

Staff Report to the Agricultural Policy Advisory Commission

Application Number: 141126

Applicant: Barbara Brown

Owner: Brown APN: 046-261-05

Date: 1/15/15 Agenda Item #: 7 Time: 1:30 p.m.

Project Description: Proposal to construct a new 1,299 square foot single family dwelling with a 1,500 square foot detached non-habitable accessory structure on a vacant parcel. Requires an Agricultural Buffer Setback Reduction to reduce the required 200 foot setback to lands zoned for Commercial Agriculture to 130 feet from APN 046-072-01 located to the northwest and 100 feet from APN 046-261-15 to the west.

Location: Property located at the southwest end of an unnamed right of way approximately 225 feet from its intersection with San Andreas Road (1179 San Andreas Road) which is approximately 1,550 feet southeast of the intersection with Sand Dollar Drive.

Permits Required: Agricultural Buffer Setback Reduction

Staff Recommendation:

• Approval of Application 141126, based on the attached findings and conditions.

Exhibits

A. Project Plans

B. Findings

C. Conditions

D. Assessor's, Location, Zoning, and

General Plan maps

E. Comments & Correspondence

Parcel Information

Parcel Size:

28,444 square feet

Existing Land Use - Parcel:

Vacant – Residential

Existing Land Use - Surrounding:

Residential and Commercial Agriculture

Project Access:

Private right of way

Planning Area:

San Andreas

Land Use Designation:

AG (Agriculture)

Zone District:

RA (Residential Agriculture)

Supervisorial District:

Second District (District Supervisor: Friend)

Within Coastal Zone:

X Inside Outside

Appealable to Calif. Coastal

Comm.

X Yes No

Page 2

Application #: 141126 APN: 046-261-05 Owner: Brown

Services Information

Inside Urban/Rural Services Line:

Yes X No

Water Supply:

San Andreas Mutual Water Company

Sewage Disposal:

Septic

Fire District:
Drainage District:

Aptos La Selva Fire Protection Outside Flood Control District

Analysis and Discussion

The proposed project is to construct a 1-story single-family dwelling of approximately 1,299 square feet on a 28,454 square foot (.65 acre) parcel. The building site is within 200 feet of Commercial Agricultural land to the north and west. The applicant is requesting a reduction in the 200 foot agricultural buffer setback to 130 feet from APN 046-072-01 located to the northwest and 100 feet from APN 046-261-15 to the south.

The subject property is characterized by relatively flat topography. The parcel is located outside the Urban Services Line and can be characterized as a neighborhood containing a mix of residential and agricultural uses. The parcel is located within the Agriculture (AG) General Plan designation and the implementing zone district is (RA) Residential Agriculture. Commercial Agriculture zoned land is situated within 200 feet at the northwest (Assessor's Parcel Number 046-072-01) and south (Assessor's Parcel Number 046-261-15) of the subject parcel.

Reductions to the required agricultural setback are recommended due to the fact that if the required 200 foot setbacks were maintained they would not allow sufficient building area. Further, there is a substantial topographic difference between the subject parcel and adjacent lands located to the south zoned for Commercial Agriculture at which the applicant is proposing to maintain an existing vegetative buffer.

The parcel located immediately to the northwest of the subject parcel (APN 046-261-01) is zoned Residential Agriculture and developed with an existing single family dwelling and outbuildings. APN 046-261-01 is approximately 115 feet wide and contains some mature vegetation. With the repair and extension of an existing fence along the boundary between APN 046-261-01 and the subject parcel an adequate agricultural buffer would be created between the proposed single family dwelling and land zoned for Commercial Agriculture (APN 046-072-01).

The applicant will also be required to record a Statement of Acknowledgement regarding the issuance of a building permit in an area determined by the County of Santa Cruz to be subject to Agricultural-Residential use conflicts.

Recommendation

- Determine that the proposal is exempt from further Environmental Review under the California Environmental Quality Act.
- Staff recommends that your Commission **APPROVE** the Agricultural Buffer Reduction from 200 feet to about 130 feet & 100 feet feet to the single-family dwelling from the adjacent CA zoned property known as APN 046-072-01 & 046-261-15, proposed under

Application #: 141126 APN: 046-261-05 Owner: Brown

Application # 141126, based on the attached findings and recommended conditions.

Supplementary reports and information referred to in this report are on file and available for viewing at the Santa Cruz County Planning Department, and are hereby made a part of the administrative record for the proposed project.

