City of Blue Lake Draft Planning Commission Special Meeting Minutes November 6, 2023

The Blue Lake Planning Commission Meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Robert Chapman, Matthew Schang, Elaine Hogan, Cort Pryor, and Jak Kirchubel

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Amanda Mager (City Manager/City Clerk), Garry Rees (City Planner), and Lana Riley (City Planner)

Public Present: Julie Christie, Dutch Morrison, Tavis Cain, Mardi Granger, Elise Scafani, Justin NOYDB, Lisa Hoover, Beckie Thornton, and Jeff Landon

1. Approval of Minutes: May 15, 2023

- a. Motion (Schang/Pryor) to approve May 15, 2023 minutes as written.
- b. Motion passed (5-0).

Approval of Minutes: June 19, 2023

- a. Motion (Hogan/Schang) to approve June 19, 2023 minutes as written.
- b. Motion passed (5-0).

2. Public Input on Non-Agenda Items

a. Julie Christie: Thanked City staff and the Planning Commission for providing video streaming as an option for participating in the meeting. Thanked the Planning Commission for listening to the public and requested more information on future projects.

3. Approval of the Agenda

- a. Motion (Pryor, Hogan) to approve agenda.
- b. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Discussion/Action:

4. Action/Public Hearing: Application #025-161-016/2023. Conditional Use Permit and Site Plan Approval for ThompsonGas, LLC to locate a 30,000-gallon propane tank on APN 025-161-016 in the Powers Creek District on the property containing B&B Portable Toilets, Six Rivers Portable Toilets, and Johnson's Mobile Rentals. The tank will be used to fill up transport trucks that would deliver propane to residential and commercial customers in the area. Other activity at the site related to the business is proposed to include the parking of vehicles/trucks, use of a storage container for the storage of materials/supplies, and the storage of up to 50 empty propane tanks ranging in size from 120 - 500 gallons. This project is found to be categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

per §15303 (Class 3) exempting projects consisting of the construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures and §15332 exempting projects characterized as infill development that meet certain criteria.

- a. Chairman Chapman introduced the agenda item.
- b. Planner Rees presented the staff report to the Planning Commission and explained the options for action that could be taken by the Commission. At the conclusion of the presentation, Planner Rees recommended that the Commission receive a presentation from the applicant.
- c. Dutch Morrison, on behalf of the applicant, presented a summary of their application submittal and explained how they intended to operate the propane storage and distribution business. The applicant also provided a response to written public comments received from Kent Sawatzky.
- d. Chairman Chapman opened the public hearing.
- e. Julie Christie: Commented on the need for public review of projects in the City. Stated that this project is consistent with the City's General Plan and inquired whether the project would conflict with other future uses in the District.
- f. Elise Scafani: Concurred with the comments made by Julie Christie and stated that she believes the project may conflict with future uses in the Powers Creek District.
- g. Chairman Chapman closed the public hearing.
- h. The Planning Commission discussed the project and asked several questions of staff.
- i. Vice-Chair Pryor and Commissioner Schang expressed concerns about cumulative impacts from the projects proposed in the Powers Creek District.
- j. Commissioner Kirchubel discussed his research into the CEQA categorical exemption recommended for the project and inquired whether propane would be considered a hazardous material as defined by CEQA. He further stated that cities and counties should adopt thresholds of significance. Commissioner Kirchubel concluded that the proposed exemption appeared appropriate for the project.
- k. Planner Rees noted that small jurisdictions do not typically adopt their own thresholds of significance for CEQA review because of the effort involved to do so. He noted that common practice for smaller jurisdictions is to use thresholds adopted by other municipalities or agencies. Planner Rees briefly discussed the City's General Plan and the amendments made to plan to provide consistency with rezoning in the Powers Creek District. Planner Rees explained that the proposed project would be a small operation that would result in limited impacts related to noise, lighting, traffic, air quality, etc. Planner Rees concluded that the project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact because of its limited nature. Planner Rees also explained how projects are defined as reasonably foreseeable for the purposes of cumulative impact analysis.
- l. Commissioner Hogan explained that she did not think the project would have cumulative impacts or that additional analysis needed to be done to address this issue.
- m. The Commissioners discussed the details of the project proposal and concurred with

- Commissioner Hogan's comments.
- n. Motion (Hogan/Schang) to adopt Resolution 3-2023 approving a conditional use permit and site plan approval for ThompsonGas, LLC to allow operation of an outdoor propane storage and distribution business in the Opportunity Zone.
- Motion passed unanimously (5-0).
- **5. Discussion:** Amendment of the Blue Lake General Plan Housing Element for the 6th Planning Cycle (2019-2027). Review of the 9/20/23 determination letter from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).
 - a. Chairman Chapman introduced the agenda item.
 - b. Planner Rees presented the staff report and provided an overview of the final comment letter received from the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on the City's Draft Housing Element Update for the 6th planning cycle. He explained that HCD found the element to be compliant with State housing law with one exception. Prior to certification of the element, the City must implement Program 14 in the element, which requires the City to adopt the Residential High Density (RHD) Combining Zone and apply it to a property in the City. Planner Rees noted the next item on the agenda is related to working on this task.
 - c. Chairman Chapman opened the public hearing.
 - d. Lisa Hoover: Thanked the Planning Commission for brining up the issue of cumulative impacts from the projects proposed in the City. Stated that the City needs to engage the public more. Stated that the City needs to engage the public before deciding which properties the RHD combining zone will be applied to.
 - e. Julie Christie: Stated that the City's General Plan needs to be updated and that the City should use a similar process to what has been done by the City of Arcata. Requested that the City provide a map of which properties the RHD combining zone would be applied to.
 - f. Elise Scafani: Stated that she concurs with the comments by Lisa Hoover and Julie Christie about the need for more public involvement.
 - g. Chairman Chapman closed the public hearing.
- **6. Discussion**: Amendment of the Blue Lake Municipal Code to include the Residential High Density (RHD) Combining Zone and a Zoning Map Amendment to apply the combining zone to property in the City. This amendment would implement Program HI-14 in the Blue Lake General Plan Housing Element Update for the 6th Planning Cycle (2019-2027).
 - a. Chairman Chapman introduced the agenda item.
 - b. Planner Rees provide an overview of Program HI-14, which proposes to adopt and apply the RHD combining zone to property in the City. Planner Rees explained that the concept of the RHD combining zone and properties that it could potentially be applied to have been discussed at two town hall meeting and several public hearings. Planner Rees noted that the City has not chosen which property that the combining

