



Legislation Text

File #: PC 17-034, Version: 1

PUBLIC HEARING to consider **Use Permit Application No. U-16-04** of **Caymus Suisun Winery** for the construction of a large winery and related uses located at 4991 Suisun Valley Road, approximately 450 feet north of Mankas Corner Road in an "A-SV-20" Agriculture-Suisun Valley Zoning District. (APN's: 0149-060-080 and 0149-060-050). The Planning Commission will also be considering adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact as recommended by the Solano County Department of Resource Management. (Project Planner: Jim Leland)

I. DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Resource Management recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. Conduct a noticed public hearing to consider Use Permit Application No. U-16-04 of Caymus Suisun Winery for the construction of a large winery and related uses, including tasting, retail sales, marketing and special events located at 4991 Suisun Valley Road, and
2. Adopt a resolution to **Adopt** the Mitigated Negative Declaration and **Approve** Use Permit U-16-04 (Attachment 1).

II. INTRODUCTION:

The Planning Commission is being asked to consider the adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration and the approval of a Use Permit (U-16-04) for Caymus Suisun Winery to permit the construction of a large winery with related uses, including tasting, retail sales, marketing and special events. The proposed winery would include facilities for the crushing, fermenting, bottling, storage, sales and distribution of wine and spirits as well as a retail sales and events center.

The Planning Commission, after the conduct of a public hearing on this matter may choose one of the following options:

1. Approve, or conditionally approve, the use permit for the project, or
2. Deny the use permit, or
3. Continue the hearing in order to obtain additional information.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Caymus Suisun Winery has applied for a Use Permit (U-16-04) to construct large winery with related uses, including tasting, retail sales, marketing and special on two parcels totaling approximately 29 acres (APN 149 060 050 and 080) located at 4991 Suisun Valley Road. The proposed winery will have an ultimate production capacity of 200,000 gallons of wine per year and will be built in two phases. This project will allow Caymus Vineyards to introduce new production capacity in Solano County from vineyards under contract, owned, leased and in development from local and other sources.

Project Site

The project consists of two separate legal parcels, as shown in Table 1:

Table 1			
APN Number	Acres	Proposed Uses	Existing Uses
0149-060-080		Winery	Former drying yard and b
0149-060-050		Public event space and vineyards	Vineyards

Project Site

The project consists of two parcels, separated for assessment purposes:

APN 149 060 050 is approximately 18 acres and contains vineyards and the following improvements:

1. 14,000 +/- sf pole barn
2. 1,300 +/- sf office building
3. 1,200 +/-sf storage building
4. 1,100sf storage shed
5. Three 1,800 +/- sf drying sheds
6. 8,000 +/- sf pole barn
7. 10,400 +/- sf pole barn
8. 9,800 +/- sf shop

All of the existing structures on the site are part of a defunct agricultural processing operation and are proposed to be removed in phases to accommodate construction of the proposed project. APN 149 060 080 is approximately 11 acres and contains vineyards, an antique tractor stand (300sf), a truck scale and scale house (100sf).

APN's 149 060 050 and 080 are the subject of a lot line adjustment application approved by the Solano County Planning Commission on February 16, 2017 (No. LLA 16 03), which increases the combined parcel acreage from 23.89 to 28.92 acres. This lot line adjustment is expected to be recorded prior to use permit approval.

The parcels are generally flat and are bounded by Suisun Valley Road and Suisun Valley Elementary School to the east, and agriculture to the north, west and south. The parcels were previously used as a dried fruit processing facility and are currently part of existing vineyard operations and equipment storage. The nearest residence is approximately 500 feet to the north. There are two existing driveways to the site and one road on the northern border of the site that is an easement for access to a neighboring parcel.

The site has a General Plan Designation of Agriculture with a zoning designation of A SV 20: Agricultural Suisun Valley 20 acres. The site is under a Williamson Act contract and is within the 100 year flood plain.

Proposed Project

The proposed project (See Attachment 4- Site Plan) will include phased development of the two parcels for winery production and administration and related tasting and event facilities. The facility will include retail sales, business administration, tours and tasting, and space for promotional and special events. Wine may be bottled onsite by a mobile bottling service or shipped via tanker truck to the winery owned by Caymus Vineyards located at 2650 Cordelia Road, Cordelia or other designated site.

