

Resolution Number 25-11

County of Sonoma
Santa Rosa, California

August 14, 2025
UPE21-0042 Jen Chard

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS,
COUNTY OF SONOMA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, GRANTING A
MODIFICATION TO A USE PERMIT FOR A WINERY AND A
NEW TASTING ROOM FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 13414
CHALK HILL ROAD, HEALDSBURG, CA; APNS 132-120-017
AND 132-120-018.

WHEREAS, the applicant, Medlock Ames Vintners and MA Properties, LLC, filed a Use Permit Modification application with the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department for a Use Permit to expand the existing winery's (Medlock Ames) annual production capacity from 20,000 cases to 30,000 cases, modification to an existing 20,000 square foot wine production building, conversion of an existing 1,350+/- square foot barn to a public tasting room, and 12 annual winery events with a maximum of 50 attendees. Proposed hours of operation are: 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM for the Winery; 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM for the Tasting Room; and afternoons and evenings for the Winery Events, with all events concluding by 9:30 PM and clean-up ending by 10:00 PM. The winery and tasting room proposes an average of 10 full time employees, up to 15 employees during harvest, as well as construction of a new 9-space parking lot with overflow parking on a 48.37 acre parcel (subject to a Williamson Act Contract) and 139.90 acre parcel located at 13414 Chalk Hill Road, Healdsburg, CA; APNS 132-120-017 and 132-120-018.; Zoned LIA (Land Intensive Agriculture), B6 40 (40 acres per dwelling unit) Z (Accessory Dwelling Unit Exclusion) with combining districts for OAK (Oak Woodland), RC 100/50 (Riparian Corridor 100 ft setback) and VOH (Valley Oak Habitat); Supervisorial District No 4; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, 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 Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Project. All interested persons were given an opportunity to hear and be heard regarding the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Project; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Zoning Adjustments has had an opportunity to review this Resolution and finds that it accurately sets forth the intentions of the Board regarding the request for a modification to the Use Permit Conditions of Approval.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments makes the following findings:

1. Environmental Determination: The Board of Zoning Adjustments has reviewed and considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared to address potential environmental impacts of the project, together with all comments received during the public review process. Based upon the full record of proceedings (including the Initial

Study and all comments received), it has been determined that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant environmental effect. Changes or alterations have been required in or incorporated into the project through the Conditions of Approval imposed herein that avoid or substantially lessen the potentially significant environmental effects of the project. These changes or alterations have been agreed to by the applicant. The Mitigated Negative Declaration has been completed in compliance with State and County CEQA guidelines and reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the County of Sonoma.

2. 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 allows 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. 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 project is consistent with all the development standards for the Land Intensive Agriculture Zoning District.
 - b. The use permit requests are 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.
4. 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.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments hereby adopts the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring Program set forth in the Conditions of Approval. The Board of Zoning Adjustments certifies that the Mitigated Negative Declaration has been completed, reviewed, and considered, together with comments received during the public review process, in compliance with CEQA and State and County CEQA Guidelines, and finds that the Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments hereby grants the requested Winery, Tasting Room, and Agricultural Promotional Events Use Permit, subject to the Conditions of Approval in Exhibit "A", attached hereto.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments designates the Secretary as the custodian of the documents and other material which constitute the record of proceedings upon which the Board's decision herein is based. These documents may be found at the office of the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments' action shall be final on the 11th day after the date of the Resolution unless an appeal is taken.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION was introduced by Commissioner _____, who moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner _____, and adopted on roll call by the following vote:

Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

Ayes: Noes: Absent: Abstain:

WHEREUPON, the Chair declared the above and foregoing Resolution duly adopted; and

SO ORDERED.