



County of Sonoma

State of California

Date: March 3, 2026

Item Number: _____

Resolution Number: _____

4/5 Vote Required

**Resolution Of The Board Of Supervisors Of The County Of Sonoma, State Of California,
Denying an Appeal by Jay Zalewski, Charlie Martin, Albert Merck, John RoseKrans and Roger
McDermontt of a Decision of the Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments, Adopting a
Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Granting a Use Permit Modification to expand
production of an existing winery and add a Tasting Room and Agricultural Promotional Events
to Medlock Ames Vintners for Property Location at 13414 Chalk Hill Rd, Healdsburg, CA
95448, APN 132-120-017 and 132-120-018; File No. UPE21-0042.**

Whereas, the Board of Supervisors (“Board”) of the County of Sonoma (“County”), has considered the full evidentiary record before it in the matter of the administrative land use appeal, filed by Jay Zalewski, Charlie Martin, Albert Merck, John RoseKrans and Roger McDermontt, of the decision of the Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration and granting the application for Use Permit Modification to expand production of an existing winery and add a Tasting Room and Agricultural Promotional Events to Medlock Ames Vintners, subject to Conditions of Approval (Exhibits A), for property located at 13414 Chalk Hill Rd, Healdsburg, CA 95448, APN 132-120-017 and 132-120-018; File No. UPE21-0042.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the Board finds and determines that the above recital is true and correct, and that it has had an adequate opportunity to review this Resolution, and the findings and determinations contained herein and finds that this Resolution accurately sets forth the Board’s intentions regarding the MND, the Appeal, and the Project. The Board’s

decisions herein are based upon the testimony and evidence presented to the County orally or in writing prior to the close of the Board's hearing, including the full record of proceedings. By Board Rule, information submitted after the close of the Board hearing is deemed late and not considered by the Board.

Now Therefore Be It Further Resolved and based thereon and the full evidentiary record before the Board, including all verbal and written comments received prior to the close of the hearing in this matter, makes the following detailed factual findings and determinations based there on:

Section 1. Proposed Project and Procedural History

- 1.1** On June 15, 2021, the applicant, Medlock Ames Vintners, ("applicant"), filed an application for a Modification to an existing Conditional Use Permit for an expansion of production and the addition of a tasting room and agricultural promotional events on a 48.37-acre and 139.90-acre parcels located at 13414 Chalk Hill Rd., Healdsburg, CA; APNs 132-120-017 and 132-120-018; Zoned Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA), 40 acre density (B6 40), Accessory Dwelling Unit Exclusion (Z) with combining districts for Oak Woodland (OAK), Riparian Corridor 100 ft setback (RC 100/50) and Valley Oak Habitat (VOH) ("the Proposed Project").
- 1.2** A Mitigated Negative Declaration ("MND") was prepared for the Project, and on July 1, 2025, the MND was posted and made available for agency and public review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), 14 California Code of Regulations, §15000 et seq. ("CEQA Guidelines"), and County CEQA guidelines.
- 1.3** In accordance with applicable provisions of law, the Board of Zoning Adjustments held a public hearing on August 14, 2025, at which time the Board of Zoning Adjustments heard and received all relevant testimony and evidence presented orally or in writing regarding the MND and the Project. All interested persons were given an opportunity to hear and be heard.
- 1.4** On August 14, 2025, the BZA voted 4-1-0 to adopt the MND and approve the Use Permit Modification for the Proposed Project subject to Conditions of Approval.

- 1.5 On August 22, 2025, by Jay Zalewski, Charlie Martin, Albert Merck, John RoseKrans and Roger McDermontt filed a timely appeal of the decision of the BZA to the Board, pursuant to County Code Section 26-92—160, (“Appeal”), raising the following issues: with improper permit level, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Fair Argument Standard and easement limitations.
- 1.6 On February 24, 2026, the Board conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the MND and the Proposed Project. The Board received all relevant oral and written testimony and evidence filed or presented at or before the close of the hearing. All interested persons were given the opportunity to hear and be heard. At the conclusion of public testimony, the Board closed the hearing, considered and discussed the MND and the Proposed Project, and the appeal and relevant evidence

Section 2. CEQA Compliance

- 2.1 A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared for the Project, and on July 1, 2025, the MND was posted through July 31, 2025 and made available for agency and public review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”), 14 California Code of Regulations, §15000 et seq. (“CEQA Guidelines”), and County CEQA guidelines. No Agency comments were received. The MND finds that potential environmental impacts have been fully mitigated to less than-significant levels. Mitigation measures for these potential impacts are detailed in the Mitigated Negative Declaration and have been incorporated into the conditions of approval.
- 2.2 In making its determinations, the Board has gained a well-rounded understanding of the range of the environmental issues related to the Project by its review of the MND, the prior proceedings at the BZA, all comments, testimony, letters and reports regarding the MND, and its own experience and expertise in these environmental issues. Prior to making the findings contained herein, the Board has reviewed and considered the evidence and analysis presented in the MND, the information presented in the Appeal and post-appeal comments, the technical reports, and all public comments and information submitted at or before the Board hearing. The Board’s findings are based

on full appraisal of all viewpoints, all evidence and all information in the record of these proceedings.

- 2.3** Based upon the entire record, there is no substantial evidence of a fair argument that the Project will have a significant environmental effect. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Project through the mitigation measures and conditions of approval imposed herein that avoid or substantially lessen all potentially significant environmental effects of the Project. These changes or alterations have been agreed to by the applicant.
- 2.4** The Board finds that the MND has been completed in compliance with CEQA and that the MND adequately and fully describes and evaluates the changes or alterations to the Proposed Project that have been requested as part of the Project.