The County Code and General Plan, as well as hearing agendas and additional information are available online at: www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us

Report Prepared By: Nathan MacBeth

Santa Cruz County Planning Department

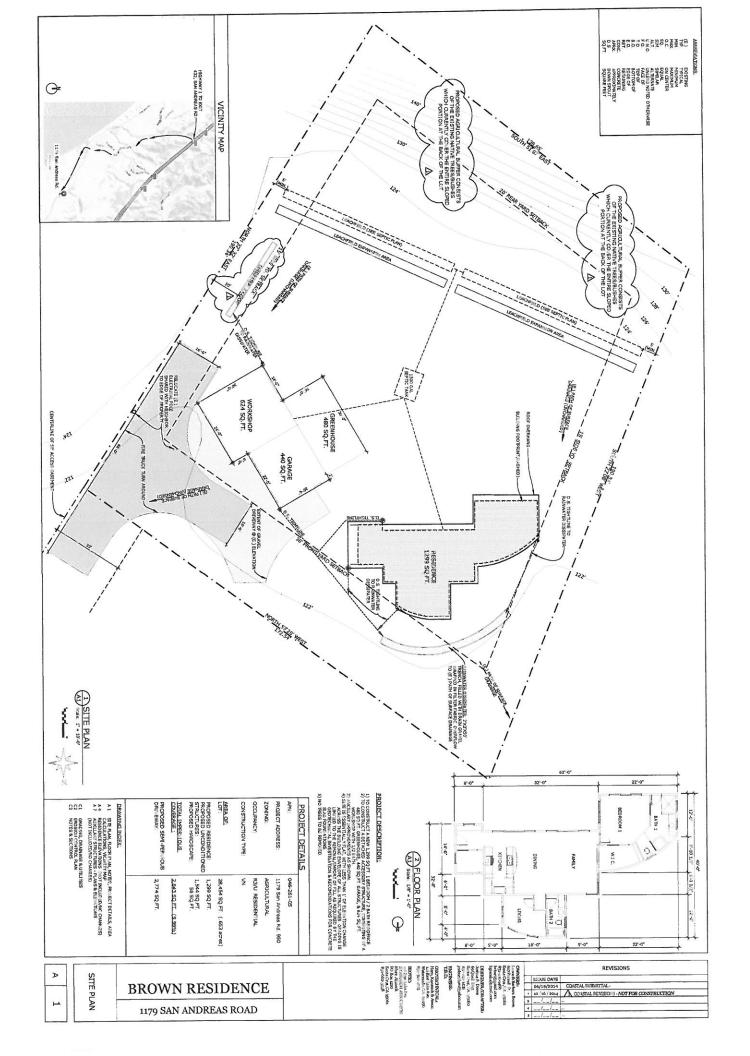
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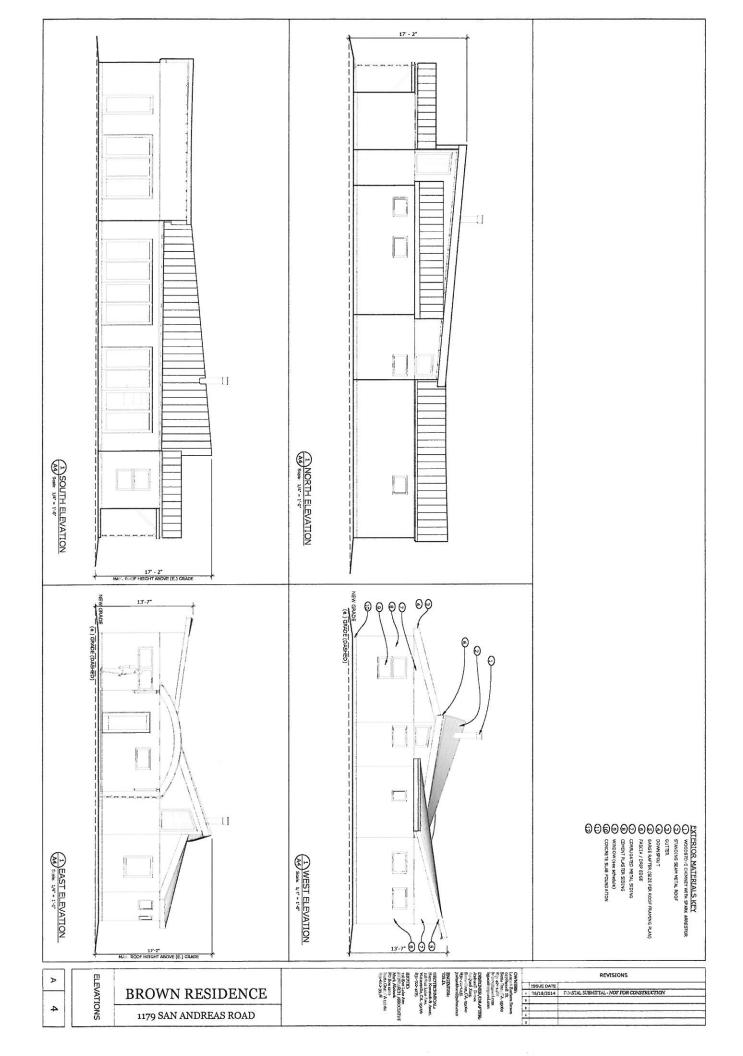
Phone Number: (831) 454-3118

