

August 4, 2010 - Revised

Job No. 09-124

Mr. Don Ridenhour, P.E.
Director
Napa County Public Works Department
1195 Third Street, Suite 201
Napa, California 94559

Re: Request for Exception to the Napa County Road and Street Standards for
Relic Wine Cellars, 2400 Soda Canyon Road, Napa, CA (APN 032-090-024)

Dear Mr. Ridenhour:

Relic Wine Cellars is proposing to build a new small winery facility on their property located at 2400 Soda Canyon Road. The winery will have a maximum annual production of 20,000 gallons of wine and up to four employees. Marketing will be limited to tours and tastings by appointment only with up to 20 visitors per day. The winery is also planning to host up to 12 marketing events per year with no more than 25 guests per event.

This request for an exception from the Napa County Road and Street Standards is being filed concurrent with the use permit application for the new winery for your review and final decision by the Conservation, Development and Planning Commission.

Existing Driveway Conditions

The site is currently served by a gravel driveway off of the east side of Soda Canyon Road immediately north of the Soda Canyon Fire Department building. The proposed building site is located in the eastern portion of the property and is accessed by an existing 1,200 ± foot long driveway that meanders through the property traversing sloping hillsides with natives trees and natural drainage courses. The driveway follows the natural landforms with longitudinal slopes generally less than 20%. There are two short segments of the existing driveway that have slopes in excess of 20% located at approximately STA 15+50 to STA 16+50 and STA 20+50 to STA 21+25. The existing driveway varies from approximately 10 to 12 feet wide and is surfaced with gravel for the first 550 feet into the property from its intersection with Soda Canyon Road. The existing driveway is approximately 10 to 12 feet wide and paved with asphalt concrete the remainder of the 650 feet to the proposed winery site. See attached photographs for illustration of the existing driveway conditions.

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**NAPA CO. CONSERVATION
DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING DEPT.**

Request for Exception to Napa County Road and Street Standards

The Napa County Road and Street Standards require that a "Common Drive" (18 feet paved plus 2 feet of shoulder) be installed to serve winery facilities. Furthermore, Section 3.D. of the Road and Street Standards as revised by Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 06-198 states that an exception to the Road and Street Standards may be granted if the exception will preserve unique features of the natural environment (including native trees, watercourses, steep slopes and geologic features) and the proposed driveway provides the same overall practical effect as the Road and Street Standards towards providing defensible space, and consideration towards life, safety and public welfare.

While it would be possible to improve the existing driveway to the full 20 foot width along its entire length, this would require substantial grading on steep slopes near existing drainage courses and removal of numerous large native trees. The property owners would like to preserve the existing slopes, trees and drainage courses to the greatest extent possible and thus are requesting an exception to the Road and Street Standards to allow small portions of the existing driveway to be 14 feet wide instead of 20 feet wide.

Proposed Driveway Conditions & Justification for Exception

As part of the proposed winery project, the driveway entrance at Soda Canyon Road will be relocated approximately 75 feet north to improve sight distance and overall access to the property. The existing driveway will be abandoned. The new driveway entrance will be constructed per the Napa County Road and Street Standards. Furthermore 775 of the total 1,175 feet of existing driveway will be improved to a total width of 20 feet and the driveway slope will be reduced to 20% or less in all areas in accordance with the Road and Street Standards. This request for an exception to the Road and Street Standards is to allow a reduced road width of 14 feet from STA 12+50 to 13+50 to preserve existing mature oak trees and from STA 18+75 to 21+75 to preserve rock outcroppings and also minimize the extent of grading and vegetation removal on steep natural slopes adjacent to an existing drainage course.

Below is a summary of the proposed road conditions with stationing references that correspond to the attached site map:

STA 10+00 to 12+50	Driveway improved to full County standards
STA 12+50 to 13+50	Request for reduced width (14 feet wide)
STA 13+50 to 18+75	Driveway improved to full County standards
STA 18+75 to 21+75	Request for reduced width (14 feet wide)

The reduced road width from STA 12+50 to 13+50 will allow preservation of several existing mature oak trees that would otherwise need to be removed to improve the driveway to the full 20 foot width. Additionally, the reduced width from STA 18+75 to 21+75 will allow preservation of natural geologic formations (rock outcroppings) and will also preserve the existing steep hillside slopes and minimize vegetation removal and erosion potential adjacent to the existing drainage course.

