



THE TOWN OF
CORTE MADERA
MARIN COUNTY CALIFORNIA

CORTE MADERA PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: AUGUST 24, 2018
MEETING DATE: AUGUST 28, 2018

TO: PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

FROM: PHIL BOYLE, SENIOR PLANNER; AND
SEAN KENNINGS, CONTRACT PLANNER

**SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION TO REVIEW PRELIMINARY PLANS FOR PROPOSED
REDEVELOPMENT AND SITE MODIFICATIONS TO THE BUDGET INN
LOCATED AT 706 MEADOWSWEET DRIVE**

APPLICANT: MARIN HOTELS, LLC

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PURPOSE:

The applicant is requesting a study session of a proposal to replace the existing Budget Inn with a new 22-unit motel called "The Evergreen". The project will replace the three existing buildings which make up the 18-unit Budget Inn. The meeting provides the Planning Commission and the community with an opportunity to gain an understanding of the applicant's proposal and provide preliminary feedback on issues of policy, planning, and design early in the development process. No action or decisions will be made by the Planning Commission at this meeting. Comments provided to the applicant are intended to serve as guidance only, based on information available at this time, and do not substitute for any required public hearings before the Planning Commission that may be necessary as part of application review. The applicant will present their pre-submittal packet to the Commission and will be available to answer questions from the Commission or members of the public.

SITE INFORMATION:

<u>Zoning:</u>	C-3 Highway Commercial
<u>Existing Development:</u>	Budget Inn
<u>Lot Size:</u>	23,086 square feet
<u>APN:</u>	02-071-04

<u>CONDITION</u>	<u>ORDINANCE REQUIREMENT</u>	<u>EXISTING CONDITION</u>	<u>APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL</u>
Minimum Lot Size	NA	23,086	No change
Front Setback	20'	16' Meadowsweet	20' Meadowsweet
Rear Setback	20'	14' Casa Buena	20' Casa Buena
Right (west) Side Setback	NA	6'	3'
Left (east) Side Setback	NA	4'	1'
Lot Coverage	NA	NA	NA
Floor Area Ratio	34%	27% (6,419 sq. ft.)	33% (7,580 sq. ft.)
Structure Height	35' max	Building A: 21'5", Building B: 12'9", Building C: 13'8"	Building adjacent to Casa Buena: ±18' Building adjacent to eastern property line: ±18" Motel Office: ±15'
On-Site Parking	1 space/unit & 1 space/900 sq. ft. common area	18	22

BACKGROUND:

The applicant previously submitted a remodel/renovation design for the subject property that was reviewed by the Planning Commission in May and July of 2017. The Planning Commission acknowledged that the findings for the requested Conditional Use Permit could be made, but that the proposed design of the rebranded motel was not consistent with surrounding design aesthetic and requested that the applicant redesign the project. The Planning Commission gave the applicant specific direction to make modifications. The May 9, 2017 video can be accessed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKduV-Rcflk> and the July 25, 2017 video can be accessed at: <https://youtu.be/20ktTxWF1tE>.

Following the July 25, 2017 Planning Commission hearing, the applicant decided to completely redevelop the site (as opposed to remodel existing structures) to address comments from the Commission specific to FEMA compliance and design considerations.

SITE AND PROJECT CONTEXT:

Site Description

The subject property is a 23,086-square foot rectangular parcel located between Meadowsweet Drive and Casa Buena Drive in central Corte Madera. The property is bounded on the west by a medical and dental office building, on the east by an urgent care medical office, and on the south by an apartment building. North of the project site is Tamalpais Drive and the Corte Madera Town Center.

