



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 2/6/2025

File #: 25-201

To: Planning Commission

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Public Hearing

SUBJECT:

Lock Box Storage LLC Conditional Use Permit for Self-Storage Facility

Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 516-111-064

Record No.: PLN-2024-19084

Glendale area

The proposed Lock Box Storage LLC Self-Storage Facility project includes a Conditional Use Permit for the construction and operation of a mini-storage center in unincorporated Humboldt County in the Glendale area. The proposed footprint is 30,290 square feet, comprised of two two-story 15,145 square foot buildings, one of which would include a small office space with a restroom. This area would be equivalent to a lot-area coverage of less than 40 percent on the 1.75 acre lot. The building appearance would be typical of other existing mini-storage companies in the Humboldt Bay area. The property is located within the Fieldbrook Community Services District for water and sewer. The parcel has historically been served electricity by PG&E. The proposed operating hours are 7 am to 9 pm.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Planning Commission:

1. Adopt the resolution (Resolution 25-___), which does the following:
 - a. Finds the Planning Commission has considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) previously adopted for the Glendale Cannabis Facility as well as the Addendum to the MND that was prepared for the Lock Box Storage LLC project pursuant to Section 15164 of the CEQA guidelines; and
 - b. Makes all the required findings for approval of the Conditional Use Permit; and
 - c. Approves the Lock Box Storage LLC Conditional Use Permit subject to the conditions of approval.

DISCUSSION:

Project Location:

This project is located in the Glendale area, on the north side of Glendale Drive, approximately 700 feet west from the intersection of Glendale Drive and Swanson Lane, on the property known as 1695 Glendale Drive.

Present General Plan Land Use Designation:

Commercial Services (CS), Density: N/A, Fieldbrook-Glendale Community Planning Area (FGCPA), 2017 General Plan, Slope Stability: Relatively Stable (0)

Present Zoning:

Unclassified (U)

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

An Addendum to a previously adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared for consideration per §15164 of CEQA Guidelines.

State Appeal:

Project is NOT appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

Major Concerns:

None.

Executive Summary:

The proposed Lock Box Storage LLC Self-Storage Facility project includes a Conditional Use Permit for the construction and operation of a mini-storage center in unincorporated Humboldt County in the Glendale area. The proposed footprint is 30,290 square feet, comprised of two two-story 15,145 square foot buildings, one of which would include a small office space with a restroom. This area would be equivalent to a lot area coverage of less than 40 percent on the 1.75 acre lot. The building appearance would be typical of other existing mini-storage companies in the Humboldt Bay area. The property is located within the Fieldbrook Community Services District for water and sewer. The parcel has historically been served electricity by PG&E. The proposed operating hours are 7 am to 9 pm.

The parcel was not identified in the County's most recent housing inventory because the site's zoning and land use are not slated for residential uses and no residences have been constructed or proposed on the property. The project would not result in a reduction of any parcel below the density utilized for determining compliance with housing element law.

Based on preliminary plans, the overall footprint of the storage units and the office would not exceed 30,290 square feet. This area would result in a lot-area coverage of less than 40% on the 1.75 acre lot.

The maximum ground coverage in the Unclassified (U) zone is exactly 40%. The new buildings are proposed to be two-stories each. The proposed elevations indicate that metal siding and metal roofing will be the primary exterior materials. The building appearance would be typical of other existing mini-storage companies in the Humboldt Bay area.

The project is located within the State Responsibility Area for CalFIRE, so Fire Safe Regulations, including 30 feet setbacks from all property boundaries. Therefore, the applicant has applied for and received an exception to the 30 foot setback allowing a reduction to 25 feet on the eastern and western property boundaries.

Site Description:

The project site is entirely paved, and no structures exist on the subject property. The property is surrounded by an existing chain-link fence. An asphalt sidewalk along and at the same elevation as Glendale Drive crosses the parcel from the west property line to the existing driveway. The sidewalk continues past the driveway, but the quality diminishes to the point that it becomes a dirt desire-path before crossing the eastern property line. The paved lot has been utilized intermittently for product storage, typically leased to companies for that purpose.

