

DESIGN REVIEW WORKSHOP STAFF REPORT**MEETING****DATE:** November 6, 2019**STAFF:** Kaitlin Zitelli, Planner I
(415) 899-8941; kzitelli@novato.org**SUBJECT: HAMILTON VILLAGE**
P2019-079; DESIGN REVIEW
APN 157-970-03; 802 STATE ACCESS ROAD

REQUESTED ACTION

Conduct a public workshop to review and provide comments regarding conceptual site design and circulation, building design and massing, and landscaping for Hamilton Village, a 73-unit residential development at 802 State Access Road (hereafter “Project”).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Project site is an approximately 4.71 acre parcel located on the north side of State Access Road, east of Nave Drive. The immediately adjacent vacant parcel to the west is comprised of a large rock outcropping known as ‘Christmas Tree Hill’. Across State Access Road to the south of the Project site is the Landham Village residential development. North of the Project site are the New Beginnings Center and Homeward Bound of Marin located on the HUD parcel, owned by the City of Novato (City), and deed restricted for uses that support the homeless population, including supportive housing and services (e.g. jobs training). Novato Village Senior Apartments are currently under construction adjacent and east of the Project site. The majority of the Project site is flat with the exception of 1.3 acres located adjacent to the Christmas Tree Hill parcel. The Project site is the former site of the base commissary and shops for Hamilton Army Airfield, and is currently vacant.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant, City Ventures, proposes 73 townhomes on the site. Each unit would include a two-car garage, and the proposed height of the buildings is 40-feet. A total of 185 parking spaces are provided, 146 of which are garage spaces. Additional improvements include landscaping, a community garden, barbecue and picnic table areas, and open space areas.

BACKGROUND

Applicant: City Ventures
Property Owner: City of Novato

Property Size: ± 4.7 acres

General Plan Designation: Community Facilities (CF)

Existing Zoning: Planned District (PD)

Existing Use: Vacant

Adjacent Zoning and Uses: North – Planned District (PD): HUD Parcel
 South – Planned District (PD): Landham Village residential
 East – Planned District (PD): Novato Village Senior Apartments
 West – Planned District (PD): ‘Christmas Tree Hill’ rock outcropping

Figure 1: Aerial view of the project site (property lines approximate)



DEVELOPMENT ENTITLEMENTS

The applicant has submitted a design review application for early feedback from planning staff, residents, and the Design Review Commission. It is anticipated that the applicant will submit additional entitlement applications subsequent to this workshop. The following City approvals are required for the proposed project:

- **General Plan Amendment.** It is anticipated that the applicant will submit an application for a General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation of the site from CF to R20 on the General Plan Land Use Map.
- **Master Plan Amendment.** The Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan will need to be amended to permit multi-family housing and other site specific development standards.
- **Precise Development Plan (PDP).** A PDP will need to be approved to address the design and operational characteristics of the project.

- **Design Review.**
- **Vesting Tentative Map.**
- **CEQA Environmental review approval.**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The project is subject to environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) however, an environmental assessment is not required for a preliminary project review, such as a Design Review Commission workshop hearing. Prior to a pending Planning Commission hearing, the City will determine and complete the necessary level of environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

A neighborhood meeting was held on October 2, 2019 at 6 P.M. at the Hamilton Community Center. Approximately 13 people attended the meeting. A summary of comments from members of the public is provided below.

- Increased traffic concerns.
- Concerns over traffic cutting through the Landham Village neighborhood to reach Main Gate Road.
- Concerns related to the number of proposed units being too high.
- Can a number of affordable units greater than 20 percent be required?

STAFF ANALYSIS

The following is an analysis of the project regarding consistency with applicable provisions of the General Plan and Novato Municipal Code, including Chapter 19, Zoning.

1996 General Plan

The project site has a current land use designation of Community Facilities (CF) in the Novato General Plan. In order to proceed with the multi-family housing project as proposed, the applicant will have to apply for a General Plan Amendment.

The General Plan land use designation that would accommodate the project would be High Density Multiple Family Residential (R20). The R20 land use permits a variety of residential uses, including multiple-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, detached or attached single-family dwellings, among other uses. The R20 land use designation has an allowable density range of 20.1 to 30 dwelling units per acre. As currently proposed, the project is approximately 22 dwelling units per acre.

In addition to specifying acceptable types of land uses and maximum development intensities, the Novato General Plan provides a framework of policies addressing such matters as land use, transportation and circulation, and community character. These policies are intended to coordinate Novato's physical development over a 20-year period. As the conceptual site plan and architectural design progresses into more detailed plans, the DRC should consider applicable design policies of the Community Identity (CI) Chapter of the General Plan when reviewing this proposal. Relevant CI policies are:

- CI Policy 1 Compatibility of Development with Surroundings. Ensure that new development is sensitive to the surrounding architecture, topography, landscaping, and to the character, scale, and ambiance of the surrounding neighborhood. Recognize that neighborhoods include community facilities needed by Novato residents as well as homes, and integrate facilities into neighborhoods.
- CI Policy 7 Landscaping. Encourage attractive native and drought-tolerant, low-maintenance landscaping responsive to fire hazards.
- CI Policy 12 Parking Standards. Reduce the visibility of parking facilities and the amount of land necessary for them to the maximum extent feasible
- CI Policy 14 Open Areas and Landscaping. Require provision of adequate landscaped, open areas in project design.
- CI Policy 15 Pedestrian Paths. Provide for maximum feasible pedestrian circulation.
- CI Policy 32 Public Art. Promote public art that enhances the cultural life of the community.

Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan

The project site has a current land use designation of Community Facilities (CF) in the Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan ([Reuse Plan](#)), consistent with the General Plan land use designation. In order to proceed with the project as proposed, the applicant will need to apply for a Reuse Plan (master plan) amendment.

The project site is part of 'Planning Area 4: Commissary Triangle' in the Reuse Plan. Section 8 of the Reuse Plan includes Design Guidelines for development within this planning area. Applicable goals and policies for this site are included in Section 8.2 of the Reuse Plan. The policies contain guidelines for aesthetic quality, landscaping, streetscapes, site planning, parking, lighting, and fencing. The DRC should consider applicable design guidelines when reviewing this proposal. Additional design information can be found in the Hamilton Field [Design Guidelines](#), which the DRC may want to reference as part of the design considerations for this project.

Novato Zoning Ordinance

Planned District: The site is zoned Planned District (PD). This zoning classification allows flexibility to develop project and site specific development and operational standards through the adoption of a Precise Development Plan (PDP). A PDP may include design and operational elements that deviate from the uniform standards of the Novato Zoning Ordinance. Deviations are allowed where doing so better addresses a unique site constraint(s) (e.g., steep topography, wetlands, easements, etc.) or would result in a superior project design. The Commissions and the City Council will need to consider the merits of the project if they are to support these types of deviations from standard code requirements through the PD approval process.

Affordable Housing Requirements: Based on the proposed residential unit count, 20 percent of the units are required to be affordable.

Art Program: The project will need to comply with NMC Division 19.21, which requires an art project that has a value of not less than one-third of one percent of the construction cost of the completed development project, or payment of an in-lieu fee.

Landscaping: NMC Division 19.28 has minimum landscape standards for new development projects, including setback areas, parking lots, and open areas.

Open Space: NMC 19.34.124 specifies standards for open space in multi-family residential project. The zoning of the site will remain PD, however the density of the project falls within the R20 zoning district designation. The required amount of open space for multi-family projects within an R20 zoning district is 200 square feet per unit. A minimum of half of the required open space shall be immediately available to and private for the occupants of each dwelling unit, while the remainder may be combined in common areas available to other residents of the project.

Parking: NMC 19.30.040 specifies the number of parking spaces required for the project. The proposed project meets this standard as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Required Parking Spaces for Multi-Family Dwelling, Condominiums and Other Attached Dwellings	
Standard*	Hamilton Village Proposal
2-bedroom units: 2 parking spaces/unit	Number of Units: 22 Two (2) bedroom units with an opt. bed 3 51 Three (3)+ bedroom units Total: 73 units
3- and 4-bedroom units: 2.2 parking spaces/unit	Number of Spaces Required: Resident Parking: 160.6 Guest Parking: 24.3 spaces Total: 185 spaces
Guest parking: 1 parking space/3 units	Number of Spaces Proposed: Garage spaces: 146 (2 garage spaces per unit) Uncovered parking spaces: 39 Total: 185 spaces
*At least one (1) space per unit shall be covered in either a garage or carport.	

The required parking calculation above assumes that the residents of the 22 two (2) bedroom units would utilize the third bedroom option.

Design Review Findings

In reviewing and offering any comments at this (workshop) stage in the design review process, staff suggests that the DRC take into account the required design findings below i.e. when the project comes back to the DRC for a formal decision, the DRC will need to make the following design review findings:

Design Review Finding No. 1: The design, layout, size, architectural features and general appearance of the proposed project is consistent with the general plan, and any applicable specific plan and with the development standards, design guidelines and all

applicable provisions of this code, including this title and any approved master plan and precise development plan.

Design Review Finding No. 2: The proposed project would maintain and enhance the community's character, provide for harmonious and orderly development, and create a desirable environment for the occupants, neighbors, and visiting public.

Design Review Finding No. 3: The proposed development would not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare; is not materially injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity; does not interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring existing or future developments and does not create potential traffic, pedestrian or bicycle hazards.

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct a workshop to receive public input and provide comments to the applicant and staff regarding the project's proposed conceptual site design, circulation, building massing, architecture, and landscaping.

FURTHER ACTION

This project will return to the Design Review Commission for further consideration. The DRC may then make a formal recommendation to the Planning Commission and City Council.

PROJECT INFORMATION AVAILABLE FOR VIEW AND DOWNLOAD

1. Project webpage maintained by the City of Novato - www.novato.org/hamiltonvillage
2. [Plan Set](#), dated 10/10/2019
3. [Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan](#) – see Section 8, Design Guidelines.
4. [Hamilton Field Design Guidelines](#) – reference document for information only.