The property is generally flat with a gentle slope from south to north towards Casa Buena Drive. The subject property is currently developed with the Budget Inn, a motel with 18 units and a manager's unit totaling 6,419 square feet of net floor area. The existing Budget Inn includes 21 parking stalls and no ADA accessible spaces. All three structures have flat roofs (except a portion of Building B). The existing structures are stucco finished exteriors painted off-white/cream in the "Spanish" or "Mediterranean" style. All three structures are in various conditions of disrepair.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed redevelopment of the Budget Inn property includes, the demolition of all three structures, raising the base elevation of site, reorienting vehicular access from Casa Buena Drive to Meadowsweet Drive, and construction of a new motel with 22 units. The new motel, The Evergreen, will include two buildings; a main "L" shaped building which will include 19 guest rooms and a small building with the motel lobby, manager's office and three additional guest units. All motel units will be one bedroom with one bathroom. A mechanical/trash room will be located on the southeast corner with access to Meadowsweet. A laundry room for housekeeping will be located in the middle of the main L-shaped building. The motel will be fully handicapped accessible without the need for ramps, lifts or elevators.

The motel will also include 22 vehicular parking spaces and pedestrian pathways linking the guest units to parking areas and pedestrian sidewalks along Meadowsweet Drive. The project also includes approximately 4,100 sq. ft. (18%) of the site dedicated to landscaping, including a bioswale and evergreen species along the Casa Buena Dr. frontage. Having only one vehicular driveway accessing Meadowsweet Drive creates a full width landscape frontage along Casa Buena Drive and also creates more public parking spaces on the street. The Meadowsweet Drive access is designed to be inviting for pedestrian and bicycle usage.

Amenities for motel patrons include covered and lit bicycle parking, a small outdoor patio outside the manager's office and a vending machine area. The motel will include a back lit illuminated sign on the low landscaping wall in front of the patio and another sign on the building at the north west corner on the lot.

The parking area will be raised to an elevation of 10'-4". This is accomplished by adding engineered fill. The raised parking area plus the connecting curbs and walkways results in the guestroom floor elevation to be +11'-0" above the 100-year flood plain. Only curb ramps are needed for access to the handicap parking space and cross walk. There is one handicapped van parking space and one handicapped accessible guestroom proposed.

The proposed design is modern with materials and forms that enhance the small-scale residential character of the motel. The colors are intended to be warm with highlights of natural materials. The roofs are one-way pitched with standing seam metal roofing. The sloped roof allows for all of the guestrooms to have high ceilings and tall windows to provide an airy bright interior. A second advantage of this roof form is to provide a natural base for large solar panels on the south facing roofs. The color of the metal roofing, gutter, copings and facias is Charcoal Grey. The soffits under the roof overhangs are natural stained cedar v-groove boards. The maximum height of the new motel will be ±18' from finished grade to the top of the roof eave off the north (Casa Buena Drive) elevation.

There is a continuous covered walkway connecting the guestrooms composed of natural stained cedar posts, beams, purlins and v-groove ceiling boards to create an overall trellis effect. To

reinforce this composition, purlins extend beyond the face of the roof and connect with stainless steel cables to form an arbor for vines designed into the landscaped walkway.

The color of the horizontal v-groove siding and stucco siding is a warm grey-green. The trim around the doors and windows is a warm grey. The window mullions are proposed to be black and the doors a dark orange. Other design features include a stacked-stone veneer on the front wall of the office fronting Meadowsweet Drive, and a low horizontal corten steel wall with "The Evergreen" and the address laser cut into it with back lighting.

The proposed design includes environmentally sustainable features, including solar panels and grey water systems. Two solar panel arrays will be mounted on the south facing standing seam metal roofs. These are proposed to provide a significant portion of the electrical power for the project.

There is a commercial washer in the laundry room which will be connected to a grey water storage system for landscape irrigation. This system relies on the use of plant friendly soaps by the motels operator. Two electric car charging stations are proposed to be installed in the parking area which can charge 4 cars at a time. In addition, conduit will be installed for the future expansion of the system.

The entire parking area will be paved with permeable pavers. This will allow all of the rainwater to be retained on site rather than discharge to the storm sewer in the streets.

The landscape design uses native and well-adapted drought tolerant species to compliment the building functions to create a sustainable site. Coastal Redwoods are proposed along the Tamalpais Road side of the property which will help to identify the motel as well as provide screening of the rooms from the busy street.

