



County of Lassen
Department of Planning and Building Services

• Planning • Building Permits • Code Enforcement • Surveyor • Surface Mining

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TO: Architectural Review Committee
Agenda Date: September 16, 2019

FROM: Maurice L. Anderson, Director

Zoning & Building
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Phone: 530 257-5263

SUBJECT: **DESIGN REVIEW #2019-020, McNeill Storage Properties, LLC.** The applicant is proposing a 5,600-square-foot, 42-unit, metal mini-storage building. The project site is zoned C-1 (Retail Business District) and has a "Central Business District" land use designation, the latter according to the *Westwood/Clear Creek Area Plan, 2002*. The project site is located approximately 1,000 feet north of the intersection of Ash and Third Streets at 406 Ash Street, in Westwood, CA, 96137. APN: 125-133-12. Staff Contact: Stefano Richichi, Associate Planner

The Lassen County Department of Planning and Building Services recommends the following findings:

1. The subject parcel is zoned C-1 (Retail Business District) and has a "Central Business District" land use designation, the latter according to the *Westwood/Clear Creek Area Plan, 2002*.
2. Existing improvements on site include two residences and a barn that the applicant proposes to remove in order to construct the proposed mini-storage.
3. The applicant is proposing a 5,600-square-foot, 42-unit, metal mini-storage building.
4. Lassen County Code Section 18.36.020 allows mini-storage warehouses by right in the C-1 (Retail Business District) district.
5. Lassen County Code 18.36.100 states that all development in the C-1 district is subject to design review.
6. Lassen County Code Section 18.102.070 sets forth specific development criteria for mini-storage warehouses. The proposed mini-storage building complies with the door height, access, color, and setback standards found in that section. Per said section, those standards are minimum allowable standards. The architectural review committee may apply additional standards if it finds such are necessary to protect the interests of the general public, surrounding landowners, or the project proponent. Said section also requires that mini-storage warehouses undergo design review.
7. The proposed mini-storage complies with the 30-foot fire safety setback found at Lassen County Code Section 9.16.103(d)(1)(a).
8. The *Community of Westwood Design Guidelines, 2004* (Westwood Design Guidelines), adopted by Board Resolution Number 04-034, states a follows:

All requests for new construction within commercial and industrial districts shall contain a landscape plan showing, at a minimum, location of existing trees, the location of any trees to be removed, proposed planting and irrigation detail.

The removal of trees along the street is prohibited unless the tree is in danger of falling, diseased, not consistent with an approved landscape plan or an adopted area-wide plan, or otherwise creates a safety concern.

A replacement tree should be planted in the same relative location as the tree that was removed; or, if removed to facilitate development, at a location on the same property as the tree that is removed.

9. The applicant proposes to remove and replace a total of 10 trees at the project site and the adjacent parcel (APN 125-133-13). At the project site, the applicant proposes to remove and replace five trees, and remove and replace five trees on the adjacent parcel. Although the applicant did not submit an irrigation plan as described above, the note on the submitted plot plan reads: "Owner to provide irrigation to new trees." If this application is ultimately approved, the applicant will be required to replant the existing trees as proposed and provide for their irrigation before issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy for the proposed mini-storage building (through the building permit process).
10. Furthermore, the applicant may be required to secure a "Less than 3 Acre Conversion Exemption" from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) for the removal of any and all trees. The applicant should speak with the Lassen-Modoc Cal Fire Unit to this effect.
11. The Westwood Design Guidelines also state as follows:

Within industrial areas, pre-manufactured buildings are to avoid the generic, off-the-shelf appearance. The use of a typical utilitarian design with an exposed low, pitch (2:12) roof, no overhang, single color, flat walls, and unorganized window openings is discouraged. If these buildings are to be used, one of the following design approaches should be employed:

- a. The low pitch roofs should be hidden behind a parapet, or;*
 - b. The roof pitch should be increased to a minimum of 4:12 and the overhangs should be commensurate with the scale of the building (e.g., 3 to 4 foot overhangs on a 14' eave height).*
 - c. Include features such as; offsets in the wall planes, recessed entry areas, metal canopies, several colors, accent color bands, multiple siding profiles.*
 - d. Roof structures over entry ways should be designed to dump snow away from pedestrian traffic and walkways.*
12. Although the project site is zoned for commercial use, and is therefore not an "industrial area" as described above, it is reasonable to infer that if the above design criteria apply to industrial areas, for which concerns about appearance are least relevant, then the above criteria would also apply to commercial areas. Furthermore, the Lassen County Code allows mini-storage buildings in both commercial and industrial zones, suggesting that mini-storage buildings can be classified as either. Ultimately, however, the Architectural Review Committee, or Planning Commission, as appropriate, will determine whether the above criteria apply to this project.

13. Furthermore, the Westwood Design Guidelines also state:

Roofs for new buildings shall not have less than a 6:12 slope, unless otherwise approved through the design review.

14. The applicant proposes a 0.5 in 12 roof pitch with 1.75 inch roof overhangs. The applicant also states in his attached letter dated September 10, 2019, that the proposed mini-storage building is not a pre-manufactured building, and therefore, in the applicant's opinion, the above criteria found in Finding 10 do not apply to the proposed project.

