

**CALISTOGA PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

To: Calistoga Planning Commission
From: Zach Tusinger, Senior Planner
Meeting Date: October 9, 2019
Subject: **Height Increase for Addition to Single-Family Home
Use Permit UP 2019-15, 226 High Street**

1 **ITEM**

2 Consideration of a use permit application to allow a twenty-nine and a half (29.5) foot
3 tall addition to an existing single-family residence in the Rural Residential-Hillside
4 zoning district.

5 **KEY ISSUES**

- 6 • Height limits for additions in the RR-H district are limited to 25 feet unless
7 approved by use permit.
- 8 • Any potential impacts to neighboring properties would be mitigated by the sloping
9 nature of the property, distance to neighboring residences, location of the
10 proposed addition, and screening in the form of mature trees.

11 **PROJECT SETTING**

12 The 0.64-acre Rural Residential-Hillside parcel was created in 1987, and the home on
13 the property was approved via PC Resolution 2006-9. The property features a 1,750
14 square foot single-family home and a detached garage with a 450 square foot art
15 studio/guest house on the second floor. Mature tree cover and vegetation screens the
16 home from surrounding properties.

17 **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

18 The applicant wishes to construct an addition on the west side (rear) of the parcel. The
19 project would add a 623 square foot master suite and would be downslope from the
20 existing portion of the home. On the basement level, a new storage room would be
21 added through the addition as well. In order to maintain architectural integrity and a floor
22 level that matches what is currently in existence, the proposed addition is twenty-nine
23 and a half feet (29.5) above the natural grade at its highest point. The addition would be
24 clad in horizontal Hardiplank cementitious siding in contrast to the stucco fascia of the
25 existing portion of the home.

26 **ANALYSIS**

27 The project's consistency with the City's applicable plans, policies and codes is
28 evaluated below.

Calistoga General Plan

The property is located within the General Plan's Rural Residential-Hillside land use designation. Single-family homes such as the one in existence on this parcel are allowed in this land use designation, subject to the development standards set by ordinance. Relevant design review policies of the Calistoga General Plan and an evaluation of the proposed design's consistency with them follows:

- Land Use Element

P3.2-1 New development shall be designed to respect and enhance Calistoga's small-town rural character and the natural environment.

- Community Identity Element

P1.1-1 New development should be sensitive to surrounding architecture, landscaping, character and scale of existing buildings.

P1.1-2 New development should use exterior materials that have traditionally been used in Calistoga.

P1.3-4 Homes of modest size, built in proportion to their lots, shall be encouraged. Construction of over-sized, bulky residential buildings should be avoided.

The project is consistent with the above policies as the siting, architecture, and exterior materials of the planned addition are compatible with Calistoga's character and preserve its natural environment. The addition would preserve the property in its natural state to the extent possible, as the location of the addition is already developed with a patio. The change of exterior materials for the addition reduces the possible visual appearance of bulkiness in the complete structure. The project is not subject to the General Plan's entry corridor overlays, character areas, or gateway designations.

Zoning Code

The project site is zoned Rural Residential-Hillside (RR-H). CMC 17.15.040.A indicates that the height of structures in the RR-H: Rural Residential-Hillside zoning district is set by use permit. CMC 17.15.040.B further states that additions to primary structures in the RR-H zoning district are limited to 25 feet in height unless a greater height is approved by use permit.

For stepped or terraced buildings, height is defined as the maximum height of any segment of the building (CMC 17.04.100). For the proposed project, the addition is therefore a new segment of the building and its height must be measured separately. The submitted plans show a height of twenty-nine and a half (29.5) feet, or four and a half (4.5) feet higher than what is allowed for additions without a use permit.

The proposed addition would comply with all other development standards of the RR-H district including lot coverage and setbacks. Architecturally, the planned addition complements the contemporary style of the structure, with the notable exception of the incorporation of the horizontal siding into the design, which provides contrast to the stucco fascia of the existing structure and breaks up the massing.

70 **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

71 The use permit application is Categorically Exempt from the requirements of the
72 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301 of the CEQA
73 Guidelines (Existing Facilities).

74 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

75 As of October 1, 2019, no public comments had been received regarding this project,
76 with the exception of an email provided from the neighboring property owners at 224
77 High Street stating that they have reviewed the plans and have no objections.

78 **FINDINGS**

79 To reduce repetition, all the necessary findings to approve the use permit application
80 are contained in the draft resolution.

81 **RECOMMENDATION**

82 Based on the information and analysis contained in this report, staff recommends that
83 the Planning Commission, after conducting a public hearing on the matter, adopt the
84 attached resolution approving Use Permit UP 2019-15 with conditions.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Resolution
2. Vicinity Map
3. Project Description
4. Email from Neighbors
5. Photos
6. Plan Set