zone would be applied to, but it is likely that it would be in the Powers Creek District. Planner Rees concluded that the City will be working on implementing Program HI-14 over the next several months.

- c. Chairman Chapman opened the public hearing.
- d. Lisa Hoover: Inquired at what point the City will decide what property the combining zone would be applied to. Requested that there be an opportunity for public involvement in this decision.
- e. Elise Scafani: Inquired if the RHD combining zone would be applied to the Baduwa't Community Project site.
- f. Chairman Chapman closed the public hearing.
- g. The Commission discussed Program HI-14 and asked several questions of staff.
- h. Commissioner Schang asked why the combining zone had to be applied to sites that are 1-acre or larger.
- i. Planner Rees explained that HCD added that requirement when they reviewed the draft combining zone. City staff previously asked a similar question and HCD responded that it is based in a requirement in State law regarding the criteria for establishing by-right zoning for multi-family development.
- j. Several Commissioners inquired about the language in the draft combining zone that requires a maximum density of 16 dwelling units per acre. They also inquired if the zone would allow an applicant to construct less than 16 units per acre.
- k. Planner Rees explained that staff had previously recommended a density range of 16-22 units per acre. A previous Planning Commission recommended that the density be capped at 16 units per acre because the development would be allowed by-right. Planner Rees also explained that the combining zone is intended to require development to provide 16 units per acre.
- l. The Commissioners requested that staff follow-up with HCD to receive further clarification on the following: 1) the requirement for the combining zone to be applied to sites 1-acre or larger; and 2) whether a development could provide less than 16 units per acre on a property with the combining zone.

7. Miscellaneous Planner Items:

a. City staff did not present any information for this item.

8. Upcoming Planning Commission Meetings for the next 3 months will be on November 20, 2023, December 18, 2023, and January 15, 2024.

- a. Vice-Chair Pryor indicated that he would not be available for the November meeting and Commissioner Schang indicated that he would not be available for the December meeting.
- b. City staff will survey the Commissioners to determine their availability for the next meeting.

9. Adjournment by 9:00 pm unless extended by the Planning Commission.

- a. Motion (Schang/Kirchubel) to adjourn.
- b. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).
- c. Meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.



CITY OF BLUE LAKE

Post Office Box 458, Phone 707.668.5655 111 Greenwood Road,

Blue Lake, CA 95525 Fax 707.668,5916

DATE: December 18, 2023

FROM: Garry Rees, City Planner

TO: Blue Lake Planning Commission

RE: Agenda Item 4: Exceptions to the Residential Development Standards for Thomas Gai

Thomas Gai has applied for an exceptions to the Residential Development Standards in Blue Lake Municipal Code (BLMC) Section 17.24.260. The exceptions are to allow a metal roof on a proposed 16-foot-wide single-family residential unit at 530 I Street (APN 025-024-010). The exceptions are required for the following reasons:

- Roofing Material: The applicant proposes a metal roof, which is not listed as an allowable roofing material in BLMC Section 17.24.260.A.5. See Attachment 1 for the specification sheets from the manufacturer of the roof material. In the attached materials, the color of the proposed metal roof is identified as matte black and the product type is skyline roofing.
- Minimum Width: The applicant proposes a single-family residential unit that is 16 feet in width, which is less than the minimum 20-foot width required by BLMC Section 17.24.260.A.1. See **Attachment 2** for the plan sheets that show the dimensions of the proposed residential unit.

Municipal Code Section 17.24.260.B states that the Planning Commission is empowered to allow a single-family residence to be constructed or placed within the City of Blue Lake with alternative reasonable development standards substituted for those set forth in Section 17.24.260.A, or to provide an exemption from the standards, upon showing of good cause. A principal criterion for determining whether good cause exists for such exemption or substitution shall be compatibility with the neighborhood in which the structure is proposed to be constructed or placed.

The applicant has provided a justification for the exceptions, which includes the following:

- <u>Metal Roof</u>: The metal roof is proposed by the applicant because metal is a longer lasting roofing material, has improved drainage characteristics, is fire-resistant, has higher aesthetic quality over time, and is similar to several other metal roofs installed on single-family residences in the City in recent years.
- Reduced Width: The reduced width for the unit meets the design parameters for the property when considering setbacks, off-street parking, and access to the rear of the property. There is a diversity of residential and accessory structure types, sizes, widths, etc. in the surrounding neighborhood.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

- 1) Receive a staff report concerning the request for exceptions to the Residential Development Standards.
- 2) Open the item for public comment and take public testimony.
- 3) Close the item for public comment and discuss the justification and application materials provided by the applicant.
- 4) Adopt Resolution 4-2023 approving the exception request (see Attachment 3).

Attachment 1

Roofing Material Specification Sheets





METAL ROOFING AND SIDING PRODUCTS

Color Key Dura Tech ** xl (sMP) ColorGuard 25 with Spectrascape* (Polyester) Dura Tech ** nt (sMP) ZINCALUME* Plus (Unpainted product) Premium Color (subject to upcharge)	12" Skyline Roofing®	16" Skyline Roofing [®]	21/4" Corninated	m/t collagator	24" Delta Rih™			36" Nor-Clad®			36" Strafa Rib®			36" Delta Rib™ III	36" DRP Danel	, N
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1) Also available in 32" Not Coverage.

