



J. Kapolchok
+ Associates

Land Use Planning
Urban Design

PROPOSAL STATEMENT
Conditional Use Permit by Waiver
Muir Wood Adolescent and Family Services, LLC
1743 Skillman Lane
Petaluma, CA 94952
Amended -May 2020

Applicant: Muir Wood Adolescent & Family Services, LLC
1733 Skillman Lane
Petaluma, CA 94952

Consultants: Jean Kapolchok
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843 2nd Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Owner: KKS Property, LLC
14155 N. 83rd Ave., #101
Peoria, AZ

Contact: Scott Sowle
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APN: 048-250-002

Site Size: ± 3.13 acres

General Plan: Rural Residential – 2-acre density (RR/2)

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Zoning: Agriculture and Residential – 2-acre density; Valley Oak Habitat (AR-B6-2-VOH)

Proposal: Use Permit with waiver of a public hearing for the expansion of an existing residential community-care facility from 6 beds to 10 beds.

PROJECT SETTING

Description

Muir Wood Adolescent & Family Services, LLC ('Muir Wood') seeks a conditional use permit by waiver for the expansion of their existing residential community-care facility from 6 beds to 10 to support the increasing the number of boys aged 12-17 participating in their program. This facility is a separate facility from that which exists at 1733 Skillman Lane, which was approved under UPE14-0018).

Pursuant to Section 26-16-020 (q) of the Sonoma County zoning code, a group home for seven or more children requires a conditional use permit in the Agriculture and Residential (AR) district. In this case, a waiver is being requested due to the urgent, unmet need for this type of vital service coupled with the fact that the expansion in the number of clients served will not require any physical expansion to the facility or improvements to the site.

Location

The property address is 1743 Skillman Lane, Petaluma, CA 94952 (APN 048-250-002) and is within the unincorporated area of Petaluma about a mile west of Petaluma Blvd. North. The subject property is 3.13 acres in size. Marin Creek is located ±600 ft. west of the property.

Existing and Proposed Structures and Land Use

In April 2019, the existing 5-bedroom single-family residence located on the property was converted to a six-bed group home licensed by the State of California, Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing. The existing facility does not require a conditional use permit, as it currently treats no more than six boys at any given time.

The subject property is currently improved with a single-family residence, an accessory building, a one car covered parking space, a large parking court, and landscaping. The buildings were constructed with building permits in 2018.

No physical expansion of existing buildings or construction of new buildings will be necessary to accommodate the increased capacity from 6 beds to 10 beds. Currently, 2 of the bedrooms upstairs have 2 residents per room and the other 2 bedrooms have 1 per room. With the proposed use permit by waiver, all 4 bedrooms will be 2

residents per room and the master bedroom downstairs (which has its own bathroom) will also have 2 boys.

General Plan and Zoning

The property site is designated Rural Residential; 2-acre density (RR/2) in the Sonoma County General Land Plan land use element and is in the unincorporated area of Petaluma. The site is zoned AR-B6-2-VOH. Section 26-16-021(o) allows the filing of a Use Permit for a Large Residential Community Care Facility.

Previous Entitlements

A parcel map was recorded on December 30, 2016 creating two separate legal lots. Lot 1 (1733 Skillman Lane, APN 048-250-001) and the subject parcel, Lot 2 (1743 Skillman Lane APN 048-250-002). Lot 1 is currently an approved 10-bed Residential Care facility (UPE 14-0018) also operated by Muir Wood.

Surrounding Land and Land Uses

The principal surrounding land use is rural/agriculture residential development on similar to larger sized parcels.

Topography

The site topography is flat to minimal slope.

Drainage

The site drains southwesterly.

Use Permit by Waiver

The applicant is requesting authorization to expand the operation of an existing group home for boys ages 12-17 from 6 beds to 10 beds.