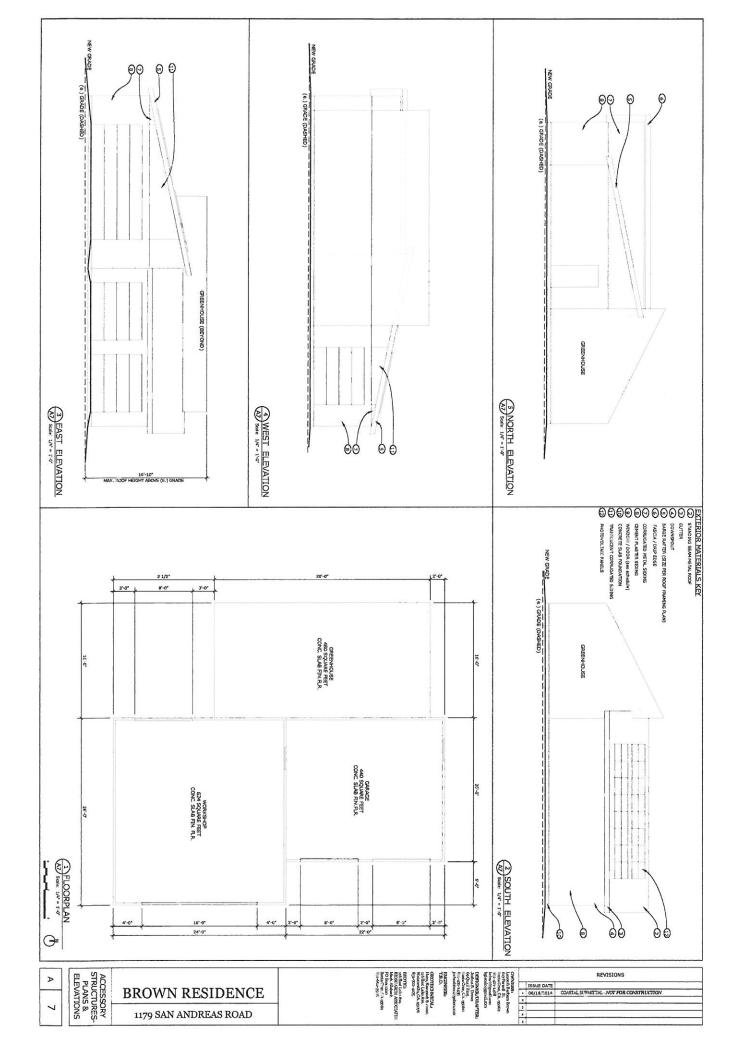
E-mail: nathan.macbeth@co.santa-cruz.ca.us