Footnotes:

Dura Tech™ 5000/mx (PVDF) 24ga & 22ga colors available for: Skyline Roofing hp, Nu-Wave Corrugated, PBR Panel, and Design Span hp. See ascbp.com for Dura Tech" 5000/mx color chart.

* Please note, these colors are batch sensitive (may have color variation) as are directional in nature. Different batches are not to be mixed on projects We recommend you request a sample of current stocked material to revie actual color before ordering to ensure color accuracy. WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR COLOR VARIATIONS.

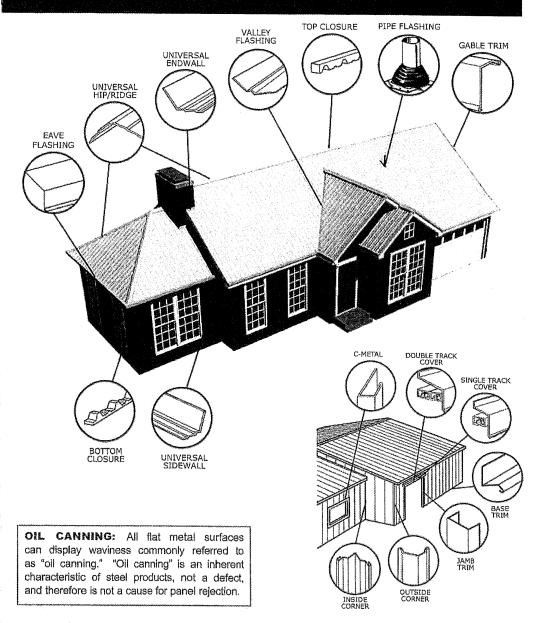
Strata Rib TRIM & FLASHING COLOR KEY: 36" Net Coverage Nor-Clad® TRIM & FLASHING COLOR KEY: 36" Net Coverage Delta Rib™III TRIM & FLASHING COLOR KEY: 36" Net Coverage Delta Rib™ TRIM & FLASHING COLOR KEY: 13/16" 21/2" Corrugated TRIM & FLASHING COLOR KEY: 1/2" K → 2-2/3" 不 21-1/3" Roof Coverage -> 24" Wall Coverage K > 2-2/3" 29-1/3" Roof Coverage Wider panel only available in 26ga ZINCALUME® Plus and 29ga Natural Rust - 32" Wall Coverage -**Nu-Wave® Corrugated** TRIM & FLASHING COLOR KEY: < > 2-11/16" ⟨ → 2-11/16" 32" Roof Coverage 34-1/3" Wall Coverage-24ga and 22ga in Dura Tech™ 5000. (Colors not shown - see ascbp.com for color chart) Additional lead times and freight charges apply **PBR Panel** TRIM & FLASHING COLOR KEY: 36" Net Coverage **Skyline Roofing®** TRIM & FLASHING COLOR KEY: 12" or 16" Net Coverage Design Span® hp TRIM & FLASHING COLOR KEY: 24ga and 22ga in Dura Tech™ 5000. - 12", 16", 17", or 18" Net Coverage (Colors not shown - see ascop.com for color chart) Additional lead times and fraight charge anniu

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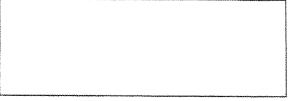
ASC Building Products recommends all properly installed roofs include flashings. Visit www.ascbp.com for installation guides and product details.