During Phase 1, the facility will be served by up to 25 full time, 5 part time and 5 seasonal employees.

During Phase 2, the facility will be served by up to 35 full-time, 10 part time and 10 seasonal employees.

The undeveloped portions of the project area would be maintained for agricultural uses primarily farming or vineyard. During harvest season (July through October) the facility will operate 24 hours a day and seven days per week. During non harvest season (November through June) the facility will operate from 5:00 am until 11:00 pm, seven days per week.

Project Operations

Grape Delivery

Any grapes will arrive via Suisun Valley Road in trucks which will be weighed and sampled off site. Grapes are generally transported in trucks with a capacity of up to 24.5 tons per truck, however, estate grown grapes or grapes grown within close proximity of the winery could be transported in picking bins loaded on tractors or flatbed trucks.

The receiving hoppers will be sized to accommodate more than a full truckload to reduce truck idling and increase efficiency.

Grape processing

Grape delivery and processing on site will initially be minimal with any red grapes being dumped via hoist into a receiving pit where the grapes are conveyed to destemming equipment. Destemmed grapes are pumped to fermentation tanks. Waste stems will be conveyed to a debris bin for composting.

Grapes will be fermented in stainless steel, wood or concrete tanks located within and/or under the barrel room roof structure.

The fermentation tanks will range in size from 300 gallons to 5,000 gallons and are up to approximately 25 feet tall. A bladder press will separate solids (pomace) from wine, and the wine will be pumped to tanks for storage, processing and blending.

White grapes will be dumped from trucks via hoist into a receiving pit. Grapes will be conveyed directly to a bladder press to separate juice from solids. The juice will be pumped to the tank area for

settling and fermentation. Pomace from fermented grapes will be conveyed to a debris bin and hauled to landfill or disked into vineyard as a soil conditioner and supplemental nutrient source.

Storage, processing and shipping

Bulk juice and bulk wine will arrive via Suisun Valley in 5,000 gallon tanker trucks. Tanker loading stations will be located along the main truck circulation adjacent to the barrel room. Juice and wine will be pumped from the truck into the storage tanks for blending and processing.

White and red juice will be transferred to barrels for fermentation in the barrel room. At times, red wine could be transferred to barrels for aging in the barrel room. Wine will be transferred back to the storage tanks for blending. After blending, the wine will be filtered and will be bottled and stored off site until ready for distribution.

Visitor Serving Uses

Visitor Serving Uses

A number of visitor serving uses are planned as identified below. Event hours will be up to 11pm.

1. Tours, tasting (including barrel tastings) and retail sales open to the public are planned daily from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm. In addition to traditional wine tasting, hay rides around the property will be offered to provide education and awareness of grape production and agriculture in the Suisun Valley region. Peak visitor numbers are expected to be up to 100 on a weekday and up to 200 people per day on a weekend.
2. Food and wine pairings will be offered daily to reserve tasting guests, in groups up to 25.
3. Amplified music would only occur within enclosed buildings or outdoors for events. Outdoor amplified music would be curtailed prior to 10:00 pm.
4. Promotional events such as wine club, winemaker dinners and marketing events with meals will be held up to 25 times per year with 20 to 100 guests per event.
5. Up to 24 weddings annually are planned with attendance of up to 450 guests. Weddings with more than 100 attendees would be served by portable toilets and meals would be prepared offsite by caterers.

Project Phasing

Phase 1 - 2018

1. Capacity to produce up to 200,000 gallons of finished wine per year
2. Demolition of the existing buildings, pole barns and structures on site
3. Improvements to the existing driveway entrances from Suisun- Valley Road, circulation roads, and visitor/employee parking for new buildings
4. 18,000 +/- square foot barrel storage building including associated offices, refrigeration/utilities including an attached canopy covered tank pad area containing stainless steel wine tanks for grape

receiving, fermentation, storage and ancillary processing equipment.