Redwoods also frame the front along Meadowsweet Drive to screen the utilities, while mature Arbutus flank the entry drive and additional trees provide shade in the parking lot. A vine covered arbor adds greenery to the parking area as well. Berms on the north side provide depth of good soil for tree roots, with a sinuous retention area to receive a portion of roof drainage. A rectangular green wall will add interest and color to the common deck and seating area near the lobby with plantings appropriate to the south aspect.

Project plans and other application materials can be accessed on the Town's website at: <http://www.townofcortemadera.org/>.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The proposed project will be categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to California Public Resource Code 15302(b): Replace or Reconstruction – Replacement of a commercial structure with a new structure of substantially the same size, purpose, and capacity.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments have been submitted in support or opposition of the proposed project since the packet was distributed on August 24, 2018.

CONCLUSION

The applicant has submitted a new project design in response to comments from the public and the Commission at the July 25, 2017 public hearing. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission, after review of all information, presentations, and public testimony, and after obtaining responses to any questions, provide comments and direction to the applicant.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Project Narrative from Applicant
2. Project plans, August 21, 2018

Attachment 1
Project Narrative from Applicant



August 23, 2018

Mr. Phil Boyle, Senior Planner
Corte Madera City Hall
300 Tamalpais Drive
Corte Madera, CA 94925

**Re: The Evergreen
706 Meadowsweet Drive
Study Session**

Dear Phil,

Below is a design narrative for a new 22-room boutique motel that will replace an aging and unoccupied 18-room motel.

Design Goals

The design goals for the project are to:

- Build a one-story motel with 22 guestrooms and 22 parking places. The plan minimizes the site area dedicated to parking and maximizes landscaped areas. There are no guest facilities beyond the rooms, only a lobby, office, maid/laundry room and utility room.
- The motel will be fully handicapped accessible without the need for ramps, lifts or elevators.
- The design is modern with materials and forms that enhance the small-scale residential character of the motel. The colors are warm and natural materials are highlighted. Landscape elements are incorporated into the design to soften the forms and beautify the site.
- The new motel will be built so that all rooms and the parking spaces are above the base flood elevation.
- Environmentally sustainable features will be incorporated, such as solar panels, grey water systems, permeable paving, and electric car charging stations.
- The site plan encourages pedestrian access and bicycle use with sidewalks and bike racks, and provides outdoor common seating areas to promote neighborhood connection.
- The landscape is designed to contribute to a 'green' building design by the use of porous paving to reduce runoff and by providing onsite stormwater management thru retention and infiltration. The use of native plants and the use of ground covers instead of lawn will limit maintenance, while the use of low-water plants, drip irrigation and grey water will minimize landscape water use. New tree plantings will contribute to urban forestry and provide cooling.
- We intend for the project to be an attractive, functional and neighborhood-friendly addition to the Town of Corte Madera.

Site Plan

The site plan is configured in direct response to 4 of our design goals. Two single-story guestroom wings run in an L-shape along the east and north boundaries of the site. A second single-story block with 3 guestrooms and the office/lobby occupies the southwest corner. The parking area is located between the two with a single driveway entering off of Meadowsweet Drive to the south. This configuration allows use to meet these goals.

The layout provides for our desired 22 guestrooms and parking spaces while leaving 18% of the site open for landscaping and public use. The 20-foot setbacks along both streets are maintained and the resulting FAR is 33%. Having only one driveway accessing Meadowsweet Drive enables us to have a full width landscape frontage along Casa Buena Drive. The net result is a gain of 2 on-street parking spaces.

Of significance is the raising of the parking area to an elevation of +10'-4". This is accomplished by adding engineered fill and using the raised foundation walls of the buildings plus a section of concrete wall along the west property line for retention. The driveway rises at a gentle 5% slope from Meadowsweet Drive to the level parking area. All of this is made possible by using the high side of the site for access. The low point of the site is at the northeast corner (+5'-0") and the high point is at the southeast corner (+9'-0"). The raised parking area plus the connecting walkways enables us to set the guestroom floor elevation (+11'-0") above the base flood elevation. Even with this raised grade, the maximum roof height is 18'-4" above the sidewalk on Casa Buena Drive.