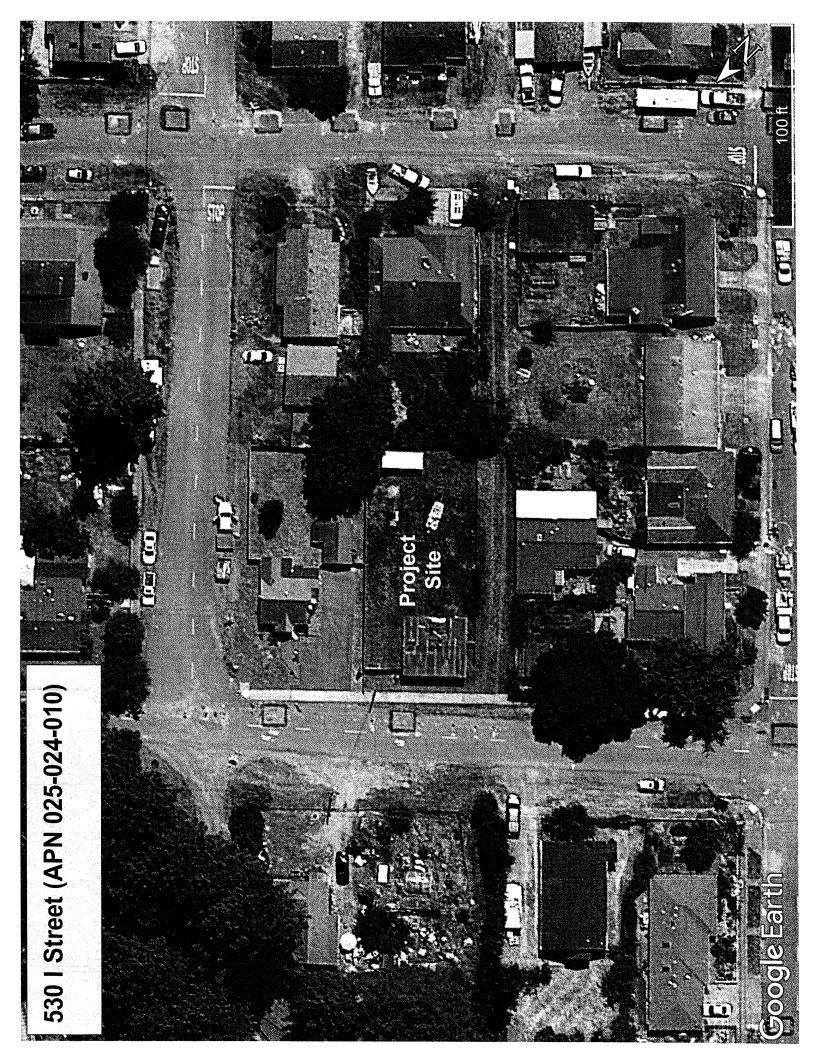
Customer Service Centers

Salem, OR. 503-390-7174 or 800-272-7023 • bpsalem@ascprofiles.com **Spokane, WA**. 509-536-4097 or 800-776-8771 • bpspokane@ascprofiles.com



Attachment 2

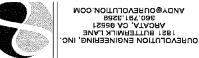
Project Plan Sheets

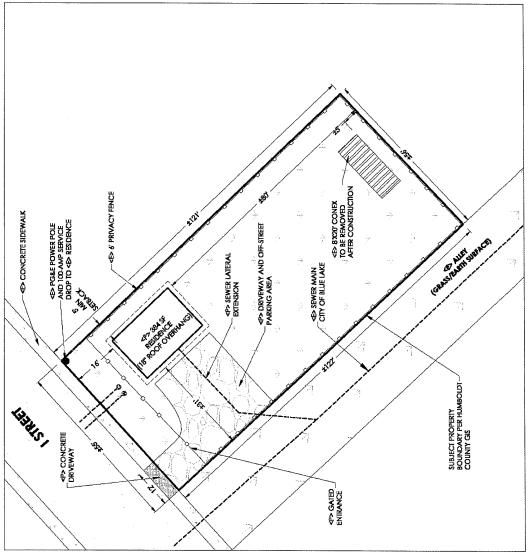


SITE PLAN - PROPOSED

BFNE TAKE' CA 96626 230 I STREET THOMAS GAI

HIZLOSA V REVISION







DRAWN AC CHECK AC APPROVED AC DATE 04/05/225 JOB NUMBER GAL SHEET 2 OF 2

PROJECT INFORMATION

DRIVING DIRECTIONS FROM BLUE LAKE, CA CITY HALL
1. TURN HEFT ONTO GREENWOOD AVENUE (0.2 MILES)
2. TURN RIGHT ONTO BLUE LAKE BLVD. (0.4 MILES)
3. TURN RIGHT ONTO ISTREET (~350 FT)
4. 530 I STREET ON LET

APPLICANT: HOWAS GAI

APPLICANT: HOWAS GAI

APPLICANGA-010-000

CITY OF BULE LAKE APPLICATION NUMBER: TBD

PROPERTY OWNIER OF RECORD: THOMAS GAI, 1971 DANIELS STREET, ARCATA, CA 95521

PHONE NUMBER: 707 845-6584

EMAIL: TGAGHOTHMAL COM

SITE ADDRESS: 530 ISTRET: BULE LAKE, CA 95252

TOTAL PROPERTY ACREAGE: 0.15 ACRES

CITY OF BULE LAKE ZONING: IMPROVED SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

CHING: IMPROPERTY ACREAGE: 0.15 ACRES

CITY OF BULE LAKE ZONING: IMPROVED SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

CHING: SINGLE CT PROPERTY ARE 45% THROUGHOUT

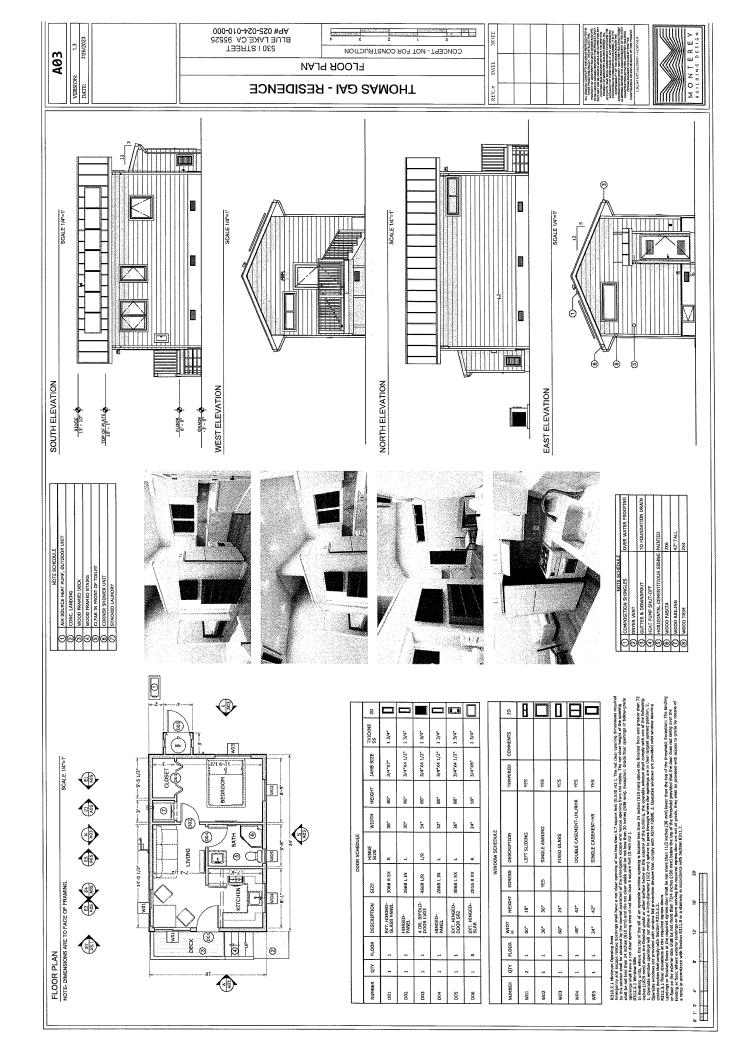
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L. SLONES ON SUBJECT PROPERTY ARE 45% THROUGHOUT

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A. NO TREES TO BE REMOVED.