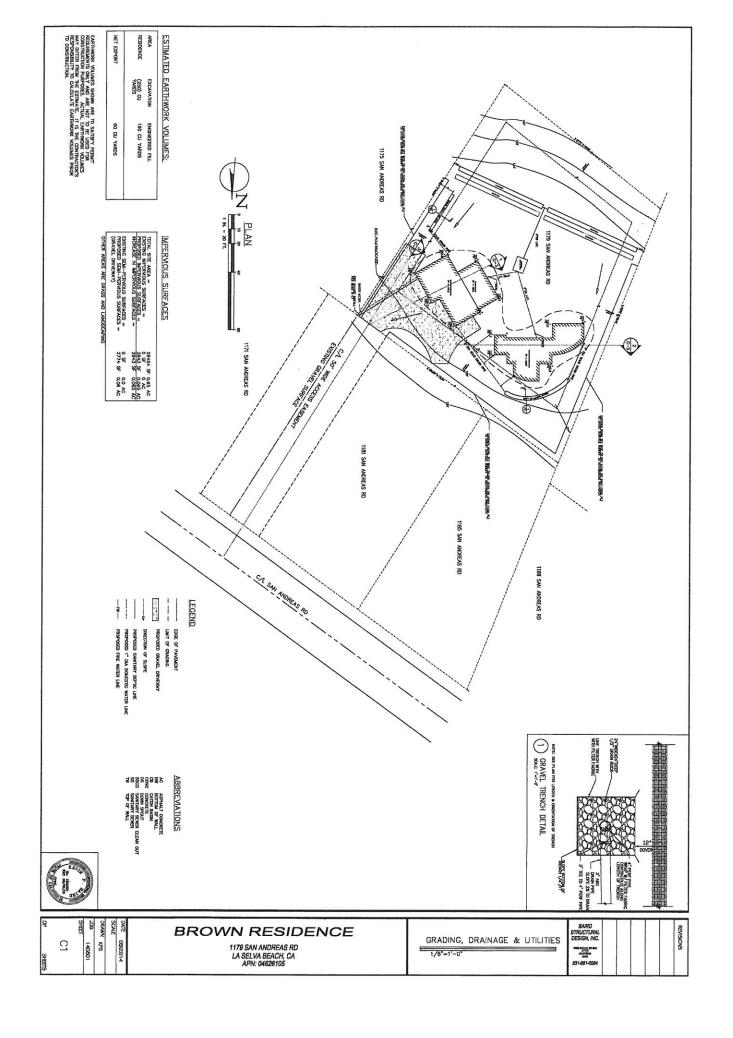
Report Reviewed By: Steven Guiney, AICP

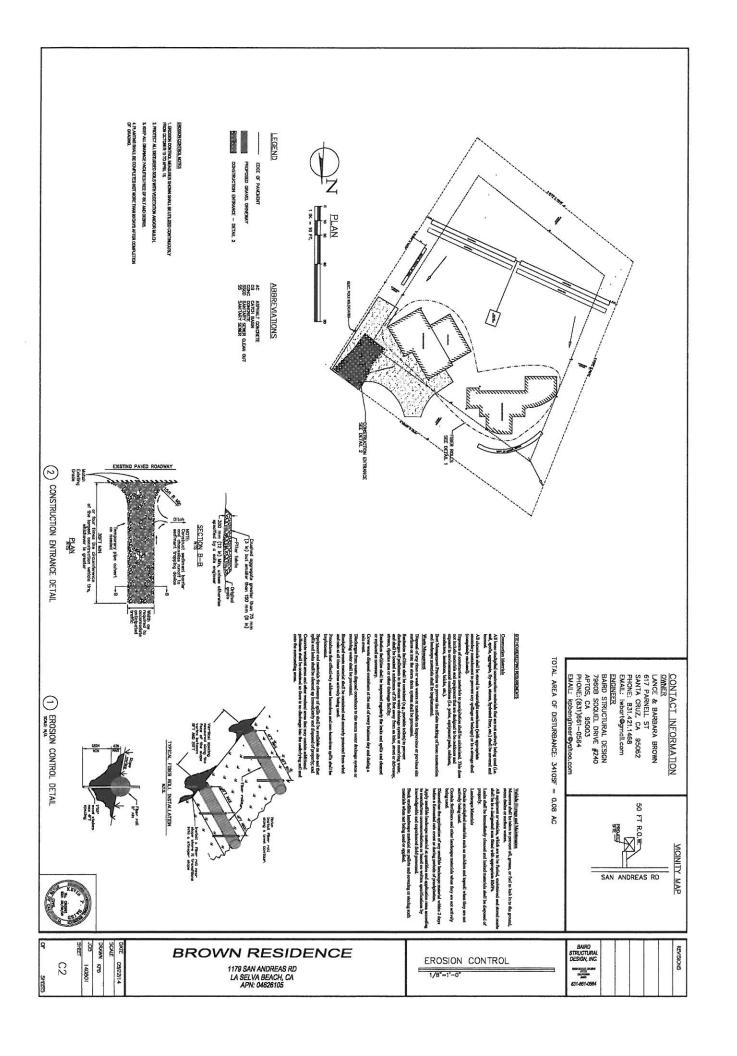
Principal Planner Development Review

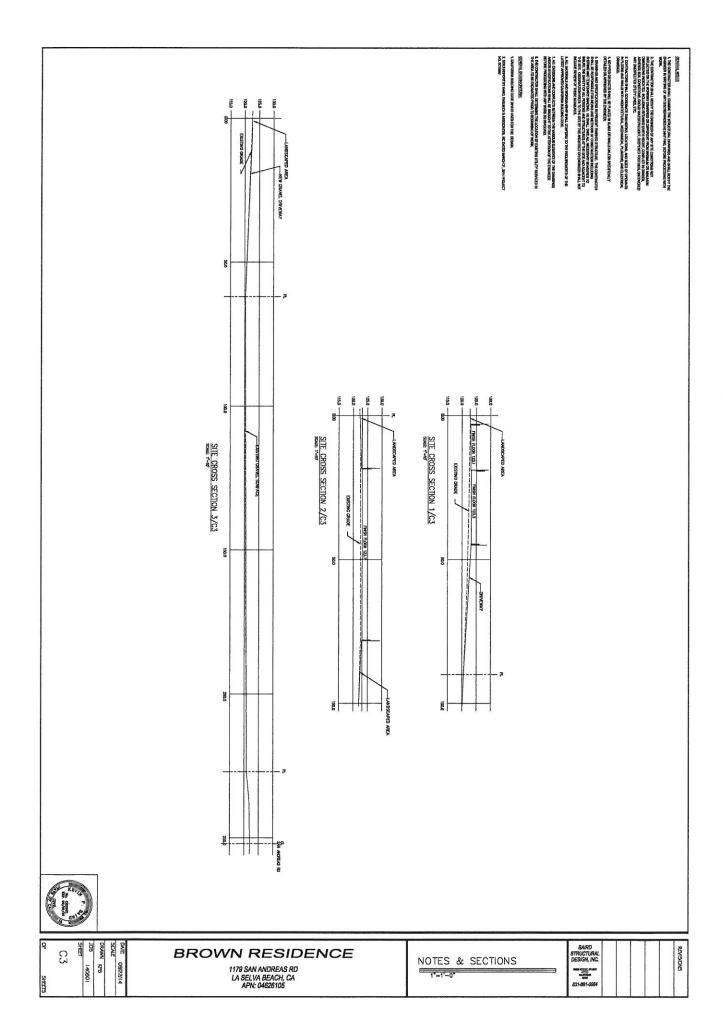












Application #: 141126 APN: 046-261-05 Owner: Brown

Required Findings for Agricultural Buffer Setback Reduction County Code Section 16.50.095(D)

1. Significant topographical differences exist between the agricultural and non-agricultural uses which eliminates or minimizes the need for a 200 foot agricultural buffer setback; or

Significant topographical differences exist between the subject parcel and the portion of APN 046-261-15 which is actively being farmed. A reduction in the required 200 foot agricultural setback to 100 feet and the west of the proposed single family dwelling is supported by a 60 foot grade differential between the portion of APN 046-261-15 which is being farmed and the subject parcel.

In addition to the topographical difference, the area between the proposed building site and the portion of APN 046-261-15 that is being farmed is heavily vegetated with mature vegetation and contains slopes of approximately 40%. Additional landscaping and solid fences are not recommended in that the existing vegetation serves as an adequate vegetative buffer and the slope will serve as an adequate physical barrier.

2. Permanent substantial vegetation (such as a Riparian Corridor or Woodland protected by the County's Riparian Corridor or Sensitive Habitat Ordinances) or other physical barriers exist between the agricultural and non-agricultural uses which eliminate or minimize the need for a two hundred (200) foot agricultural buffer setback; or

This finding does not apply.

3. A lesser setback is found to be adequate to prevent conflicts between the non-agricultural development and the adjacent agricultural land, based on the establishment of a physical barrier (unless it is determined that the installation of a barrier will hinder the affected agricultural use more than it would help it, or would create a serious traffic hazard on a public or private right of way) or the existence of some other factor which effectively supplants the need for a two hundred (200) foot agricultural buffer setback; or