The parking area and walkways are all level, allowing for full handicapped access to all parts of the site. Only curb ramps are needed for access to the handicap parking space and cross walk. There is one handicapped van parking space and one handicapped accessible guestroom provided.

An additional advantage of having our main access from Meadowsweet Drive is that it is a residential street with sidewalks and significant landscaping, which is inviting for pedestrian and bicycle usage. As added enhancements we have included a furnished terrace in the front of the office for public use and added 5 covered bicycle racks in the corner of the parking area.

Design Character

The building design is modern with warm colors and numerous natural materials and landscape elements.

The roofs are one-way pitched with standing seam metal roofing. The sloped roof allows for all of the guestrooms to have high ceilings and tall windows to provide an airy bright interior. A second advantage of this roof form is to provide a natural base for large solar panel installations on the south facing roofs. The color of the metal roofing, gutter, copings and facias is Charcoal Grey. The soffits under the roof overhangs are natural stained cedar v-groove boards.

There is a continuous covered walkway connecting the guestrooms. The structure of this walkway is composed of natural stained cedar posts, beams, purlins and v-groove ceiling boards. The overall effect is of a trellis. To reinforce this composition, we have extended the purlins beyond the face of the roof and connected them with stainless steel cables to form an arbor for vines designed into the walkway by the landscape architect.

The color of the horizontal v-groove siding and stucco siding is a warm grey-green. The trim around the doors and windows is a warm grey. The windows are black and the doors a dark orange.

Design features include a stacked-stone veneer on the front wall of the office fronting Meadowsweet Drive, a living plant wall set into the stacked stone wall designed by the landscape architect, and a low horizontal corten steel wall with the Evergreen and the address laser cut into it

with back lighting. All of these features are set around a wood deck with outdoor seating open to the public.

Environmentally Sustainable Features

In the development of this design we have included several sustainable features.

The most significant is the solar panel arrays mounted on the south facing standing seam metal roofs. These panels will provide a significant portion of the electrical power for the project.

There is a commercial washer in the laundry room which will be connected to a grey water storage system for landscape irrigation. This system relies on the use of plant friendly soaps by the motel's operator.

There will be 2 electric car charging stations installed in the parking area which can charge 4 cars at a time. In addition, conduit will be installed for the future expansion of the system.

The entire parking area will be surfaced with permeable pavers. The engineered fill below them will provide retention and infiltration for stormwater under the permeable paving. This will allow all of the rainwater to be retained on site rather than discharge to the storm sewer system in the streets.

The 5 bicycle parking racks located off of the parking area are covered and lit to encourage use.

Landscape Design

The landscape design uses native and well-adapted drought tolerant species to compliment the building functions to create a sustainable site. In keeping with the name Evergreen, we have proposed Coastal Redwoods along the Tamalpais Road side of the property which will help to identify the motel as well as provide screening of the rooms from the busy street.

Redwoods also frame the front along Meadowsweet to screen the utilities, while mature Arbutus flank the entry drive and additional trees provide shade in the parking lot. A vine covered arbor adds greenery to the parking area as well. Berms on the north side provide depth of good soil for tree roots, with a sinuous retention area to receive a portion of roof drainage.

A rectangular green wall will add interest and color to the common deck and seating area near the lobby with plantings appropriate to the south aspect.

Sincerely,



Gary Samonsky

Partner

Attachment 2
Project Plans, August 21, 2018

706 Meadowsweet Drive (The Evergreen) Plans

Plans are available for public review in the Corte Madera Planning Department at 300 Tamalpais Drive, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Or call 415-927-5064

Plans can also be accessed online at the project webpage:

<https://www.townofcortemadera.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=221>