5. NO CURRES. SIDEMAL OF CONNECTED TO DOWNSPOUTS DISCHARGED VIA SPLASH BLOCKS.



Attachment 3

Resolution No. 4-2023

RESOLUTION NO. 4-2023

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF BLUE LAKE APPROVING A REQUEST FOR EXCEPTIONS TO THE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR THOMAS GAI

WHEREAS, Thomas Gai filed an application dated November 3, 2023 for exceptions to the Residential Development Standards in Blue Lake Municipal Code (BLMC) Section 17.24.260 to allow a metal roof on a proposed 16-foot wide single-family residence at 530 I Street (APN 025-024-010). The exceptions are required because metal is not listed as an allowable roofing material in BLMC Section 17.24.260.A.5 and because the minimum required unit width is 20 feet in BLMC Section 17.24.260.A.1. Application materials include, but are not limited to, project plans, specification sheets from the roof manufacturer, and a justification for the exception request;

WHEREAS, the project site is zoned Residential One-Family (R-1), which principally permits single-family residences;

WHEREAS, after posting of the meeting agenda, the matter came on regularly for hearing before the Blue Lake Planning Commission on November 20, 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Planning Commission of the City of Blue Lake as follows:

- 1. The Planning Commission finds that the project is categorically exempt per CEQA Guidelines Section 15305 (Class 5) exempting minor alterations in land use limitations in areas with an average slope of less than 20 percent, which do not result in any changes in land use or density. Examples of minor alterations in land use limitations include, but are not limited to minor lot line adjustments, side yard, and set back variances not resulting in the creation of any new parcel. The project meets the criteria for the Class 5 exemption because it proposes minor alterations in the City's development standards applicable to single-family residences (including a manufactured home).
- 2. The Planning Commission finds on the basis of the justification and other materials submitted by the applicant, that the proposed exception to the residential development standards will be compatible with the neighborhood in which the existing residence is located.
- 3. The Planning Commission of the City of Blue Lake hereby approves the Exceptions to the Residential Development Standards for Thomas Gai, as set forth in the staff report and application materials.

INTRODUCED, PASSED, AND ADOPTED this 20 th day of November 2023, by the following vote:	ıe
AYES:	

NAYS:

RESOLUTION NO. 4-2023

	Chairman, Planning Commission, City of Blue Lake
ATTEST:	



CITY OF BLUE LAKE

Post Office Box 458, Phone 707.668.5655 111 Greenwood Road,

Blue Lake, CA 95525 Fax 707.668.5916

STAFF REPORT

DATE: December 18, 2023

APPLICATION #: 025-081-003/2023

APPLICANT: Chris & Amelia Gonzalez

PROPERTY OWNER(S): Tonine Nelson Trust

PROJECT LOCATION: 130 H Street

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL #: 025-081-003

ZONING: RC – Retail Commercial

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: C – Commercial

BACKGROUND/HISTORY: The project site contains a two-story building known as the "Stewart Building," which was constructed in 1900 in the City's Downtown. In 1990, there was a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) approved for residential use of the building that only allowed the use of the ground floor commercial space for residential purposes until June 30, 1992 (Resolution No. 7-1990, pg. 1, finding 3). The public records available at City Hall do not contain any information that indicates that the property owner(s) received any further approval(s) to allow continued use of the ground floor commercial space for residential use after 1992. Therefore, the 1990 CUP approval allowing two residential units is determined to run with the land, but the approval for temporary use of the ground floor commercial space for residential purposes appears to have expired in 1992. It is noted that according to the applicant, the commercial space continued to be used for residential purposes after the 1992 permit expiration date.

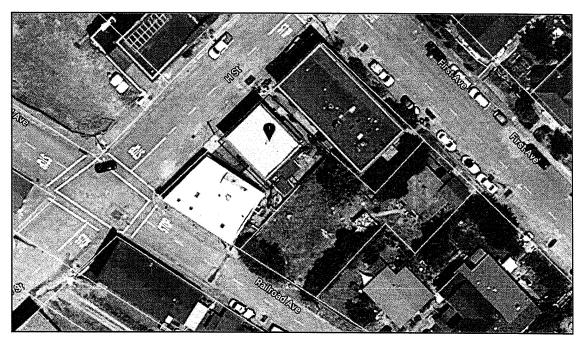
PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project is a Conditional Use Permit application for Chris & Amelia Gonzalez for temporary residential use of an approximately 340 s.f. commercial space located on the street-side ground floor of the Stewart Building at 130 H Street (APN 025-081-003) in the City's Downtown. The building currently contains two permitted residential units and a CUP had previously been approved for residential use of the 340 s.f. commercial space, which expired in June 1992. The applicant is requesting a minimum 3-year permit term for the CUP (see **Attachment 1** for the application submittal provided by the applicant).

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: As described below, staff recommends that the project be found to be categorically exempt per CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 (Class 1) and 15303 (Class 3).

