels at 100 feet from the noise source or the edge of habitat, whichever is closer. The project has been conditioned to include requirements for keeping artificial light fully contained within structures such that no light escapes. The project was referred to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and no response was received.

Access: The property is accessed via private driveway from Holmes Flat Road, a County maintained road. Public Works comments recommend paving the access driveway, maintaining access in accordance with the County Sight Visibility Ordinance, and ensuring that gates are setback sufficiently from the road so vehicles will not block traffic when opening or closing the gate. These recommendations have been included as conditions of approval in Attachment 1A.

Tribal Consultation: The project is located in the Bear River and Sinkyone Aboriginal Ancestral Territories. The project was referred to the Northwest Information Center, Bear River Band, and Sinkyone. The Bear River Band Rancheria recommended a Cultural Resource Investigation to be conducted on the parcel. The applicant submitted a Cultural Resource Survey prepared by Archaeological Research and Supply Company dated May 2018. According to the survey there were no historic or prehistoric era resources located during the survey. The project has an ongoing condition to include inadvertent archaeological discovery language.

Flood Zone: The subject parcels are situated within the mapped FEMA flood zone and are required to provide flood elevation certificates for structures utilized for cannabis activities, including the proposed greenhouses. The proposed greenhouses underwent a hydrostatic load study and will be kept up all year round due to each structure receiving a flood elevation certificate and the applicant's commitment to remove the greenhouse skins during the rainy season.

Consistency with Humboldt County Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 18-43: Planning staff has determined that approval of this project is consistent with Humboldt County Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 18-43, which established a limit on the number of cultivation permits and acres which may be approved in each of the County's Planning Watersheds. The project site is located in the Lower Eel Planning Watershed, which under Resolution 18-43 is limited to 336 cultivation permits and 116 acres of cultivation. With the approval of this project the total approved cultivation permits in this Planning Watershed would be 77 permits and the total approved acres would be 35.4 acres of cultivation.

Lot Line Adjustment: The applicant proposes a Lot Line Adjustment (LLA) between three parcels of approximately 2.5 acres, 2.5 acres, and 5.0 acres resulting in two parcels of approximately 5.0 acres. Both resulting parcels will be developed with existing single-family residences and accessory structures. APN 209-311-017 is developed with an existing permitted cannabis cultivation operation. The sites are served domestic water by a shared well on APN 209-311-017 and have individual wastewater treatment systems. The purpose of the LLA is to remedy the encroachment of the existing metal pole building that currently transects the lot line, and to accommodate proposed cannabis improvements associated with APNs 209-301-013 and 209-301-012.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The project was referred to responsible agencies and all responding agencies have either responded with comments, no concerns, or recommended conditional approval. (Attachment 5)

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Zoning Administrator could elect not to hear this item and put the decision making in front of the Planning Commission. Any decision to place this matter before the Planning Commission must be made before opening the public hearing on this project.
2. The Zoning Administrator could elect to add or delete conditions of approval.
3. The Zoning Administrator could deny approval of the requested permits if unable to make all the required findings.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Resolution
 - A. Conditions of Approval
 - B. Operations Plan
 - C. Site Plan
 - D. Lot Line Adjustment Map
2. Location Map
3. CEQA Addendum
4. Applicant's Evidence in Support of the Required Findings
5. Referral Agency Comments and Recommendations

Applicant

Cameron Moore
888 Holmes Flat Road
Redcrest, CA 95569

Owner (APNs 209-301-012, -13)

Cameron Iris & Associates
888 Holmes Flat Road
Redcrest, CA 95569

Owner (APNs 209-301-016, -17)

Cameron R. Moore Trust
888 Holmes Flat Road
Redcrest, CA 95569

Agents

Humboldt Logistics
Brittany Massaro
PO Box 457
Scotia, CA 95565

Wallace Wright
3509 Church Street
Fortuna, CA 95540

Please contact Rodney Yandell, Senior Planner, at ryandell@co.humboldt.ca.us or 707-445-7541 if you

File #: 24-289

have questions about this item.