Several measures have been incorporated into this project to provide the "same overall practical effect" as the Road and Standards towards providing defensible space, and consideration towards life, safety and public welfare while allowing two short sections of driveway to have a reduced width. Below is a summary of the proposed measures:

1. Horizontal and vertical vegetation management will be implemented along the entire length of the driveway and around the structure to create defensible space in accordance with Napa County Fire Department requirements.
2. From STA 12+50 to 13+50 the entire length of road that is less than 20 feet wide will be intervisible from end to end thereby allowing cars to stop at either end if another vehicle is already in the reduced width area.
3. From STA 18+75 to 21+75 vegetation will be trimmed and maintained as necessary so that the entire length of road that is less than 20 feet wide will be intervisible from end to end thereby allowing cars to stop at either end if another vehicle is already in the reduced width area. The portion of the driveway that is over 20% slope will be regraded to a slope of 20% or less.
4. Traffic generation will be minimized by limiting the production capacity to 20,000 gallons of wine per year and maintaining a modest marketing plan consisting of a maximum of 20 by appointment tours and tastings guests and 12 annual marketing events with up to 25 guests
5. Tours and tastings and marketing events will be scheduled such that guests will not arrive or depart at the same time as other guests or at the same time as a scheduled truck delivery (fruit, barrels, supplies, etc.) to minimize the change for traffic in opposing directions crossing at a section of driveway with reduced width.
6. Signs will be posted so that traffic leaving the winery will be notified of the reduced road width and will be instructed to yield until oncoming traffic has cleared the reduced width portion of driveway.

Conclusion

It is our opinion that the proposed request to allow a reduced driveway width from STA 12+50 to 13+50 and STA 18+75 to 21+75 meets the criteria for preserving unique features of the natural environment. Furthermore, the proposed site improvements and winery production, visitation and marketing parameters will provide the same overall practical effect as the Road and Street Standards towards providing defensible space and safe access conditions for the general public and emergency vehicles.

We look forward to hearing from a representative from your department to discuss any questions that may arise during review of this request. Please contact our office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Muelrath

Michael R. Muelrath, P.E.
Principal



Enclosures:

Relic Wine Cellars Use Permit Map
Photographs of Existing Driveway



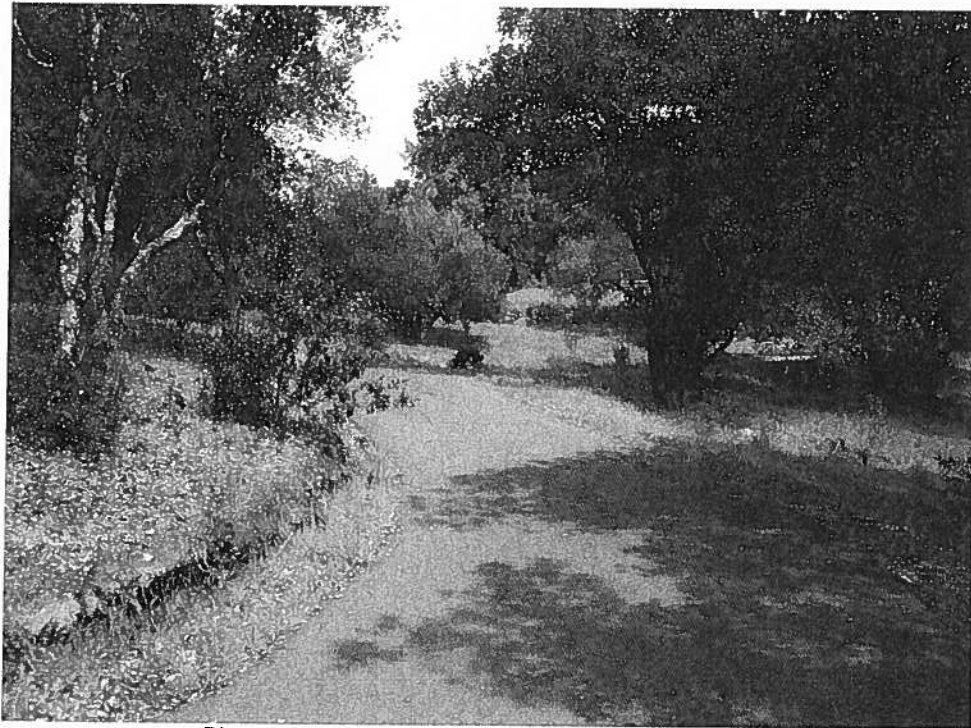
Photograph looking east from new driveway connection at Soda Canyon Road.
This stretch of driveway will be improved to full Road and Street Standards



Photograph looking north along existing driveway alignment at STA 12+00
New driveway will transition to 14 feet wide at the trees point to minimize tree removal



Photograph looking northeast from STA 15+00
This stretch of driveway will be improved to full Road and Street Standards



Photograph looking north from STA 17+00
This stretch of driveway will be improved to full Road and Street Standards



Photograph looking west from STA 21+00

This stretch of driveway will be improved to 14 feet wide to provide adequate access and to minimize grading on steep slopes, minimize disturbance to rock outcrops and to minimize impacts to trees and the watercourse at the base of the hill on left. Area with slopes in excess of 20% will be reduced to 20% or less.