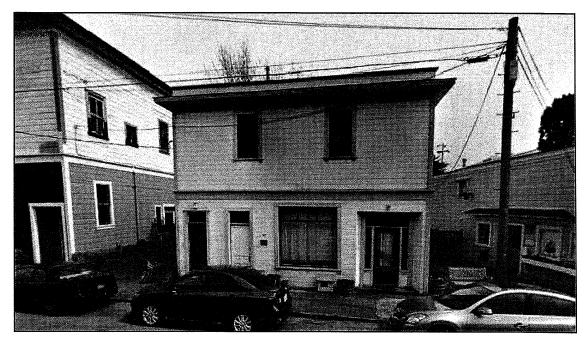
Section 15301 (Class 1) exempts the permitting of existing public and private structures involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The exemption is applicable to the proposed project because it proposes the permitting of a portion of an existing private structure for residential purposes, which according to the applicant, was used for similar residential purposes for several decades.

Section 15303 (Class 3) exempts projects consisting of the installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another. The exemption is applicable to the proposed project because it proposes to convert a small commercial space to residential use and proposes minor interior improvements to the space.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS: As noted above, the project site is developed with a two-story building known as the "Stewart Building" that was constructed in 1900 and is approximately 2,805 square feet. The project site is located in the City's Downtown and is relatively flat. The site is zoned Retail Commercial (RC) and a CUP was approved in 1990 to allow the building to be used for residential purposes. The building currently contains two permitted residential units and an approximately 340 square foot ground floor commercial space that fronts on H Street (see Attachment 1 and photos below). The site does not contain any off-street parking and there is perimeter fencing along the rear of the property. Land uses surrounding the project site include: A) to the northwest is H Street and the Dell'Arte International Theater building; B) to the northeast is an existing 2-story building with commercial uses on the bottom floor and residential units on the top floor; C) to the southeast is property that is mostly undeveloped with a residence fronting on First Ave; and D) to the southwest is the Chumayo Spa Building which is currently vacant. Access to the site is provided from H Street.



Aerial Photo of Parcel 025-081-003



Street View Photo of the Stewart Building

STAFF COMMENTS: Referrals for this project were sent to the City Manager, Public Works Department, Building Official, City Engineer, and Blue Lake Volunteer Fire Department.

City Manager

The City Manager responded to the project referral expressing concern about the use of the commercial space for residential purposes. A summary of the comments from the City Manager are provided below:

- The City has lost a number of commercial/retail spaces over the years to residential uses and in turn, we have seen a loss of businesses and business opportunity in the area of our town most suited for economic enterprise.
- The City of Blue cannot sustain a vibrant municipal existence without sales tax revenue; the City must make every reasonable effort to create opportunities for economic success, both for the City and for the small businesses that are working hard to exist and revitalize our downtown sector.
- The space is perfectly suited for a small business, as was its original intent and purpose. Changing it over to a residential unit presents a conflict of uses and a disconnect amongst the businesses in the area. In the past, the unit was very closed off and the tenants routinely kept the window coverings closed; this exacerbated the look of a closed/vacant space. The large picture window presents an issue to anyone residing in the unit, but presents the perfect merchandising front for a small business.

Public Works Department

The Public Works Department did not respond to the referral.

Building Official

The Building Official did not respond to the project referral. A condition of approval is recommended for the project requiring the applicant to notify the Building Official of any proposed improvements to the building so they may determine if a building permit is required. Due to the information provided by the applicant regarding unpermitted residential use occurring in the building for several decades, a condition of approval has also been included requiring an inspection of the building by the Building Official prior to residential occupancy of the approximately 340 square foot commercial space.

City Engineer

The City Engineer responded to the referral stating that they have no comment on the project.

Blue Lake Volunteer Fire Department

The Volunteer Fire Department did not respond to the project referral.

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CODE CONSISTENCY: The project site has a General Plan Designation of Commercial (C) and a Zoning Classification of Retail Commercial (RC). As stated in Blue Lake Municipal Code (BLMC) Section 17.16.061, the purpose of the RC zone is to "...retain the character of downtown while protecting the integrity of the Dave Power's Creek. These include downtown and neighborhood commercial locations which are primarily retail in character, with some light services to include professional, personal and financial."

Conditional Use Permit and Findings for Approval

BLMC Section 17.16.061.B.2 allows up to three residential units in the RC zone with a CUP, when secondary to a principal permitted use (e.g., retail commercial use), and subject to the standards specified in BLMC Section 17.16.061.D.8. The standards in Section 17.16.061.D.8 state the following:

- 8. Dwellings, and uses or structures accessory to dwellings, shall meet one or more of the following, as applicable:
 - a. Be located on the second floor of a structure;
 - b. Be located in the rear of the lot or structure, or behind the commercial use so as not to front directly on the street;
 - c. Be determined by the Planning Commission to not adversely affect the commercial character of the district.

As noted above, the existing building at the project site contains two permitted residential units that received a CUP in 1990. The existing units are consistent with the standards of the RC zone shown above, which requires residential units in the zone to be on the second floor of a structure (BLMC Section 17.16.061.8.a.) or to be located in the rear of the lot or structure, or behind the commercial use so as not to front directly on the street (BLMC Section 17.16.061.8.b). The proposal for a third residential unit in the building in a commercial space the fronts directly on H Street, requires that the Planning Commission makes the finding in BLMC Section 17.16.061.8.c. In support of this finding, the applicant provided the following information (also see Attachment 1):

The proposed use of the commercial space as a residential unit may appear inconsistent with the requirements of the RC Zone, however, I urge the Planning Commission to make a finding stating that the use is determined to not adversely affect the commercial character of the district.