The project site was previously used by a mill for stacking clean lumber. The Commercial Services (CS) land use designation was established on the site in the General Plan Update in 2017 and is intended for heavy commercial uses and compatible light industrial uses not serving day to day needs. Warehousing, Storage, and Distribution uses such as that proposed in this Conditional Use Permit are expressly compatible with the current land use designation.

Access & Parking:

The property is presently accessed by an existing driveway which is roughly 30 feet wide for its length, and 40 feet wide at the intersection with Glendale Drive. The project proposes an additional 16 foot wide driveway. The gate and fence are approximately 20 feet from the intersection of the driveway and Glendale Drive, however Public Works requires an available staging area outside of the right of way. Staging areas are typically 25 feet, and the right of way extends over 10 feet across the driveway's intersection, so the gate will need to be relocated further into the property to accommodate an appropriate staging area outside of the right of way (**Condition 10.g**). This relocation may cause the gate to be excessively close to the proposed storage buildings, so shifting the proposed footprints of the buildings northerly may be appropriate. As long as the eastern and western setbacks are maintained, this shift is unlikely to require additional planning review. Additionally, Public Works has requested that both driveways meet the commercial driveway standards as detailed in the County Urban Driveway No. 1 standards, which would require a maximum driveway width of 29 feet, with 3 feet of slope on either side of the intersection to reach the standard level of the curb. Complying with these standards will require a five foot reduction to the driveway's width at the intersection and a one foot reduction to the driveway's maximum width for the remainder (**Condition 10.d**).

The site plan includes four standard parking spaces behind the buildings and one ADA parking space near the entrance to Building 'A'. The applicant estimates that a maximum of two to three customers would be on the site at any given time. Operationally, many visitors to the facility would conceivably temporarily park in front of their respective rental units before departing the premises and traffic generated by the center is anticipated to be similar to or less than the average traffic to and from the heavy commercial uses allowed in the commercial services land use district. The usual traffic for established mini storage facilities is less than what is typical for retail, grocery, and restaurant businesses.

Public Works has communicated that the target width of the Glendale Drive right-of-way is 50 feet, but the easement for said right of way is presently 44 feet. In order to support full build-out of the right-of-way and prevent the proposed project from encroaching on future road improvements, the project [is conditioned to record an easement increasing the right of way by three feet (**Condition 10.c**)]. Public Works requested frontage improvements including curb, gutter, and a five foot wide sidewalk along Glendale Drive. These improvements will require the fence to be relocated in order to accommodate travelers. The area overall has the potential to become a walkable community, and the inclusion of the sidewalk will support those long-term goals.

Water Resources:

The property is located within the Fieldbrook Community Services District for water and sewer. Typical water usage for the project would be limited to the one restroom in proposed Building 'A'. Results from a depth to groundwater assessment dated August 2, 2019, indicate the presence of groundwater located in the back of lot, the northern property line, at a depth of 7.86 feet below the asphalt. From the three borings that were performed, the assessment did not find evidence of groundwater elsewhere on the property. The project is not expected to disturb groundwater during installation of water and sewer lines and the sewer and water connections will be designed to keep ground disturbance to a depth of four feet at the back of the lot, falling to eight feet towards the front (**Condition 3**).

Energy Resources:

The site has historically been served electricity by PGE. The applicant proposes installation of a new utility box near the southwestern corner of the property. The project was referred to PGE on September 27, 2024, and PGE responded on October 10, 2024, confirming that the proposed improvements do not appear to directly interfere with existing PGE facilities or their easement rights.

Geologic Suitability:

The proposed building footprints are partially located within an area of potential liquefaction. An R-2 soils report shall be conducted by a registered professional, prior to application of building permits, to identify the extent of the potentially unstable soils and to recommend engineering solutions for project construction (**Condition 6**). The area is mapped as relatively stable in WebGIS and the average

slope grade of the site is roughly 2%.