A lesser setback of 130 feet to lands zoned for Commercial Agriculture (APN 046-072-01) located to the northwest of the subject property in that parcel located immediately to the west of the subject parcel (APN 046-261-01) is zoned residential and developed with an existing single family dwelling. Further, an existing six foot high solid wood board fence lines the majority of the north property line of the subject parcel. As a condition of approval the existing fence shall be extended and/or repaired as necessary to provide a continuous physical barrier along the west property line. Existing mature vegetation located on APN 046-261-01, between the subject property and land zoned Commercial Agriculture to the northwest, serves as a suitable vegetative buffer therefore no additional planting is recommended.

4. The imposition of a two hundred (200) foot agricultural buffer setback would preclude building on a parcel of record as of the effective date of this chapter, in which case a lesser buffer setback distance may be permitted, provided that the maximum possible setback distance is required, coupled with a requirement for a physical barrier (e.g. solid fencing and/or vegetative screening) to provide the maximum buffering possible,

APN: 046-261-05 Owner: Brown

consistent with the objective of permitting building on a parcel of record.

The subject parcel is approximately 190 feet deep in which the imposition of a 200 foot setback from APN 046-261-15 (south side) would prevent development on the subject parcel. As previously stated in finding #1, existing mature vegetation and topography of the area located between the proposed building site and the portion of APN 046-261-15 that is actively being farmed serve as a sufficient vegetative and physical agricultural buffer. No additional buffering is recommended at the south side of the subject parcel.