5. 5,000+/ square foot detached two story tasting room with catering prep area, event space and retail sales
6. Juice/wine tanker loading area
7. Pomace staging area
8. Process wastewater treatment and storage, with hold and haul for offsite treatment or onsite treatment and irrigation of reclaimed process wastewater
9. Sanitary sewage treatment and subsurface disposal system
10. Gardens and outdoor event space

Phase 2 - 2020+

1. 5,000+/ square foot detached retail and hospitality building
2. 30,000+/ square foot building to house kitchen, event space, museum and other hospitality activities
3. Additional parking, gardens and outdoor event space located adjacent to the detached retail and hospitality building.
4. Expansion of the sanitary sewage treatment and subsurface disposal system

Infrastructure

Stormwater

The existing improvements on the subject parcels have approximately 236,000 square feet of impervious area which will be removed in conjunction with the project. The proposed project is expected to result in less total impervious area than currently exists. Therefore a storm water detention pond is not expected to be required. In the unlikely event that, when the project is completed, the total impervious area exceeds the existing impervious areas to be removed, detention measures will be provided to address any incremental increase in impervious area.

Traffic and Circulation

The intersection of Suisun Valley Road and Mankas Corner Road is proposed to be improved to allow a 4 way stop with an entrance to the west through the adjacent parcels APN 149 060 100, 149 060 130. As an alternate, if intersection improvements prove to be infeasible due to easement issues or road geometry, a new entrance will be constructed south of the existing entrance on APN 149 060 100. Access easements for the new entrance and roadways will be obtained for APNs 149 060 100 & 130. The southern entrance will be the primary entrance for visitors, employees and grape/wine delivery and shipping traffic. The existing northern driveway will be maintained for incidental access needs and secondary access along the access easement area noted above. The existing central driveway will be removed in conjunction with development of the new southern entrance and driveway.

Water Supply

Water will be supplied by a combination of existing connections to the Suisun Solano Water Authority and on site well(s) to be developed. The parcel has two existing connections (1 inch and 2 inch) which will supply an on site tank to accommodate peak demand during harvest. The existing Suisun Solano Water Authority water line passes through the properties. The water line will be relocated under permit with the Authority in compliance with their standards to allow development of the winery. While the existing connections are adequate for the proposed project, a well is planned to provide redundancy to the existing Suisun Solano Water Authority supply.

Wastewater

Sanitary sewage will be collected from restrooms and other areas within the facility and conveyed to a central collection point, then pretreated and disposed of in a subsurface drip system to be located on the western part of the parcels. Percolation testing in this area has been performed in conjunction with Solano County staff.

Process wastewater from winery operations will initially be collected and hauled offsite for treatment and disposal at the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) Treatment Plant, or other approved location. As an alternate, a package treatment plant would be installed and treated effluent would be reclaimed onsite for irrigation of vineyards and/or landscape planting.

At full production, a package treatment plant may be installed for process wastewater treatment, along with onsite reclamation for irrigation of up to 5 acres of vineyards and/or landscape planting.

If implemented, the reuse of treated process wastewater for irrigation will reduce overall water demand for the project. The process wastewater treatment and reclamation system will be permitted through the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Refer to the attached Wastewater Feasibility Study (Appendix 6.5) submitted with the project application for detailed information.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The Department of Resource Management has prepared a Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) (Attachments 5 and 5A) for the proposed project, which was noticed and available for public review and comment between June 20, 2017 and July 28, 2017. The Draft MND identified certain potentially significant impacts together with proposed mitigations to reduce the impacts to less than significant along with other impacts determined to be less than significant (See Attachment 5):

As of July 27, 2017, 4 comments (Attachment 8) have been received commenting on the following impacts:

1. Traffic
2. Size of the Winery
3. Hours of Operation

One of the four commenters represented the Solano Irrigation District which had no comments on the IS/MND.

All comments, along with staff responses, will be provided to the Planning Commission along with responses to comments upon the close of the public review period (July 28, 2013).

V. DISCUSSION:

General Plan

The property is designated as Agricultural by the 2008 Solano County General Plan which is intended to protect areas devoted to the practice of agriculture. Crop production and agricultural processing activities, including wineries, are consistent with this land use designation. The General Plan also identified this area as within a special study area. As a result, the County subsequently undertook a planning effort for the Suisun Valley.

