



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 10/21/2025

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Permit Sonoma

Staff Name and Phone Number: Scott Orr (707) 565-1754, Alisa Rossetti (707) 565-2605

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Second

Title:

Agricultural Easement and Covenant for a Farm Family Dwelling Unit on an 81.49-acre parcel located at 4490 D Street, Petaluma (APN 020-120-005); Permit Sonoma File No. ZPE24-0088.

Recommended Action:

Accept and authorize the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to execute, and Permit Sonoma to record, a Grant Deed of Agricultural Easement and Covenant to allow one detached Farm Family Dwelling unit on the property located at 4490 D Street, Petaluma; APN 020-120-005, Permit Sonoma File No. ZPE24-0088. (Second District)

Executive Summary:

The Land Extensive Agriculture zoning district allows for one (1) detached Farm Family Dwelling unit per lot. A Farm Family Dwelling unit is defined as an additional single-family dwelling incidental to the main dwelling in terms of size, location, and architecture which is not leased, subleased, rented, or sub-rented separately from the main dwelling nor divided by sale, and which is inhabited by a member of the farm operator's family. A Farm Family Dwelling is considered a compatible use as described in the County's Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones for Land Conservation (Williamson Act) contracted lands. Staff recommends your Board accept and authorize the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to execute, and Permit Sonoma to record, the offered Grant Deed of Agricultural Easement and Covenant to allow one detached farm family dwelling unit on the property, because upon recordation, all zoning requirements for a Farm Family Dwelling will have been met.

Discussion:

Cypress Abbey Company, the landowner, seeks approval of a Zoning Permit to construct a new 2,445 square foot Farm Family Dwelling Unit on an 81.49-acre grazing property located at 4490 D St, Petaluma, APN: 020-120-005, subject to the Williamson Act. The farm family dwelling will be occupied by a member of the farm operator's family.

Site Characteristics:

The 81.49-acre property is accessed from D Street, approximately 0.5 mile southwest of the City of Petaluma. The Farm Family Dwelling 2,445 square feet in size is proposed to be constructed near an existing 5,779 square foot primary residence and garage. Other structures on site include existing agricultural buildings located south of the primary residence. Approximately 79 acres of the 81.49-acre property is devoted grazing land, as represented in the attached site plan (Attachment 2). Zoning for the site is LEA (Land Extensive Agriculture) B6

100 (100 acres per dwelling unit density) and combining zones for Z (Accessory Unit Exclusion), RC50/50 (Riparian Corridor with 50-foot setbacks), and SR (Scenic Resources). The property has been subject to a Land Conservation (Williamson Act) Contract since 2002 (contract recorded under Book 4, Page 10) and is currently in compliance with the contract.

Farm Family Dwelling:

1. The Sonoma County Zoning Code allows Farm Family Dwelling units on properties zoned LEA (Land Intensive Agriculture), provided that the standards under Section 26-24-160 (B) are met. Sec. 26-24-160 (B) Standards: A maximum of one (1) Farm Family Dwelling unit is allowed per lot.
2. LIA zone: Allowed only on a property with a Williamson Act contract.
3. LIA and LEA zones:
 - a. An agricultural easement having a term equal to the useful life of the structure, but in no event less than twenty (20) years, shall be offered to the county at the time of application.
 - b. A covenant shall be recorded, in a form satisfactory to county counsel, which acknowledges that, in the event that the agricultural use is terminated on the property, the Farm Family Dwelling becomes a nonconforming residential use.

Staff finds that the proposed request is consistent with the Zoning Code definition (Sec. 26-24-160 (A)) and standards for a Farm Family Dwelling as the proposed 2,445 square foot residence is incidental to the existing 5,779 square foot primary residence and the Farm Family Dwelling will be occupied by a member of the farm operator's family, and the farm family dwelling will not be leased, subleased, rented or sub-rented separately from the primary residence nor divided by sale. A Grant Deed of Agricultural Easement and Covenant (Farm Family Housing) has been prepared for the request and the easement will protect and preserve the resource value, agricultural viability, and productiveness of the property, and ensure that the property continues in agricultural use throughout the term of the easement and will cover the whole property.

Land Conservation (Williamson Act) Contract Compliance:

The property is currently subject to a Williamson Act contract for agricultural land, recorded under Book 4, Page 10. The Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones ("Uniform Rules") require at least 50% of the property acreage is devoted to a qualifying agricultural land use and that all existing and proposed development complies with the compatible uses allowed under contract. Staff finds that 98% of the property is currently devoted to grazing lands and that the new farm family dwelling unit will be located near existing development which collectively occupy approximately 1.5 acres, or 1.8% of the property. Construction of the farm family dwelling will not result in removal of grazing land. For these reasons, staff finds the property complies with its Williamson Act contract and adding a new farm family dwelling is consistent with the Uniform Rules.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Board approve the request to accept and authorize the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to execute a Grant Deed of Agricultural Easement and Covenant because all zoning requirements for the easement, covenant, and farm family dwelling are met and a Grant Deed of Agricultural Easement and Covenant (Farm Family Housing) has been prepared, which is included as Attachment 3.

Agenda Date: 10/21/2025

Strategic Plan:

Not Applicable

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

Prior Board Actions:

Not Applicable

FISCAL SUMMARY

This is an at-cost project for which project costs are the responsibility of the applicant.

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Not Applicable

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

Not Applicable

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Proposal Statement

Attachment 2: Site Plan

Attachment 3: Grant Deed of Agricultural Easement and Covenant

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

Not Applicable