

Chiles Ranch Subdivision Proposal Staff Summary

The Chiles Ranch Subdivision proposal consists of 108 single family dwellings in a mix of detached, attached, and condominium units. The project would include market rate units and for sale affordable units. The development plan proposes city greenbelt; mini-park, common open space; private alleys; and amenities such as a gathering structure utilizing wood from the existing barn on site, and neighborhood gardens for residents. The proposed site plan and other project information can be viewed on the city's web page at <http://www.cityofdavis.org> under "Chiles Ranch Subdivision Proposal."

The Chiles Ranch, (formerly referred to as Simmons Estates) is a city identified residential infill site consisting of three vacant parcels totaling approximately 12.084 acres. The two largest parcels are located in the interior of the site and are not clearly visible from the Street. The smallest parcel is located on E. 8th Street. The zoning on the parcels is a mix of Agriculture (A) on the two interior lots, and Residential One and Two Family (R-2) on the smaller lot located on E. 8th Street. The General Plan Land Use designation on all three parcels is Residential Low-Density. The General Plan has identified the site for "Residential" use since 1973. For this reason a Measure J vote would not be needed to develop the proposed subdivision.

Background

The subject site originally operated as a family farm and contained a large farmhouse which was destroyed in a fire in 1972. The property is now largely vacant, with a few deteriorated outbuildings and a large barn remaining in the southwest quadrant of the property. Under the project proposal the outbuildings would be demolished. The barn would be deconstructed and the wood would be reused in part to construct a gathering structure on the site. A remnant swale traverses the quadrant southwest corner to the northwest corner. The existing swale would be brought up to grade to accommodate the proposed development.

Swainson's hawks are known to nest within one-quarter mile of the proposed project and nesting has occurred on the site in the past and may support nesting in the future. White-tailed kites roost in the cedars in the cemetery and may roost on the Simmons site. Impacts to biological resources are addressed in the environmental analysis prepared for the project and would be mitigated in accordance with Fish and Wildlife Services requirements.

Numerous trees and shrubs are scattered through the property. The applicant states that most of the trees would be removed as many of the species are not suitable for the proposed use, are misshapen, unhealthy or have significant structural defects. The plan would incorporate several existing trees into the landscape; other trees would be moved and replanted on site or donated to the adjacent cemetery if feasible. A large elderberry shrub was identified within the proposed project site. The elderberry shrub is the sole host plant for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB). The applicant has transplanted the elderberry shrub to a service approved conservation bank (Wildlands Inc, River Ranch VELB Conservation bank in Yolo County) following the Service's Conservation Guidelines for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle in doing so.

Requested Entitlements

- General Plan Amendment to amend the existing land use designation from “Residential Low-Density” to “Residential Medium-Density.”
- Tentative Subdivision Map to merge and re-subdivide the three parcels for the creation of 108 single family residential lots; city street, city greenbelt; private alleys; and common open space.
- Rezone/Preliminary Planned Development Ordinance to rezone the three parcels from Agriculture and R-2 to a Preliminary Planned Development to establish single-family residential zoning on the site.
- Final Planned Development to establish development standards such as setbacks, lot coverage, FAR, height, etc. for the new PD zoning district.
- Individualized Housing Plan for the proposed on site construction of for-sale affordable housing.
- Design Review for site plan and architectural review
- Environment Review. Appropriate mitigations would be included to address biological resources and any other significant impacts identified with the development of the site

Project Processing

- Social Services Commission reviewed and made recommendation on the proposed Affordable Housing Plan on September 17, 2008.
- Public hearing before the Planning Commission on May 27, 2009.
- Public hearing before the City Council on June 16, 2009.
- Hearing will be mailed to property owners within a 500 feet radius of the project site prior to the meeting and to board members of the Sunrise Neighborhood Association. Notices of Public Hearing will also be posted on the “Chiles Ranch Subdivision Proposal” link on the city’s web page.

SACOG Process

Prior to the submittal of the formal application by the landowners, a SACOG grant enabled the city to hire a planning consultant firm to enhance public involvement and create concept plans to guide the future development for the site. Four community workshops took place; three in September 2007, and one in November 2007. In December 2007 and January 2008, the Planning Commission and City Council respectively, reviewed and commented on three conceptual plans. Neither the Planning Commission nor the City Council endorsed any one plan. The City Council adopted guiding principals for the development of the site and specific project features to be included in any future plan. These include a fifty-foot buffer on the north and east property lines between new and existing homes, and a limit of seven to ten gross units per acre (84 to 120 units) for the project. The applicant has incorporated these elements into the site plan.

Please direct comments or questions regarding this project to: Cathy Camacho, Planner, ccamacho@cityofdavis.org, (530) 757-5610, 23 Russell Boulevard, Davis CA 95616