Suisun Valley Strategic Plan and Zoning

The Suisun Valley Strategic Plan was adopted by the County in 2010. The Plan designates this property as Agriculture. The Strategic Plan also included new zoning regulations for Suisun Valley. The subject property was rezoned to a newly created Agriculture-Suisun Valley (A-SV-20) District. The A-SV-20 District permits the establishment of large wineries (>100,000 gallons per year) with a use permit. In addition, the zoning permits restaurants and cafes, local products and special events. The proposed winery and retail and events center is consistent with the standards established in the A-SV-20 District.

Williamson Act

A portion of the property is under a Williamson Act contract. The establishment of a winery is a compatible use with the Williamson Act.

Development Review Committee

The project was referred to the Development review committee for Solano County. Comments were received from the Environmental Health, Public Works and Building and Safety Divisions. Their requirements have been incorporated into the conditions of approval (Attachment 6).

Outside Agency Review

The project was also referred to several outside agencies, including:

1. Solano Irrigation District
2. Suisun Fire Protection District
3. Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District
4. Sonoma State University
5. SF Regional Water Quality Control Board,

As of the writing of this report, staff has received comments from the Suisun Fire Protection District and the Solano County Irrigation District.

Public Correspondence Received to Date

As of the writing of this staff report, we have received one letter on the use permit from Mary Browning (Attachment 7) in opposition to the proposed winery. In her letter, Mary cites several concerns with respect to winery development within the Suisun Valley, including:

1. Inappropriate scale of the proposed development
2. Deficiencies in the County General Plan, Suisun Strategic Plan and Zoning with respect to wineries and agritourism,
3. Inadequate enforcement of existing permits and regulations.

In response, staff believes that the 2008 General Plan process and the 2010 Suisun Valley Strategic Planning

process included extensive outreach to stakeholders and significant discussion of agritourism, wineries and the emergence of retail farming and agritourism. These concepts were vetted and it was the consensus of stakeholders and most public participants that the policies embedded in those documents were most appropriate for the residents of Solano. Subsequently, the zoning was amended to include a new Suisun Valley Agricultural Zoning District (A-SV-20) which was applied to this property. As previously discussed, this project is consistent with the provisions of the A-SV-20 Zoning District.

Conclusion

It is the conclusion of staff that the project as proposed is consistent with all applicable plans and policies of Solano County. Staff will present a supplemental report to the Planning Commission prior to the public hearing as further comments are received on the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Resource Management recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. Conduct a noticed public hearing to consider Use Permit Application No. U-16-04 of Caymus Suisun Winery, for the construction of a large winery and related uses located at 4991 Suisun Valley Road, and
2. Adopt a resolution to **Adopt** the Mitigated Negative Declaration and **Approve** Use Permit U-16-04 (Attachment 1).

VII. FINDINGS:

Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission make the following findings in support of approving Use Permit U-16-04:

1. **The establishment, maintenance or operation of the proposed use is in conformity with the County General Plan with regard to traffic circulation, population densities and distribution, and other aspects of the General Plan.**

The establishment of a large winery is permitted in the A-SV-20 district with a use permit. Wineries, a form of agricultural processing, are uses considered consistent with the agriculture designation in the 2008 General Plan and the 2010 Suisun Valley Strategic Plan.

2. **Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and other necessary facilities have been or are being provided.**

The conditions of approval imposed by this use permit ensure that adequate roads, utility and drainage facilities will be constructed to meet the demands of the proposed winery complex.

3. **The subject use will not, under the circumstances of the particular case, constitute a nuisance or be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort or general welfare of persons residing or working in or passing through the neighborhood of such proposed use, or be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the County.**

As conditioned, the proposed winery will not constitute a nuisance to surrounding properties, nor will it be

detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of County residents. Adequate mitigation measures and conditions of approval have been incorporated into the project.

VIII. CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution approving Use Permit U-16-04, including the conditions of approval in Attachment 6.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1 - Resolution (To be Distributed at the Hearing)
- 2 - Location Map
- 3 - Aerial View
- 4 - Site Plan
- 4a - Elevations
- 5 - Final IS/Mitigated Negative Declaration
- 5a - Mitigated Negative Declaration
- 6 - Conditions of Approval
- 7 - Letter from Mary Browning dated 07-27-17