Application #: 141126 APN: 046-261-05 Owner: Brown

Conditions of Approval

- I. This permit authorizes an Agricultural Buffer Setback reduction from the proposed residential use to APN (046-072-01 & 046-261-15). This approval does not confer legal status on any existing structure(s) or existing use(s) on the subject property that are not specifically authorized by this permit. Prior to exercising any rights granted by this permit, including, without limitation, any construction or site disturbance, the applicant/owner shall:
 - A. Sign, date, and return to the Planning Department one copy of the approval to indicate acceptance and agreement with the conditions thereof.
 - B. Obtain a Building Permit and Grading Permit from the Santa Cruz County Building Official.
 - 1. Any outstanding balance due to the Planning Department must be paid prior to making a Building Permit application. Applications for Building Permits will not be accepted or processed while there is an outstanding balance due.
- II. Prior to issuance of a Building Permit the applicant/owner shall:
 - A. Submit final architectural plans for review and approval by the Planning Department. The final plans shall be in substantial compliance with the plans marked Exhibit "A" on file with the Planning Department. Any changes from the approved Exhibit "A" for this development permit on the plans submitted for the Building Permit must be clearly called out and labeled by standard architectural methods to indicate such changes. Any changes that are not properly called out and labeled will not be authorized by any Building Permit that is issued for the proposed development. The final plans shall include the following additional information:
 - 1. A development setback of a minimum of 130 feet to APN 046-072-01 and 100 feet to APN 046-261-15 from the single-family dwelling to the adjacent Commercial Agriculture zoned parcels.
 - 2. Final plans shall show the location of the vegetative buffering barrier (and any fences/walls used for the purpose of buffering adjacent agricultural land) which shall be composed of drought tolerant shrubbery. The shrubs utilized shall attain a minimum height of six feet upon maturity. Species type, plant sizes and spacing shall be indicated on the final plans for review and approval by Planning Department staff.
 - B. The owner shall record a Statement of Acknowledgement, as prepared by the Planning Department, and submit proof of recordation to the Planning Department. The statement of Acknowledgement acknowledges the adjacent agricultural land use and the agricultural buffer setbacks.

APN: 046-261-05 Owner: Brown

III. All construction shall be performed according to the approved plans for the building permit. Prior to final building inspection, the applicant/owner must meet the following conditions:

- A. The agricultural buffer setbacks shall be met as verified by the County Building Inspector.
- B. The required vegetative and/or physical barrier shall be installed. The applicant/owner shall contact the Planning Department's Agricultural Planner, a minimum of three working days in advance to schedule an inspection to verify that the required barrier (vegetative and/or other) has been completed.
- C. All inspections required by the building permit shall be completed to the satisfaction of the County Building Official and/or the County Senior Civil Engineer.

IV. Operational Conditions

- A. The vegetative and physical barrier shall be permanently maintained.
- B. All required Agricultural Buffer Setbacks shall be maintained.
- C. In the event that future County inspections of the subject property disclose non-compliance with any Conditions of this Approval or any violation of the County Code, the owner shall pay to the County the full cost of such County inspections, up to and including permit revocation.
- V. As a condition of this development approval, the holder of this development approval ("Development Approval Holder"), is required to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the COUNTY, its officers, employees, and agents, from and against any claim (including attorneys' fees), against the COUNTY, it officers, employees, and agents to attack, set aside, void, or annul this development approval of the COUNTY or any subsequent amendment of this development approval which is requested by the Development Approval Holder.
 - A. COUNTY shall promptly notify the Development Approval Holder of any claim, action, or proceeding against which the COUNTY seeks to be defended, indemnified, or held harmless. COUNTY shall cooperate fully in such defense. If COUNTY fails to notify the Development Approval Holder within sixty (60) days of any such claim, action, or proceeding, or fails to cooperate fully in the defense thereof, the Development Approval Holder shall not thereafter be responsible to defend, indemnify, or hold harmless the COUNTY if such failure to notify or cooperate was significantly prejudicial to the Development Approval Holder.
 - B. Nothing contained herein shall prohibit the COUNTY from participating in the defense of any claim, action, or proceeding if both of the following occur:

APN: 046-261-05 Owner: Brown

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 - B. Nothing contained herein shall prohibit the COUNTY from participating in the defense of any claim, action, or proceeding if both of the following occur:

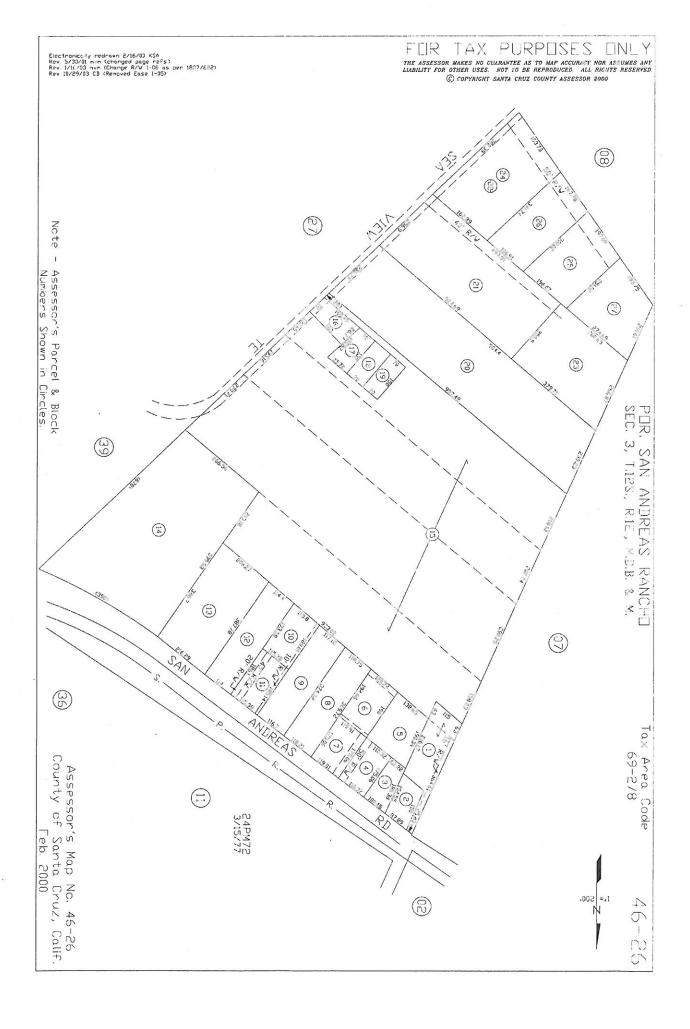
- 1. COUNTY bears its own attorney's fees and costs; and
- 2. COUNTY defends the action in good faith.
- C. <u>Settlement</u>. The Development Approval Holder shall not be required to pay or perform any settlement unless such Development Approval Holder has approved the settlement. When representing the County, the Development Approval Holder shall not enter into any stipulation or settlement modifying or affecting the interpretation or validity of any of the terms or conditions of the development approval without the prior written consent of the County.
- D. <u>Successors Bound</u>. "Development Approval Holder" shall include the applicant and the successor'(s) in interest, transferee(s), and assign(s) of the applicant.

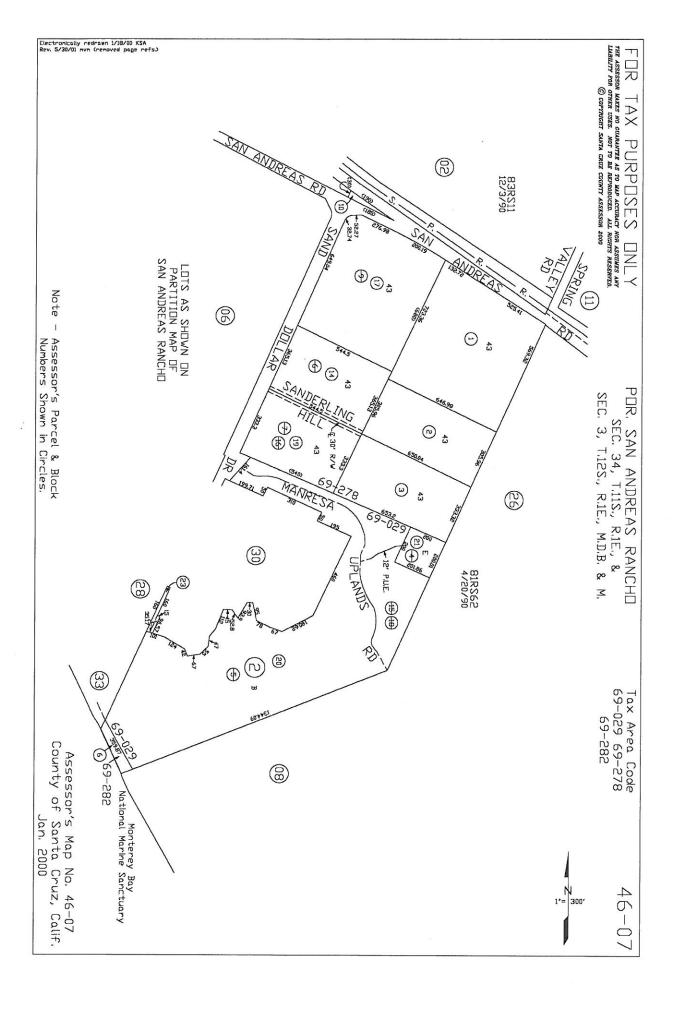
Minor Variations to this permit which do not affect the overall concept or density may be approved by the Planning Director at the request of the applicant or staff in accordance with Chapter 18.10 of the County Code.

Please note: This permit expires three years from the effective date listed below or if additional discretionary permits are required for the above permitted project, this permit shall expire on the same date as any subsequent approved discretionary permit(s) unless a building permit (or permits) is obtained for the primary structure described in the development permit (does not include demolition, temporary power pole or other site preparation permits, or accessory structures unless these are the primary subject of the development permit). Failure to exercise the building permit and to complete all of the construction under the building permit, resulting in the expiration of the building permit, will void the development permit, unless there are special circumstances as determined by the Planning Director.