Operations

Muir Wood is a gender-specific, comprehensive treatment program for boys age 12-17 suffering from behavioral health and substance abuse issues. The program, licensed by both the State of California Department of Social Services and Department of Health Care Services, combines the key elements essential in effectively treating adolescent boys with substance abuse and other mental health disorders. Muir Wood is a highly individualized, holistic program designed to treat the psychological, biological, spiritual, social and educational needs of our clients. Admission to the program is voluntary and the average length of stay is 45-90 days. Executive Director, Scott Sowle and Clinical Director, Liz Fischel, LCSW carefully screen boys entering Muir Wood. Boys need to be high functioning and most are from local area families, from local area high schools. Exclusionary criteria include an inability to actively participate in school, group and family therapy.

The daily schedule includes schooling with a State of California credentialed teacher in the mornings, intensive individual, group therapy, and lectures throughout the

afternoon. Residents participate in an intensive and highly structured family therapy programs two days per month. Family/resident therapy sessions take place off campus (accompanied by staff) at an office building in downtown Petaluma. Residents also participate in off campus Adventure Therapy (accompanied by staff) for 6-8 hours per week in the surrounding State and National Parks (facilitated by a Masters level therapist).

Staffing

Scott Sowle, Muir Wood's Founder and Executive Director, is certified by the State of California as a Group Home Administrator, and has over 20 years experience operating similar programs. Scott is on campus most every day managing the staff and day-to-day operations, along with Liz Fischel, LCSW, a licensed clinical social worker and Nicholas Reeves, MD, a licensed physician and psychiatrist.

Staff work in 3 shifts: Day Shift 7:00am to 3:00pm; Swing Shift 3:00pm to 11:00pm and Night Shift 11:00pm to 7:00 am.

- Day Shift – 6 staff members (Therapist, teachers, administrators, etc.)
- Swing Shift – 2 staff members (1 per 6 residents)
- Night Shift – 2 staff members (1 per 6 residents)

The maximum number of people on site occurs during the day shift. With this requested expansion, the maximum number of people on-site at any given time will be 16.

Parking

The site easily accommodates twenty (25) non-tandem parking spaces and is in compliance with parking requirements for a group home. Access to the 1743 Skillman lane facility is provided via an easement over the existing paved driveway from Skillman Lane through Lot 1 (1733 Skillman Lane). Once on the subject property (Lot 2), the driveway transitions from asphalt to crush rock.

Parking accommodates one parking space for each staff member on the largest shift, one parking space for the facility vehicle and visitor parking. Muir Wood requires all employees/staff, family members and/or vendors to park on the subject property. No parking on Skillman Lane is permitted.

Traffic/Circulation

Access to the 6-bed facility on Lot 2 is provided via easement over the asphalted driveway along the west boundary of Lot 1 to the fire truck turn around, which is partially on Lot 2. This driveway transitions to a crushed rock driveway on Lot 2. Access will remain as is for the expanded facility (6 beds to 10 beds) on Lot 2. Residential clients do not have access to their vehicles while they are at the facility.

All parent therapy sessions are held off-site at an office building in downtown Petaluma. No additional miscellaneous traffic (vendor/delivery) is anticipated as the result of the proposed expansion.

Alternative Transportation

The proposed expanded facility is a closed facility, meaning residents do not leave the grounds unless accompanied by staff for a specific purpose such as a parent therapy sessions or day outdoor therapy sessions. All meals, as well as daytime education are provided on site. Any off-campus event will be by a facility van. Staff are encouraged to car pool.

Well & Septic

The existing engineered mound septic system, has been approved for a six-bedroom residence. A well servicing Lot 2 was installed prior to the property being subdivided (WEL09-0066). The well is located at the south-east corner of the property (see attached site plan). The 5000-gal. tank has an additional 10,000 gallons of storage. The well produces a minimum of 50GPM. The on-site well services 1743 Skillman Lane (Lot 2) only.

Water and Resource Conservation

The residence was constructed in 2018 under the applicable state and local building code at the time. All required CalGreen building code standards were incorporated, including but not limited to low flush toilets and shower heads. The residents are encouraged to practice water and resource conservation. For example, food scraps from the kitchen are composted and drought tolerant landscaping has been installed.