- O Viability of Commercial Use: Given the limited space at this location, it is worth considering whether a viable commercial use is feasible. A small space may face challenges in accommodating a sustainable commercial operation. Of the two interested parties we have had for commercial uses, they have shown a lack of continued interest due the lack of commercially compatible kitchen fixtures, lack of compatibility with higher power appliances, lack of multiple egress and lack of ADA accessibility.
- **Prior Residential Use:** The history of prior residential use of this space should be taken into account. If the space has previously functioned as a residential unit without adverse impacts on the downtown character, it serves as evidence that the proposed use is compatible with the surrounding environment.
- o Lack of Impacts from Prior Residential Use: Past experience with residential use in this space should be highlighted, emphasizing that it did not negatively impact the downtown or neighboring properties but enriched the feel of the downtown.
- O Limited Permit Term: The requested permit term of a minimum of three years is a crucial consideration. This limited duration provides an opportunity to assess the impacts of the residential use without committing to a long-term change, aligning with the intent of a conditional use permit.

Since the applicant proposes a project that does not meet the standards for the location of residential uses in the RC zone, BLMC Section 17.16.061.B.12 would also apply. This section requires approval of a CUP for uses that do meet all the requirements of the RC zone. As stated in this section:

"Listed uses that do not meet all the requirements stated in this section but due to specific project design and amenities in the opinion of the Planning Commission conform to the purpose and intent of this section."

In support of the finding required by this section, the applicant provided the following information (also see **Attachment 1**):

This section allows for flexibility in permitting uses that may not meet all requirements but conform to the purpose and intent of the section. The Planning Commission can make this finding based on:

• **Project Design and Amenities**: The project's specific design and amenities are not changing in comparison to the last 30 years of usage and within that idea is retaining the character of the district.

In addition to the findings in the RC zone that must be made for approval of the proposed project, below are the standard findings that must be made by the Planning Commission to approve a CUP (BLMC Section 17.28.030.F):

The City Planning Commission shall make the following findings before granting a use permit:

- 1. That the proposed location of the conditional use is in accord with the objectives of subsection A of this section and the purposes of the zone in which the site is located.
- 2. That the proposed location of the conditional use and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity.

In support of the standard findings for approval of a CUP, the applicant provided the following information (also see **Attachment 1**):

The proposed location of the conditional use is in accord with the objectives of this section and the purposes of the zone in which the site is located.

O Commercial Viability Assessment: The proposed residential unit aligns with the objectives of maintaining the downtown character while considering the viability of a commercial use in a small space at this location.

No Detriment to Public Health, Safety, or Welfare OR Not Materially Injurious to Properties or Improvements in the vicinity:

- Prior Residential Use Experience: Given the prior residential use experience in this space without reported detrimental effects, it is reasonable to conclude that the proposed use will not be detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare.
- o **Limited Permit Term and Previous Use**: The limited permit term and the history of the space's prior residential use contribute to the argument that the proposed use will not be materially injurious to nearby properties or improvements.

Development Standards

The development standards in the RC zone are found in BLMC Section 17.16.061.D. Because the project proposes the use of a space in an existing building that was constructed in 1900, an analysis of the development standards in the RC zone was not conducted for this project. Based on a cursory review of the existing building and site layout, it appears the existing building is noncompliant with several of the development standards in the RC zone (e.g., off-street parking, setbacks, etc.). However, based on the age of the building, it is considered to be legal non-conforming for these standards.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION OPTIONS: Listed below are the potential options for Planning Commission action on the proposed project including recommended motions for each action.

1. <u>Approval.</u> Determine that all the necessary findings can be made for approval of the project with or without modifications to the conditions of approval recommended by staff. **Attachment 2** to this staff report contains draft Resolution No. 5-2023, which contains the findings necessary for approval of the proposed project. Exhibit "A" to Resolution No. 5-2023 contains the conditions of approval recommended by staff and Exhibit "B" contains the Floor Plans for the building.

<u>Action</u>: Motion to adopt Resolution No. 5-2023, read by title only: "A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Blue Lake Approving a Conditional Use Permit Application for Chris & Amelia Gonzalez to allow the temporary use of a commercial space as a residential unit in the Retail Commercial Zone."

2.	<u>Denial.</u> Determine that one or more of the necessary	findings	for approval	of the project	t cannot
	be made.				

<u>Action</u>: A motion to deny the Conditional Use Permit application due to the findings for approval not being met, specifically regarding ______.

3. Request Additional Information and continue item to next meeting agenda. Request additional information needed to assist in determining whether the necessary findings for approval of the project can be made.

Action: A motion to request additional information specifically regarding

be brought back to the regularly scheduled meeting of January 15,

2024 (or time certain Special) Planning Commission meeting for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) Receive a presentation from city staff on the Conditional Use Permit application.
- 2) Receive a presentation from the applicant (if present at the meeting).
- 3) Open the public hearing and receive public testimony.
- 4) Close the public hearing.
- 5) Discuss the application and ask questions of city staff and the applicant.
- 6) Take action on the Conditional Use Permit application.

Attachment 1

Application Submittal Documents

CITY OF BLUE LAKE APPLICATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

1.	Type of Application (c	heck one):		
	Use Permit Variance Gen Plan Amend. Site Plan Approval	<u> </u>	Rezone/Ord. Amendment Minor Subdivision Major Subdivision Other	
2.	Name of Property Owner Mailing Address_1497 Co Phone_(951)764-2511	Chris & Ame entral Ave, M	elia Gonzalez cKinleyville, CA 95519	-
3.	Phone :			
4.	Site Location: AP# 025 Street Address 130 H St	5-081-003-00 reet	0	
5.	minimum of three years to r	make use of t	itional use permit to be grant he street-side 340 sq ft t of the building.	
cause above Furth rease	application. I also under called the delay in processing the cand all accompanying in- cer, I authorize City per- conably necessary to evalua- cer applicant is not the or	rstand that application formation an sonnel to en ate the proj	Signature	bmittals may fy that the ect. operty as Market of Applicant
ı au matte	ers concerning the application	tile this ap ation.	plication and to represen	t me in all
			Signature of Own	er of Record
appli proce treat Recei	estion. For most project poss your permit or approve ed as a deposit. You will pt/Check No. 2447	types, if e your proje		red to will be
Fee (ategory		Received by XX	

Dear Planning Commission Members, first off, thank you for your volunteering to help facilitate the voice of our community, without volunteers such as you this city would not be the great place people love to call home.