Section 3. General Plan, Planning and Zoning Compliance

3.1 General Plan Consistency

The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan land use designation of Land Intensive Agriculture, and the goals, objectives, policies and programs of the General Plan.

- a. The Agricultural Resource Element policies allow for for wineries, defining them as agricultural processing facilities, tasting rooms and events, defining them as visitor serving uses.
- b. The project is consistent with Policy AR-4a, as the project site is devoted to agricultural production and related processing, support services, and visitor serving uses.
- c. The project is consistent with Policies AR-1a, AR-6a, AR-6d and AR-6f as the project's visitor serving uses only promote or sell products grown and processed on site or in the local area, the uses are secondary or incidental to local agriculture production, the uses will not require and extension of sewer or water and are compatible with the surrounding uses in the area.
- d. The project is consistent with Policies AR-6f and AR-5g as the project would not constitute a detrimental concertation of visitor serving and recreational uses, and agricultural support uses. The project would not result in joint road access conflicts

and traffic levels that exceed the Circulation and Transit Element's objectives for level of service on a site specific and cumulative basis will be mitigated as part of the proposed CEQA analysis. Additionally, the new tasting room would not draw water from the same aquifer and be located within the zone of influence area wells and proposed construction, traffic and noise would not be detrimental to the rural character of the area.

3.2 Zoning Consistency

The proposed project is consistent with Sonoma County Zoning Code, in that the proposed winery and tasting room are allowed in the LIA (Land Intensive Agriculture) Zoning District with a permit.

a. The proposed project is consistent with all the development standards for the Land Intensive Agriculture Zoning District.

- i. All applicable setback requirements including front street centerline, interior side, and rear setback will be met as no new structures are proposed.
- ii. The maximum height threshold of 35-foot for non-agricultural structures, and 50-foot for agricultural structures is not proposed to be exceeded as the existing structures onsite are under the applicable thresholds. Additionally, no new structures are proposed as a part of the project that would exceed the standards.
- iii. The existing lot coverage of 18,000 square-feet does not exceed the allowable 30,000 square-foot threshold or 5% lot coverage whichever is greater threshold.
- iv. The minimum parking requirements are as follows:
 - **Winery:** No specific requirement; the standard condition is 1 space per employee
 - **Tasting Room:** No specific requirement; the standard condition is 1 space per 2.5 guests and 1 space per employee.
 - **Events:** No specific requirement; the standard condition is 1 space per 2.5 guests and 1 space per employee.

And will be met as follows 24 paved parking spaces, 24 unimproved parking spaces:

- Winery and Tasting Room - 24 spaces
 - Events – 35 spaces needed during harvest (48 parking spaces exceeds largest event needs)
- b. The use permit request consistent with the standards of Zoning Code Sections 26-18-030 and 26-18-210 for agricultural processing and tasting rooms in the LIA Zoning District.
- c. The project qualifies for the Pipeline Provision under Ordinance No. 6404 (Winery Events Ordinance) because the application was deemed complete on February 8, 2023, prior to the effective date of Ordinance No. 6404. Although the Medlock Ames project is not subject to the winery, tasting room, and winery event operating standards established by Ordinance No. 6404 (Sec. 26-18-260 of the Zoning Code), the project has demonstrated consistency with the 2023 zoning code operating standards for wineries, tasting rooms, and winery events

3.3 General Use Permit Finding

The establishment, maintenance or operation of the use for which application is made will not, under the circumstances of this particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, comfort and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such use, nor be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the area. The particular circumstances in this case are: the project has been found to have insignificant environmental impacts in the Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Noise and Tribal Cultural Resources topic areas based on the project design with the adoption of mitigation measures, conditions of approval and project operational characteristics; the proposed use is consistent with General Plan policies and the underlying Land Intensive Agriculture zoning designation, which allows the proposed uses subject to approval of a Use Permit; and conditions of approval have been imposed on the project to limit visual impacts, control noise in accordance with the General Plan standards, and ensure compliance with all County and resource agency standards that will prevent impacts to biological resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, Be It Further Resolved that based on the foregoing findings and determinations and the full record of these proceedings, the Board hereby declares and orders as follows:

1. The foregoing findings and determinations are true and correct, are supported by substantial evidence in the record, and are adopted as set forth above.

2. The Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Project have been prepared in conformance with CEQA and are hereby adopted. MND had been prepared in conformance with CEQA, approved the MND, and approved the Proposed Project (“the Project”), subject to the conditions of approval imposed herein
3. The Appeal of the Board of Zoning Adjustments approval of the Proposed Project is not meritorious and is denied.
4. The use permit is granted for the Proposed Project as presented in the application, and as described in the Conditions of Approval attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein.
5. Staff is directed to file and post a Notice of Determination of this action pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act within five (5) days of the date of this resolution.

Be It Further Resolved that the Board of Supervisors designates the Clerk of the Board as the custodian of the documents and other material which constitute the record of proceedings upon which the decision herein is based. These documents may be found at the office of the Clerk of the Board, 575 Administration Drive, Room 100-A, Santa Rosa, California 95403.

Supervisors:

Rabbitt:

Coursey:

Gore:

Hopkins:

Hermosillo:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

So Ordered.

ATTACHMENTS: EXHIBIT A