Approval Date:	
Effective Date:	
Expiration Date:	

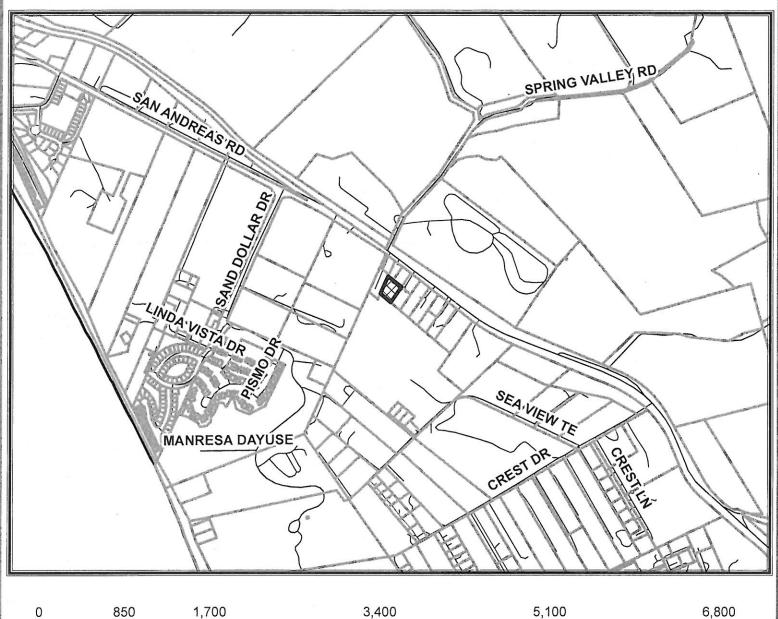
Appeals: Any property owner, or other person aggrieved, or any other person whose interests are adversely affected by any act or determination of the Agricultural Policy Advisory Commission under the provisions of County Code Chapter 16.50, may appeal the act or determination to the Board of Supervisors in accordance with chapter 18.10 of the Santa Cruz County Code.



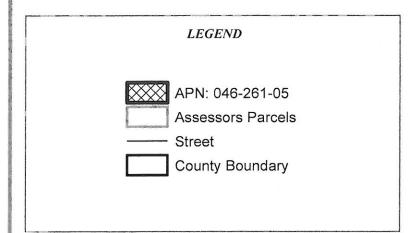




Location Map





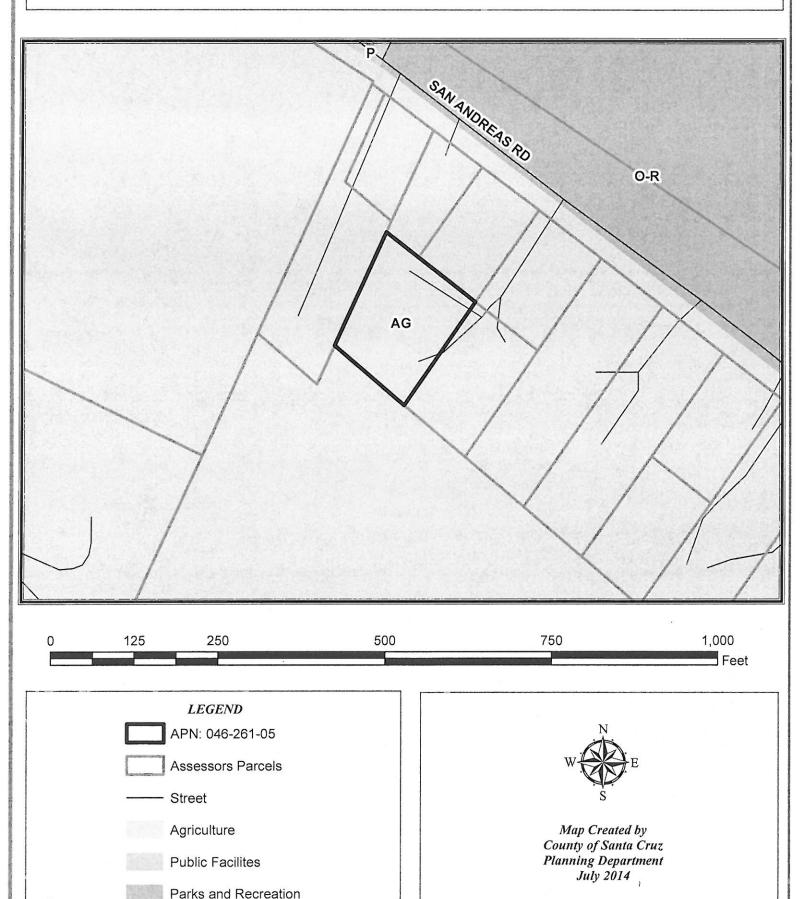




Map Created by County of Santa Cruz Planning Department July 2014



General Plan Designation Map





Zoning Map

