



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 6/5/2025

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File #: 25-739

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**To:** Zoning Administrator

**From:** Planning and Building Department

**Agenda Section:** Consent

**SUBJECT:**

**Cavanaugh- Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit**

Assessor Parcel Number: 016-172-013

Record Number: PLN-2025-19216

Myrtletown area

A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) to authorize tree removal associated with a Less Than Three Acre Conversion Exemption authorized by CALFIRE and the construction of a shop. The parcel is approximately 3.17 acres in size and the majority of the parcel will be subject to the conversion exemption with the exception of the Watercourse and Lake Protection Zone (WLPZ) in the northern portion of the property, which will be avoided consistent with the California Forest Practice Rules. In addition to the CDP, a Special Permit (SP) is requested for the construction of an accessory structure exceeding the size requirements pursuant to Section 313-69.1.4 of Humboldt County Code. Currently, a shop of up to 1,600 square feet and up to 20 feet tall is proposed northeast of the existing residence. Proposed improvements to the existing residence are exempt from a CDP pursuant to the Categorical Exclusion Order E-86-4. The parcel is served with community water and sewer provided by the Humboldt Community Services District.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Zoning Administrator:

1. Adopt the resolution (Attachment 1) which does the following:
  - a. Finds the Cavanaugh project exempt from environmental review pursuant to Sections 15303 and 15304 of the CEQA Guidelines; and
  - b. Finds the proposed project complies with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance; and
  - c. Approves the Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit as recommended by staff, subject to the conditions of approval (Attachment 1A).

**DISCUSSION:**

**Project Location:**

The project site is located in the Myrtletown area, at the east end of Pennsylvania Avenue, approximately 200 feet east of the intersection of Frank Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue, on the property known as 3970 Pennsylvania Avenue.

**Present General Plan Land Use Designation:**

Residential/Low Density (RL). Density range: 3-7 units per acre. Slope Stability: Low Instability (1).

**Present Zoning:**

Residential Single Family with a 5,000 square foot minimum lot size (RS-5).

**Environmental Review:**

The project is exempt from environmental review per section 15303 and 15304 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) - New construction, specifically accessory structures (15303) and Minor Alterations to Land, specifically, the removal of trees, provided they are not scenic (15304).

**State Appeal:**

Project is located within 100 feet of a stream and is therefore appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

**Major Concerns:**

None.

**Monitoring Required:**

None.

**Executive Summary:**

A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) to authorize tree removal associated with a Less Than Three Acre Conversion Exemption authorized by CALFIRE and the construction of a shop. The parcel is approximately 3.17 acres in size and the majority of the parcel will be subject to the conversion exemption with the exception of the Watercourse and Lake Protection Zone (WLPZ) in the northern portion of the property, which will be avoided consistent with the California Forest Practice Rules. In addition to the CDP, a Special Permit (SP) is requested for the construction of an accessory structure exceeding the size requirements pursuant to Section 313-69.1.4 of Humboldt County Code. Currently, a shop of up to 1,600 square feet and up to 20 feet tall is proposed northeast of the existing residence. Proposed improvements to the existing residence are exempt from a CDP pursuant to the Categorical Exclusion Order E-86-4. The parcel is served with community water and sewer provided by the Humboldt Community Services District.

The project consists of two components - tree removal associated with a Less Than 3-Acre Conversion Exemption and the construction of an accessory structure over 1,000 square feet in size. The tree removal is considered development under the Coastal Act, therefore, it requires a Coastal Development Permit (CDP). The parcel is approximately 3.17 acres in size and the majority of the parcel is intended to be cleared to reduce hazard trees, provide additional sunlight and clear a site for the construction of a shop. Trees along Myrtle Avenue will be retained and some additional select trees will remain for landscape purposes. There is a drainage feature that begins at the east end of Pennsylvania and runs along the northerly portion of the property and flows in a northeasterly direction. Although the Humboldt Bay Area Plan does require specific setbacks for riparian corridors, timber harvests associated with Less Than 3-Acre Conversions are permitted provided they are consistent with Coastal Commission special treatment areas as mapped. This site is not located within such area. Watercourse and Lake Protection Zone (WLPZ) setbacks established through the California Forest Practice Rules will be maintained.

The second component of the project is the construction of a detached accessory structure (workshop) of up to 1,600 square feet. The Coastal Zoning Ordinance limits detached accessory structures on residentially zoned parcels to 1,000 square feet. Pursuant to Section 313-69.1.4 of Humboldt County Code, a Special Permit is required for an accessory structure over 1,000 square feet. Given the size of the parcel - approximately 3.17 acres - a shop larger than that principally permitted in a residential zone would be appropriate.

**Air Quality:**

No air quality impacts are anticipated with the proposed project. There will be some emissions associated with the timber harvest and construction of the shop, however, these impacts will be minimal and limited in duration.

**Biological Resources:**

No biological resource impacts are anticipated with the proposed project. A site visit was conducted with a representative from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). No special status plants or animals were identified. The tree removal will maintain California Forest Practice Rules setbacks to watercourses consistent with the Humboldt Bay Area Plan (HBAP) requirements and the shop building will be over 100 feet from the unnamed drainage to the north of the property.

**Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources:**

The proposed project is not anticipated to impact any cultural resources or Tribal cultural resources. The project was referred to Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria, Blue Lake Rancheria, NWIC, and the Wiyot tribe. The Bear River Band responded that the

activities did not appear to represent a source of significant impacts on cultural resources. They requested that inadvertent archaeological discovery protocols be in place for any ground-disturbing activities that will take place in the future. NWIC recommended consulting with local tribes. The standard inadvertent discovery protocols have been included within the conditions of approval for this project.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials:**

The proposed project is not anticipated to create additional hazards or hazardous materials. The subject parcel is located in an area that is Relatively Stable (0), is not within a fault hazard zone and is outside the tsunami hazard area, is outside of an area of potential liquefaction and outside of the identified 100-year Flood Zone (A). The subject parcel is within the Local Response Area with Humboldt Bay Fire providing structural fire protection as well as responding to medical emergencies. Humboldt Bay Fire did not respond with any concerns regarding the project. No hazardous materials are anticipated as part of the proposed tree removal and construction of the shop.

**Hydrology and Water Quality:**

The proposed tree removal and construction of a shop is not anticipated to significantly impact hydrology and/or water quality within the surrounding area. The residence is served with community water and sewer provided by the Humboldt Community Services District. The District reviewed the proposed project and had no objections to the project, however, they did provide a list of requirements (see Attachment 4).

**Noise:**

The proposed tree removal and construction of a shop is not anticipated to create significant impact noise impacts. There will be noise impacts associated with the timber harvest and construction of the shop, however, these impacts will be minimal and limited in duration.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

The project was referred to responsible agencies and all responding agencies have either responded with no comment or recommended approval or conditional approval. (Attachment 3)

**ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Zoning Administrator could elect not to approve the project. This alternative should be implemented if the Zoning Administrator is unable to make all the required findings. Planning Division staff is confident that the required findings can be made. Consequently, planning staff does not recommend further consideration of this alternative.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution
  - A. Conditions of Approval
  - B. Site Plan
2. Applicant's Evidence in Support of the Required Findings
3. Referral Agency Comments and Recommendations

**APPLICANT, OWNER, AGENT AND PLANNER INFORMATION:**

**Applicant:**

Amber Cavanaugh  
3970 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Eureka, CA 95501

**Owner:**

Same as applicant

**Agent:**

N/A

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Please contact Trevor Estlow, Senior Planner, at [testlow@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:testlow@co.humboldt.ca.us) or 707-268-3740 if you have questions about this item.