

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

DATE: July 8, 2015

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Planning Staff

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Consideration of a request by the Woodside Fire Protection District to determine if the District's acquisition of a 3.2-acre parcel (APN 080-060-580) from the dissolving Los Trancos County Water District conforms to the County General Plan.

County File Number: PLN 2015-00248

PROPOSAL

The Woodside Fire Protection District seeks a determination of whether acquisition by the District of a 3.2-acre parcel (APN 080-060-580) from the former Los Trancos County Water District, for the purpose of maintaining it in its largely undisturbed state in perpetuity, conforms to the General Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission find and report that County acquisition of APN 080-060-580 conforms to the General Plan.

SUMMARY

The subject parcel is located in unincorporated Los Trancos Woods, at the southern edge of Portola Valley. This parcel is largely in a natural condition with the exception of a small storage structure. The parcel provides habitat for local wildlife, particularly birds and small mammals. During years of very heavy rainfall, this parcel can retain standing water. The parcel is directly adjacent to the Los Trancos County Water District's reservoir.

The property is currently owned by the Los Trancos County Water District. However, the Los Trancos County Water District is currently in the process of dissolution, and must dispose of its properties. The Woodside Fire Protection District intends to accept the property from the Water District at no cost. In order to maintain the parcel in its current largely undeveloped condition, the Woodside Fire Protection District has entered into an agreement with San Mateo County and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) whereby the Woodside Fire Protection District will offer to MROSD,

and MROSD will accept, a permanent conservation easement restricting the future use of the property.

The acquisition of the properties by the Woodside Fire Protection District, with the intent to maintain them in their undeveloped state in perpetuity, is consistent with the Vegetative, Water, Fish and Wildlife Resources Policies of the General Plan, which require minimization of adverse impacts on natural resources, and prioritize managed use and protection of such resources; the Soil Resources and Visual Quality Policies, which require minimization of soil erosion, grading, and land clearing; and the Water Quality Policies, which encourage improvement and safeguarding of water supply systems, water supplies and reservoirs. The proposed acquisition is consistent with the County's General Plan.

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RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission find and report that County acquisition of APN 080-060-580 conforms to the General Plan.

BACKGROUND

Report Prepared By: William Gibson, Project Planner, Telephone 650/363-1816

Applicant: Woodside Fire Protection District

Owner: Los Trancos County Water District

Location: Los Trancos Woods

APN: 080-060-580

Size: 3.2 acres

Existing Zoning: R-1/S-108

General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential

Sphere-of-Influence: Portola Valley

Existing Land Use: Unimproved open space with one small shed

Water Supply: None

Sewage Disposal: None

Flood Zone: Zone X, Area of Minimal Flooding

Environmental Evaluation: A request for General Plan Conformity analysis is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and is not subject to environmental evaluation. Any future development proposed on the property would need to address relevant CEQA requirements.

Setting: This parcel is largely in a natural condition with the exception of a small storage structure.

DISCUSSION

A. KEY ISSUES

1. Basis for Acquisition

The subject parcel is located in unincorporated Los Trancos Woods, at the southern edge of Portola Valley. This parcel is largely in a natural condition with the exception of a small storage structure. The parcel provides habitat for local wildlife, particularly birds and small mammals. During years of very heavy rainfall, this parcel can retain standing water. The parcel is directly adjacent to the Los Trancos County Water District's reservoir.

The property is currently owned by the Los Trancos County Water District. However, the Los Trancos County Water District is currently in the process of dissolution, and must dispose of its properties. The Woodside Fire Protection District intends to accept the property from the Water District at no cost. In order to maintain the parcel in its current largely undeveloped condition, the Woodside Fire Protection District has entered into an agreement with San Mateo County and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) whereby the Woodside Fire Protection District will offer to MROSD, and MROSD will accept, a permanent conservation easement restricting the future use of the property.

2. Reason for General Plan Conformity Determination

Per California Government Code Section 65402, prior to any acquisition of property for public purpose, the acquiring agency must request a determination of the acquisition's consistency with the adopted General Plan.

