

**COUNTY OF EL DORADO PLANNING AND BUILDING
DEPARTMENT
PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**



Agenda of: August 24, 2017

Staff: Efren Sanchez

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

FILE NUMBER: S17-0008/Island Girl Wines

APPLICANT: Jeremy Vander Velde

OWNER: Jeremy and Diana Vander Velde

AGENT: William Crenshaw, De Novo Planning Group

REQUEST: Conditional Use Permit request to allow a winery with no on-site sales or tasting room.

LOCATION: East side of Gopher Hole Road, approximately 0.2 mile north of the intersection with Bucks Bar Road, in the Somerset area, Supervisorial District 2. (Exhibit A)

APN: 093-180-53 (Exhibit B)

ACREAGE: 22.6 acres

GENERAL PLAN: Rural Residential (RR)/ Important Biological Corridor (IBC) Overlay (Exhibit C)

ZONING: Limited Agriculture (LA-20) (Exhibit D)

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT: Categorically Exempt pursuant to 15303(c) of the CEQA Guidelines

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions:

1. Find that the project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act Section 15303(c); and
2. Approve Conditional Use Permit S17-0008 based on the Findings and subject to the Conditions of Approval as presented.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approval of this Conditional Use Permit would allow a winery with no on-site sales or tasting room to be constructed and operated in the Somerset area. Wineries are a conditionally allowed use in Limited Agriculture Zones. Staff has determined that the proposed project is consistent with the El Dorado County General Plan policies and Zoning Ordinance requirements, as discussed in the Findings.

This application is consistent with the June 7, 2016 voter-approved ballot Measure E because the project will generate minimal trips to the site, and will not cause traffic to reach LOS F during peak hours. As there are no on-site wine sales or general public access proposed, the use would not include additional trips to the site to taste and purchase wine or to attend an event.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Background: The property is under an active Williamson Act Contract (WAC 08-0004) for vineyard and grazing with the identified Agricultural Preserve Number 321. The Board of Supervisors approved it on March 10, 2009 along with rezone Z08-0014.

Site Description: The site is located off Gopher Hole Road, approximately 0.2 miles north of the intersection with Bucks Bar Road in the Somerset area. The project site is surrounded by rural land uses to the east, west and north (Rural Land, RL-10) and is in a rural region. The site to the south is zoned Community Commercial (CC) and is part of the Somerset Rural Center, however this area is currently undeveloped. The parcel lies at approximately 2,000 feet above mean sea level with an elevation range from approximately 1,980 to 2,240 feet above mean sea level. The vineyard has been in production and operation since 2008 at an average of 18 tons a year of wine grape production. The property includes a residence that was built in 2012, and an existing 40x40 foot temperature controlled steel beam building with a 40x20 foot concrete pad in the front of the structure. The western portion of the site consists largely of active agricultural vineyard operations with the residential dwelling located near the center of the vineyard operations. The eastern portion of the site consists largely of grass and tree cover. Currently 6 acres of the 22.6 acre parcel are used for grape production. A private driveway provides access to the parcel from Gopher Hole Road.

Project Description: The project would allow the use of an existing 40x40 foot metal structure as a winery. Current farming/vineyard operations, which are allowed on the site by-right, would

continue. In addition to the current 18-ton wine grape production, approximately four tons of grape varieties not produced onsite may be sourced from other vineyards per year.

The use permit would add the manufacture of wine on site, which would include grape crush, storage/cellaring, and bottling. The proposed operation includes the use of nine existing stainless steel tanks for the handling of wine and a 10-ton glycol chiller on site to maintain temperature levels. All bottling would be done on site with a bottle-filler and corking machine. Two types of presses would be used, a three-ton corkscrew press and a half-ton hydraulic press. All of the presses to be used are on wheels and the applicant proposes to bring them out to the existing 40x20 foot concrete pad during manufacturing.

Bottling and cellaring are to be conducted in the 40x40 foot temperature controlled steel beam building existing on the property. The existing 20x40 foot concrete pad will be used as the crush/press pad during grape processing. The project would also include the installation of a water collection system that would re-use the water used for sanitization. The operation proposes to utilize 180 degree water to clean and sanitize equipment rather than chemicals provided by a commercial instant-on-demand hot water system. The water used during the manufacturing and cleaning process will flow into the proposed catch pipe along the front of the pad and run down the hill into two poly storage tanks (340 gallons each) to collect the water. Water will be transported by tractor/trailer into the vine rows and dispersed to irrigate.

Proposed operations are to be conducted in developed portions of the site, and no additional structures, development, or operations are proposed for the undisturbed/undeveloped portions of the site. A 5000 kW solar array exists onsite and will be utilized to power all electrical agricultural and winery operations. Bulk ageing will be done in barrel and stored in the steel winery building. All entrances have locks and the site is secure with the entire vineyard being fenced and an electric locked gate entrance.

No public on-site sales, and no public wine tasting, special events, or general public access is proposed. Wines sales are to be conducted online through islandgirlwines.com. Shipments will be conducted by UPS/Fedex and scheduled approximately once per week. The applicant anticipates producing up to 1,000 cases a year depending on grape yield, and shipping up to 19 cases a week at full production. Wines sales are to be direct to consumer through digital channels (online sales). Currently, pruning and grape crews periodically report to the site to work during harvest and pruning seasons. This proposal would also include up to three employees.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The project has been found to be Categorical Exempt from the requirements of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15303(c) (Conversion of Small Structures), which allows the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another for structures not involving the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances, and not exceeding 2,500 square feet in floor area.

A \$50.00 processing fee is required by the County Recorder to file the Notice of Exemption (NOE). The filing of the NOE is optional; however, not filing the NOE extends the statute of limitations for legal challenges to the project from 35 days to 180 days.

SUPPORT INFORMATION

Attachments to Staff Report:

Findings
Conditions of Approval

Exhibit A.....Location Map
Exhibit B.....Assessor's Parcel Map
Exhibit C.....General Plan Map
Exhibit D.....Zoning Map
Exhibit E.....Site Plan