



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 4/4/2024

File #: 24-405

To: Planning Commission
From: Planning and Building Department
Agenda Section: Public Hearing

SUBJECT:

SN Indianola Coastal Development Permit and Special Permits
Record Number: PLN-2023-18856
Assessor Parcel Numbers: 402-032-002 and 402-032-035
Bayside area

A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) and Special Permits for the after-the-fact tree removal associated with a 10% Dead, Dying, or Diseased Tree CALFIRE exemption (1-23EX-00780-HUM).

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Planning Commission:

Adopt the Resolution (Attachment 1) which does the following:

- a. Finds that the proposed project complies with the Local Coastal Plan and Zoning Ordinance; and
- b. Finds the project exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15304 of the CEQA Guidelines, and that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment; and
- c. Approves the Coastal Development Permit and Special Permits subject to the recommended conditions of approval (Attachment 1A).

DISCUSSION:

Project Location: The project is located in the Bayside area, at the southeast intersection of Indianola Road and Walker Point Road, on the property known as 201 Walker Point Road.

Present General Plan Land Use Designation: Rural Residential (RR), Humboldt Bay Area Plan; Average Density: 1 Dwelling Unit per 2.5 acres. Slope Stability: Low Instability (1).

Present Zoning: Rural Residential Agriculture with a Combining Zone for Design Review (RA-2.5/D).

Environmental Review: Project is categorically exempt from environmental review per Section 15304 *Minor Alterations to Land* of the CEQA Guidelines.

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

Major Concerns: None.

Executive Summary: A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) and Special Permits for the after-the-fact tree removal associated with a 10% Dead, Dying, or Diseased Tree CALFIRE exemption (1-23EX-00780-HUM). The exemption issued by Cal-Fire allowed for up to 2.2 acres of trees that meet the Dead, Dying, or Diseased criteria to be removed. Tree planting is proposed to improve conifer stocking at approximately 300 trees per acre across approximately 4.5 acres. In total, approximately 1,350 one-year old redwood trees will be planted across the parcels (Site). The project includes two Special Permits; one for Major Vegetation Removal per Section 313-64.1 of the Zoning Regulations, and the second for Design Review as required by the Design Review Combining Zone. The parcel is not developed, and no additional development is proposed as part of this project. Timber removal occurred in late October and early November 2023.

A Botany and Wetland Report was prepared for the project by Hohman and Associates, dated November 29, 2023, and no plants considered sensitive, rare, threatened, or endangered (including candidate species) were detected during seasonally appropriate surveys within the boundaries of the Site (Attachment 2). Additionally, no wetland or watercourse features were found within the extent of the Site, as surveyed in March and July of 2022. The project was referred to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). On January 2, 2024, a response was received from CDFW stating there were no comments at this time.

A letter describing the project's conformance to the Forest Practices Act was submitted by Hohman and Associates Forestry Consultants, Inc. on March 22, 2024, and is included as Attachment 6. Attachment 7 includes satellite images from both before the timber removal and after the timber removal.

The timber removal and the restocking are consistent with the Humboldt Bay Area Plan policies, and did not occur in any sensitive habitat areas or affect coastal resources. The subject property is located within a designated Coastal Scenic Area in the Humboldt Bay Area Plan and the timber removal is consistent with the Coastal Scenic policies of the Plan. Specifically, the timber removal and restocking does not impact the scenic and visual qualities of the area of impact any views to or along the coast. The activities have not altered the natural landforms or the visible contour of important treelines. The Plan specifically requires developments in the Indianola area that are visible from Highway 101 to be subordinate to the character of the area and for timber management activities to conform to timber harvesting visual standards for Special Treatment Areas. The timber management activities have not altered any views from Highway 101 and involve no proposed development. Additionally, per the licensed forester, the activities are consistent with these standards of the Forest Practice Act.

The proposed project is being brought before the Planning Commission due to public comment received on February 5, 2024, requesting a hearing for the project. The commenter requested a public hearing with no specific reason for the request identified in the comment (Attachment 5).

After staff review and consideration of the submitted comments, all applicable findings for project approval can be made and the recommendation by staff to approve the project remains unchanged.

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 4).

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

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. Plot Plan
2. Botany and Wetland Resource Assessment
3. CALFIRE Letter of Acceptance
4. Referral Agency Comments and Recommendations
5. Public Comment
6. Letter from Forester
7. Timber Removal Satellite Imagery

APPLICANT AND PLANNER INFORMATION:

Applicant

SN Indianola LLC, Co.
Attn: Kenneth Carswell
P.O. Box 1028
Eureka, CA 95502

Owner

Same as Applicant.

Agent

North Point Consulting Group, Inc.
Attn: Annje Dodd
1117 Samoa Blvd.
Arcata, CA 95521

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Please contact Max Hilken, Assigned Planner, at 707-443-5054 or by email at hilkenm@lacoassociates.com, if you have any questions about the scheduled item.