Solid Waste Management

Weekly waste disposal is provided by Recology. They provide (3) six yard bins for garbage, compost and recycling which is sufficient to accommodate the 10-person occupancy of housing for this requested Use Permit by waiver.

Energy Conservation

According to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) 2017 CEQA Guidelines, if a project meets the screening criteria and is consistent with the methodology used to develop the screening criteria, then its air quality impacts may be considered less than significant. In review of Table 3-1: Operational Related Criteria Air Pollutant and Precursor Screening Level Sizes of BAAQMD Guidelines, the project is significantly below the size required for screening. The project most resembles a Congregate Care Facility. The screening size for operational ROG is 657du and operational GHG is 143 du. The facility is the addition of 4 beds over the existing CEQA baseline. There is no construction related impacts.

Although the GHG impact of the project would be below the BAAQMD threshold criteria of 1,100 metric tons of carbon dioxide a year, the project will implement the following measures to further reduce its potential GHG impact.

Operations:

Lace House Linen Supply services the property twice a week replacing all bedding, towels, etc., rather than repeated use of the on-site laundry facilities.

The residents are taken off campus once a week to do laundry at the laundry-mat rather than having repeated use of on-site laundry facilities.

All windows are sealed for energy efficiency.

Thermostats can only be adjusted by staff.

Storm Water Management

The expansion of the existing facility will not result in any grading or land disturbance. A grading permit and therefore a preliminary storm water management plan are not required. The addition of 4 beds will not alter the drainage of the property.

Safety and Security

Muir Wood is a highly structured program with supervised groups, lectures, and educational programming between the hours of 8am to 11pm (weekday and weekend schedules attached). Residents at Muir Wood are supervised at all times and are not permitted to leave the premises at any time unless accompanied by staff or with their family.

Muir Wood controls all outdoor activities. There are no parties or gatherings on-site. Parents visit with their children and attend therapy sessions off-site. There have been no incidences of any reported community concerns regarding noise levels. Muir Wood limits any outdoor activity (basketball, touch football, soccer) to the subject property and limits activities from 9am to 6pm.

Emergency Services

The property is within the Rancho Adobe Fire Services District. The site is accessed through Lot 1 by an asphalted driveway. There is an existing truck turnaround area on Lot 2, which meets fire safe standards. There is also a Sonoma County Fire Department 30' setback from all property lines. Fire alarm systems, which exist at each facility, were designed and installed by Bay Alarms.

Muir Wood Program and Leadership

Scott Sowle is the Founder and Executive Director of Muir Wood Adolescent & Family Services and is also the certified group home administrator with the State of California. Scott has been instrumental in developing two of the leading adolescent residential treatment programs in the United States (Visions Adolescent Treatment Center in Los Angeles, CA and Newport Academy in Orange County, CA). He held the position of Executive Director at Visions (2001-03) and Executive Director and Founder at Newport Academy (2007-12). Both Visions and Newport Academy exist in residential zoned neighborhoods and are licensed similar to Muir Wood. Visions has been in operation for twenty years and Newport Academy for thirteen years. Scott was instrumental in obtaining a conditional use permit for Visions allowing for

an expansion of its' residential capacity from six beds to ten beds. Under his leadership, neither Visions nor Newport Academy were ever cited by the State for any violations nor were there any issues with the neighbors. In fact, both Visions and Newport Academy were recognized as resources for the community and recognized as good neighbors. Scott served as the President for the Home Owners Association at the Newport Academy boys' residential location in Orange, CA.

Additionally, is nationally accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Facilities and accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Muir Wood has been recognized by a number of leaders in the treatment of adolescence as a "center of excellence and gold standard for treatment" (David Smith, MD, Immediate Past Medical Director, State of California, Alcohol and Drug Programs) and "a place of light and hope, where kindness, trust, and respect are established as the keystones of life-long recovery" (Kathy Ketcham, best-selling author, "Teens Under the Influence").