15. In addition, the Westwood Design Guidelines state:

Policy CCE-4: The County supports the undergrounding of utilities in the planning area.

Implementation Measure CCE-I: In the review of development projects in the planning area, utility lines will be required to be installed underground unless there are substantial reasons to demonstrate that undergrounding of certain utility lines is not feasible.

16. The applicant proposes several underground conduits providing electrical service to the existing storage buildings on the adjacent parcel and to the proposed mini-storage building.

17. The Westwood Design Guidelines relate the following regarding siding:

Wood, stone, or brick siding is considered traditional and is the preferred material; however, alternate materials (e.g. steel, concrete, vinyl) may be used provided that the exterior appearance resembles traditional materials.

For buildings within the Central Business Area, horizontal wood lap siding is the preferred design and material. Alternate materials may be used provided that the exterior appearance resembles wood lap siding once installed. Brick accents, for patios, walkways, fireplaces and similar supporting architectural or landscape features, are acceptable. Plywood or similar appearing panel siding is discouraged due to maintenance requirements and overall appearance.

18. The proposed mini-storage building is located in the Central Business Area. The applicant proposes metal siding.

19. The Westwood Design Guidelines also state:

Along Ash and Birch Streets, between 3rd and 5th streets, buildings should be a minimum of two stories. When two stories are not proposed, the building design should incorporate the use of an attic with loft windows similar to the main building, and be constructed in a manner that would allow for a second addition in the future.

20. The project site is at the intersection of 4th Street and Ash Street. The proposed mini-storage building would be 14 feet tall if approved.

21. The following excerpts from the *Community of Westwood Design Guidelines, 2004* more generally pertain to the project:

PURPOSE:

1. **Provide direction to the public as well as establish criteria for review of projects.** The purpose of the design guidelines is to provide a clear set of design policies to help developers, builders, and the public in general understand, appreciate, and fulfill the design qualities and objectives being encouraged within the Westwood/Clear Creek Planning Area. These guidelines also provide the primary design criteria which County Staff, Architectural Review Committee, Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors will use to evaluate project proposals during the review and approval process.
2. **Implement the Community Character Element of the Westwood/Clear Creek Area Plan, the Westwood Revitalization Plan, and provide direction to enhance Westwood's visual form which is comprised of natural and man made components.** These Guidelines provide that the appearance of structures will support the visual resource goals of the area and ensure that buildings, signs, and other development within this area are designed and constructed so as not to be unsightly, undesirable, or obnoxious in appearance to the extent that they will hinder the orderly and harmonious development and appearance of the neighborhood.
3. **Preserve and enhance the historic milltown character of downtown Westwood.** These guidelines require that new structures and alterations to existing structures in commercial districts be designed with consideration for preserving and enhancing the historic milltown character of Westwood. These guidelines provide a means of helping people assess how proposals are consistent with this design theme.
4. **Articulate the design preferences and expectations of the Westwood Community.** The text identifies the Community's design preferences. Applications submitted are expected to incorporate these preferences.
5. **These design guidelines take the lead in design related issues.** Lassen County has many documents that address design such as: the General Plan, Area Plan, and the Zoning Code. These documents are typically more general in nature than the Design Guidelines contained herein. The guidelines are more focused on design and more specific. The guidelines shall take the lead on design issues, but they need to be used in conjunction with other County regulations.

I. SITE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

GOALS

- To provide and maintain a pedestrian-friendly environment that encourages visitors.
- To ensure new land uses are compatible with existing development, and the goals and vision of the Westwood Community.

A. Placement of Structures

Roofing

Roofing of all structures should be designed or oriented on the site to not dump snow on other buildings, adjacent properties, or on sidewalks.

Commercial Buildings

Building setbacks from side and front property lines should be similar to the adjacent building(s).

Industrial Uses

Screen landscaping and a buffer area should be provided when industrial uses are adjacent to a different land use designation or a public street.

II. BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

GOALS

- To enhance and preserve the architectural features of Westwood.

A. GENERAL

Building Scale and Shapes

No building shall be permitted in which the design or exterior appearance is of such an unorthodox or abnormal character in relation to the surroundings as to be unsightly or offensive to generally accepted tastes.

The scale of new construction should be consistent with the scale of adjacent buildings.

Buildings should not be over two stories in height within the Central Business Area.

Awnings

Awnings should be designed to shed snow or be removable for storage during the winter months.

Commercial Buildings

Free-standing buildings shall be designed and detailed consistently on all sides, including the rear and side elevation.

Central Business Area

Facades of new or remodeled buildings should retain the continuity of existing aesthetically appropriate or design preferred buildings within the community.

New buildings should include covered porches, or recessed entries to emulate the covered porch.

B. MATERIALS

Building Exterior

Although the use of traditional materials in new construction and building renovation is encouraged, alternate materials may be used, provided that the exterior appearance of the building resembles traditional materials.

Roofs/Coverings

Metal roofs shall not be reflective.