3. Conformance with the San Mateo County General Plan

The proposed acquisition potentially involves the following General Plan Policies, which are addressed herein.

a. Vegetative, Water, Fish and Wildlife Resources Policies

- (1) Policy 1.22.a of the County General Plan requires that the County regulate land uses and development activities to prevent, and if infeasible mitigate to the extent possible, significant adverse impacts on vegetative, water, fish and wildlife resources.
- (2) Policy 1.23 requires the County to regulate the location, density and design of development to minimize significant adverse impacts and encourage enhancement of vegetative, water, fish and wildlife resources.
- (3) Policy 1.24 requires that the County ensure that development will (1) minimize the removal of vegetative resources; and/or (2) protect vegetation which enhances microclimate, stabilizes slopes or reduces surface water runoff, erosion or sedimentation; and/or (3) protect historic and scenic trees.
- (4) Policy 1.27 requires that the County regulate land uses and development activities within and adjacent to sensitive habitats, and permit only land uses and development activities that are consistent with the protection of sensitive habitats, including such uses as fish and wildlife management, trails and scenic overlooks, and minimally necessary public service and private infrastructure.

Discussion: This parcel is largely in a natural condition, and provides habitat for local wildlife, particularly birds and small mammals. During years of very heavy rainfall, this parcel can retain standing water.

The Woodside Fire Protection District has not proposed any developments on the property proposed for acquisition, or any changes to the conditions or uses of the property at this time. The proposal is limited to acquisition of the property, and any subsequent

changes in use would be determined through a planning process, consistent with applicable County regulations. The acquisition in itself does not conflict with the General Plan's vegetative, water, fish and wildlife resources. In addition, the District has indicated its intent, by dedicating a conservation easement to MROSD, to maintain the parcel in its undeveloped state, for open space and natural resource preservation. This intent is consistent with these General Plan Policies.

b. Soil Resources and Visual Quality Policies

- (1) Policy 2.17 calls for the County to regulate development to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation.
- (2) Policy 2.23 calls for the County to regulate excavation, grading, filling and land clearing activities to protect against accelerated soil erosion and sedimentation.
- (3) Policy 4.25.a calls for minimizing grading or earth-moving operations.
- (4) Policy 4.25.b requires blending graded areas with adjacent landforms through the use of contour grading rather than harsh cutting or terracing of the site.

Discussion: The District has indicated its intent to permanently restrict the parcel to its current state. The proposed acquisition does not conflict with the General Plan Soil Resources Policies or Visual Quality Policies.

c. Water Supply Policies

- (1) Policy 10.2 encourages the County to safeguard the productive capacity of groundwater aquifers and storage reservoirs.
- (2) Policy 10.13 encourages the County to improve water distribution and storage systems in unincorporated neighborhoods and communities.

Discussion: By acquiring the property, directly adjacent to the existing Los Trancos County Water District reservoir, and maintaining it in undeveloped condition, the Woodside Fire Protection District will help to buffer and protect the existing reservoir, consistent with the General Plan Water Supply Policies.

B. ALTERNATIVES

The alternative to a finding of conformity would be to find and report that the acquisition does not conform to the County's General Plan.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A request for General Plan Conformity analysis is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and is not subject to environmental evaluation. Any future development proposed on the property would need to address relevant CEQA requirements.

D. REVIEWING AGENCIES

County Real Property Services Division
County Counsel

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Recommended Finding
- B. Vicinity Map

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County of San Mateo
Planning and Building Department

RECOMMENDED FINDING

Permit or Project File Number: PLN 2015-00248

Hearing Date: July 8, 2015

Prepared By: William Gibson
Project Planner

For Adoption By: Planning Commission

RECOMMENDED FINDING

1. Find and report that Woodside Fire Protection District's proposed acquisition of APN 080-060-580 from the former Los Trancos County Water District is consistent with the General Plan Vegetative, Water, Fish and Wildlife Resources Policies, Soil Resources and Visual Quality Policies, and Water Supply Policies, and conforms to the County General Plan.

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VICINITY MAP

San Mateo County Planning Commission Meeting

Owner/Applicant: _____

Attachment: _____

File Numbers: _____