Fire Safety:

The project site is located within an area mapped as Moderate fire hazard severity. The site is within the State Responsibility Area for CalFIRE and within the Blue Lake Fire Protection District. The project has received an exception from CalFIRE for the standard 30 foot setback to reduce it to 25 feet from the eastern and western property boundaries.

Tribal Consultation:

The project was referred to the Northwest Information Center (NWIC), Blue Lake Rancheria, the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, and the Wiyot Tribe Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) on September 27, 2024. The Wiyot Tribe THPO responded October 4, 2024, requesting standard inadvertent discovery protocols. The Bear River Band THPO responded October 7, 2024, also requesting standard inadvertent discovery protocols. NWIC responded October 10, 2024, recommending consultation with the local tribes.

Future Zoning Analysis:

The parcel is presently zoned Unclassified (U), which are designated for areas which had not been sufficiently studied to justify precise zoning classifications. U zones are therefore areas which have the potential to be rezoned to better match their mapped land use from the General Plan. The mapped land use is Commercial Services (CS), which in the General Plan is compatible with the following zones: Neighborhood Commercial (C-1), Community Commercial (C-2), Industrial Commercial (C-3), and Highway Service Commercial (CH). Storage warehouses and agencies or services of a similar character are principally permitted within the C-3 and CH zones but are not permitted within C-1 or C-2 zones. Given that the parcel fronts Glendale Drive, a main road that is connected to two points of State Highway 299, and the mapped area of the land use is adjacent to an Industrial General (IG) land use, a CH or C-3 zone may be more likely as a future zoning for the parcel. However, the Residential Low Density (RL) land use also adjacent to the parcel may be reason for the property to be zoned C-1 or C-2 in the future.

Environmental Review:

An Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration was adopted by the Planning Commission on September 5, 2019 for a cannabis facility on the same parcel. The permit for said cannabis facility has since expired. An addendum to the Mitigated Declaration has been prepared pursuant to section 15164, determining that the proposed self-storage facility will have less impact than that analyzed and disclosed by the MND for the Glendale Cannabis Facility.

Public Comments:

Previous applications for conditional use permits on the property received comments from members of the public prior to hearing. The County received written correspondence with concerns and opposition related to odor, nighttime lighting, water use, property devaluation, crime, pedestrian

safety, traffic, potential water contamination, hazardous substance contamination from the former lumber mill site, and improper CEQA noticing. The previous applications were for a cannabis facility, so concerns such as odor and water use are unlikely to be applicable to the self-storage facility proposal. Previous concerns regarding improper CEQA noticing no longer apply because the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the previous projects has already been adopted and a new declaration will not be required.

Some commenters had requested the Department not bring any conditional or special use permit applications forward until the Fieldbrook-Glendale Community Plans and zoning update was completed. Under the Permit Streamlining Act, an application must be processed unless there is a declared emergency which necessitates that no applications may be processed. There is no declared emergency and applications which are consistent with the General Plan and Zoning are entitled to have a fair hearing.

The current proposal received comments in response to a Notice of Application distributed December 19, 2024. These comments, however, were more specific than the previous projects' comments and were significantly less numerous. The primary concerns of the new comments are stormwater drainage and recent flooding on neighboring properties. Comments indicate that there are drainage ditches that should have been directing water from Glendale Drive to a storm drain on APN 516-111-006, to the northwest of the subject parcel, but those ditches have not been sufficiently maintained. One of the conditions requested by Public Works requires curb, gutter, and sidewalk to be installed along Glendale Drive, at the south of the subject property (**Condition 10.b**). Additionally, the project is conditioned to contain drainage onsite in an oil/water filtration system before piping the water to Glendale Drive (**Condition 10.f**). The proposed development would be unlikely to worsen drainage conditions, considering the parcel appears to have been paved since at least 2003. Additionally, the required gutter and drainage system should improve drainage conditions and it is unlikely that rainwater would flow northeast from the property, because USGS topography contours suggest that elevation increases slightly on the property from the southwest corner to the northeast corner. These contours would indicate an only 1.7% slope, however, so it is possible for slight differences in the actual slope onsite to result in alternative flows. In order to support future efforts to maintain the drainage ditches, however, the applicant is conditioned to cooperate with the neighboring property owners for the maintenance of said ditches and paying their fair-share cost associated with work necessary for that maintenance or improvement (**Condition 11**).