C. COLORS

Buildings should not be painted in florescent, luminescent, or other extreme colors which detract from the appearance of the neighboring property and the community as a whole.

Commercial Districts

The proposed building design and colors should enhance the visual character of the environment and the historic character of the district, and should strive to complement other buildings consistent with the historic theme. Natural stained wood, earth tone, and off-white are acceptable colors within commercial districts. Other colors may be found acceptable upon design review.

The colors of the roof, siding, porch, awnings, and trim of the building should complement each other.

22. The applicant proposes to paint the proposed building yellow or beige to match the mini-storage buildings on the adjacent parcel (see submitted color sample).
23. The following goals, policies, and implementation measures from the *Westwood/Clear Creek Area Plan, 2002* generally pertain to the project:
 - GOAL L-2: New development compliments and builds upon the positive characteristics of the community and does not cause significant adverse impacts to local natural and community resources.
 - POLICY LU-8: Tree cutting within communities for the purpose of clearing land for development should be minimized, compatible with the setting, and limited to areas needed for structures, installation and operation of facilities, safety, fire protection, and visual enhancement.
 - GOAL L-3: Neighborhoods which offer safe and pleasant living environments for residents of the planning area.

- POLICY LU-11: The County supports the need to maintain safe and pleasant living environments and, in consideration of related land use decisions, shall require mitigation of impacts which significantly threaten such qualities.
- IMPLEMENTATION MEASURE LU-F: In the course of reviewing development proposals, the County will consider how proposed development will relate to and affect the quality of neighborhoods in the vicinity and will consider mitigation measures, conditions of approval, and other means to protect the safety and quality of life in those neighborhoods.
- GOAL L-4: A thriving and pedestrian-friendly central business area in Westwood with an interesting and complimentary blend of commercial, service, and community activities.
- POLICY LU-12: The area plan designates a special central business area in Westwood that is primarily commercial in character but which also accommodates community and institutional services.
- POLICY LU-13: The County supports special planning efforts and projects to encourage revitalization and enhancement of the Westwood central business area.
- GOAL L-9: Increased community wealth, job opportunities and the provision of needed commercial services through economic growth and diversification by supporting the expansion of existing commercial operations and by encouraging new commercial ventures in appropriate locations.
- GOAL L-10: New commercial development in designated areas that are designed and operated to compliment and enhance the community.
- POLICY LU-18: The County supports the economic viability of existing communities and will minimize the development of scattered commercial uses by directing commercial uses to town centers and commercial areas or the orderly expansion of such areas, with limited exceptions including home occupations, agricultural-related sales, and specially-considered local convenience and highway commercial sites.
- IMPLEMENTATION MEASURE LU-M: Zoning for commercial uses will be limited to areas designated for commercial land uses as indicated in the area plan land use maps.
- IMPLEMENTATION MEASURE LU-N: The County will clarify and strengthen design review and code compliance provisions applicable to commercial districts in the planning area.
- GOAL L-26: All buildings in the planning area should be sound, safe and pleasant in appearance and the condition and appearance of property should not be detrimental to the character and value of the neighborhood.
- POLICY LU-43: The County supports progressive efforts and redevelopment programs to rehabilitate dilapidated structures and properties in the planning area or replace dilapidated structures with buildings that are sound, safe and pleasant in appearance.

SCENIC RESOURCES AND DESIGN STANDARDS

- GOAL CC-1: A pleasant rural setting where architecture and development features compliment the visual quality of the landscape and do not significantly detract from it. Buildings are designed and maintained to compliment the forest and mountain character of the local landscape.
 - GOAL CC-2: Buildings and property are maintained to present a well-kept, pleasant appearance that compliments and does not detract from the appearance of neighboring property and the community as a whole.
 - GOAL CC-3: In Westwood the appearance of buildings in the town center compliment and do not significantly detract from the historic heritage of the community and most buildings incorporate design elements from early mill town architecture.
 - POLICY CCE-2: The Area Plan includes land use designations for which the zoning will require design review of new structures. Design review procedures shall encourage that the appearance of structures will support the visual resource goals of the area and ensure that buildings, signs, and other development within these areas are designed and constructed so as not to be of unsightly, undesirable or obnoxious appearance to the extent that they will hinder the orderly and harmonious development and appearance of the neighborhood.
 - POLICY CCE-5: Development of land adjacent to Westwood and Clear Creek should be subject to design guidelines that are compatible with the guidelines of the adjacent community.
 - MEASURE CCE-H: The use of adequate and visually attractive fencing and natural screening will be encouraged to screen outdoor storage and visual intrusions that are allowed under established zoning provisions.
24. Pursuant to Lassen County Code § 18.118 (Design Review Guidelines), the Architectural Review Committee may make one of the following determinations:
- a. Approve the application as submitted; or
 - b. Suggest any changes in the plans it deems necessary to accomplish the purpose of applicable design standards; or
 - c. Refer the application to the Planning Commission for a decision.

Code Requirements

1. The applicant will secure a building permit from the Department of Planning and Building Services before construction of the proposed building.

MLA:smr