The project is conditioned to follow Dark Sky Standards, to comply with HCC §314-109.1.2.7 so that direct rays are confined to the property, and to ensure the proposed buildings are not made of reflective materials that would introduce a new source of glare (**Condition 8**). This condition of approval will limit light spillover and intensity.

Concerns of property devaluation is a socioeconomic impact and is not evaluated for compliance with local regulations or CEQA.

To reduce concern about potential criminal activities, the project is conditioned to provide the name and telephone number of an on-site representative of the project to whom one can provide notice if there are operating problems associated with the facility, as well as post that contact information onsite. The project shall make every good faith effort to encourage neighbors to call this contact person to try and solve problems if any, before calls or complaints are made to the Sheriff or Planning Director. Should problems arise that cannot be adequately resolved, the disgruntled party can submit a petition to initiate a permit revocation process (**Condition 13**).

The project is conditioned to develop a new sidewalk running the full length of the parcel's frontage, which will increase pedestrian safety (**Condition 10.b**).

The site is approximately 0.2 miles (1,056 feet) from the onramp/offramp to Highway 299 off Glendale Drive. Glendale Drive is a Major Rural Collector per Humboldt County's general Plan Revised Draft EIR (page 3.5-4), which can accommodate 300 to 2600 average daily trips (ADT) per the Federal Highway Administration. The current Level of Service ((LOS) or volume to capacity ratio) is "A" per the Public Works, Department of Land Use. Additionally, during the 2017 General Plan Update, Glendale Drive was not identified as having the ability to go below LOS "C" which the County strives to maintain. Therefore, the increased traffic as a result of the proposed project is consistent with the General Plan goals and policies in the Circulation Element and the roadway is adequate for the intended use.

The subject site is a portion of the former McNamara and Peepe Lumber Mill site which is listed in DTSC's Envirostor database as an active cleanup site. However, a Phase II Site Assessment prepared in 2003 by Winzler and Kelly Consulting Engineers found no contamination on the site and a letter prepared by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) dated June 27, 2019 acknowledged the concerns that have been raised that construction and operation of the proposed project could result in contaminated soil and groundwater flowing into Hall Creek to the Mad River but concluded that the property is not impacted by PCP-contaminated soil or groundwater. Furthermore, it has been determined that the development of the project will occur without encountering groundwater during construction activities.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

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

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Planning Commission could elect to add or delete conditions of approval. The Planning Commission could deny approval if unable to make all the required findings. Staff has concluded the required findings in support of the proposal can be made. Consequently, staff does not recommend further consideration of these alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Resolution
 - A. Conditions of Approval
 - B. Site Plan
2. Location Map
3. Addendum to Mitigated Negative Declaration
 - A. Adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration
4. Applicant's Evidence in Support of the Required Findings
 - A. Groundwater Level Test
 - B. Letter from DTSC
5. Referral Agency Comments and Recommendations
 - A. Public Works Referral Response
 - B. CalFIRE Exception Request Approval
6. Public Comments

APPLICANT, OWNER, APPLICANT, AND PLANNER INFORMATION:

Applicant:

Lock Box Storage LLC
Travis Schneider
PO Box 133
Eureka, CA 95502

Owner:

Travis L. Schneider & Stephanie M. Bode, Tr
1695 Glendale Dr
McKinleyville, CA 95519

Please contact Augustus Grochau, Associate Planner, at agrochau@co.humboldt.ca.us or (707) 441-2626 if you have questions about this item.