My name is Chris Gonzalez; along with my wife Amelia, we have purchased the Stewart building downtown across from Dell'Arte at 130 H Street. We are asking for a conditional use permit to be granted for a minimum of three years to make use of the street-side 340 sq ft commercial space as a third dwelling unit of the building. I would like to provide the commission with some information to support their findings in order to grant a conditional use permit.

Consistency with RC Zone Requirements (BLMC Section 17.16.061.D.8):

Finding 1: The proposed use of the commercial space as a residential unit may appear inconsistent with BLMC Section 17.16.061.D.8, which states that residential uses must be above or behind commercial uses. However, I am urging the Planning Commission to make a finding in accordance with criteria c in this section, stating that the use is determined to *not* adversely affect the commercial character of the district. Here's how:

- Viability of Commercial Use: Given the limited space at this location, it is worth considering whether a viable commercial use is feasible. A small space may face challenges in accommodating a sustainable commercial operation. For comparison, a similarly sized commercial space, even in downtown Arcata on the Plaza, such as at 632 9th Street are struggling to find commercial tenants which are priced low at \$2/square ft.; that property has been up for rent since Feb 2023 and is still sitting without a tenant at \$700/mo. Of the two interested parties we have had for commercial uses, they have shown a lack of continued interest due to a couple of factors such as the lack of commercially compatible kitchen fixtures, lack of compatibility with higher power appliances, lack of multiple egress and lack of ADA accessibility.
- Prior Residential Use: The history of prior residential use of this space should be taken into account. If the space has previously functioned as a residential unit without adverse impacts on the downtown character, it serves as evidence that the proposed use is compatible with the surrounding environment. This space has unofficially been in use since the 1980's as a residential studio apartment most people lovingly referred to as "The Fishbowl". It was frequently used as short term housing for students or faculty who were attending Dell'Arte due to its convenient proximity to the school as well as the previous owner being the creative director there.
- Lack of Impacts from Prior Residential Use: Past experience with residential use in this space should be highlighted, emphasizing that it did not negatively impact the downtown or neighboring properties but enriched the feel of the downtown.
- **Limited Permit Term:** The requested permit term of a minimum of three years is a crucial consideration. This limited duration provides an opportunity to assess the impacts of the residential use without committing to a long-term change, aligning with the *intent* of a conditional use permit.

Conformance with BLMC Section 17.16.061.B.12:

Finding 2: This section allows for flexibility in permitting uses that may not meet all requirements but conform to the purpose and intent of the section. The Planning Commission can make this finding based on:

 Project Design and Amenities: The project's specific design and amenities are not changing in comparison to the last 30 years of usage and within that idea is retaining the character of the district.

Standard Findings for Planning Commission Approval of CUP (BLMC Section 17.28.030.F): To address the standard findings for Planning Commission approval of a CUP, we can provide the following insights:

Finding 1: the proposed location of the conditional use is in accord with the objectives of subsection A of this section and the purposes of the zone in which the site is located.

• Commercial Viability Assessment: The proposed residential unit aligns with the objectives of maintaining the downtown character while considering the viability of a commercial use in a small space at this location.

Finding 2: No Detriment to Public Health, Safety, or Welfare OR Not Materially Injurious to Properties or Improvements in the vicinity:

- Prior Residential Use Experience: Given the prior residential use experience in this
 space without reported detrimental effects, it is reasonable to conclude that the proposed
 use will not be detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare.
- **Limited Permit Term and Previous Use:** The limited permit term and the history of the space's prior residential use contribute to the argument that the proposed use will not be materially injurious to nearby properties or improvements.

In conclusion, the proposal for the residential unit on the ground floor aligns with the intent of the Blue Lake Municipal Code, considering the specific circumstances and history of the location. The provided information addresses the criteria outlined in the code, emphasizing the minimal impact on the downtown character, the prior successful residential use, and the temporary nature of the permit request.

My wife and I are excited to have the privilege of being the stewards of this historic building. We would like to continue the use of the studio apartment as housing as most people also identify there is a need for housing in Blue Lake.

We would not be adversely affecting the commercial quality of the district, we intend to keep a large storefront window on the street-side as part of the architectural design, we would like to increase the safety of the downtown by replacing the single paned cracked windows with modern double paned windows and allow another egress point by making them operable. Our

plan to "convert" the use to residential however would not require much other than flooring, kitchen cabinets and some minor drywall work in the existing (tiny) bathroom. And just like that, we could have a new resident bringing life and vibrancy to downtown, by the end of the month.

Do we want another empty storefront in Blue Lake or do we want another happy resident to join the community?

We are not against the intended purpose of the commercial use but the financial hurdles to clear to make the space functional in a commercial capacity are out of reach for us in the short term. In the long term, to accommodate a commercial retail business we would likely be required to reengineer the sidewalks in front of the building to meet ADA accessibility as well as new electrical (currently only a subpanel from the back unit) and plumbing for prospective commercial uses, these are no trivial tasks for us as we are funding this with only our W-2 job income, currently our only sources of income.

The entire three unit building has sat mostly vacant the last one and a half years since the previous owner passed; we would like to fill it with future residents of Blue Lake.

Additionally, granting this conditional use permit would help us to qualify for a residential home loan on the property. Our current financing for the property was only made possible by the previous owner's trust offering to carry the note for three years. By denying this conditional use we would be forced to seek a commercial property loan instead of a home loan; this would drastically change the affordability of the property and may push us out of the market and force us to put the property back on the market and sell in order to satisfy the terms of the three year deadline to pay back the loan.

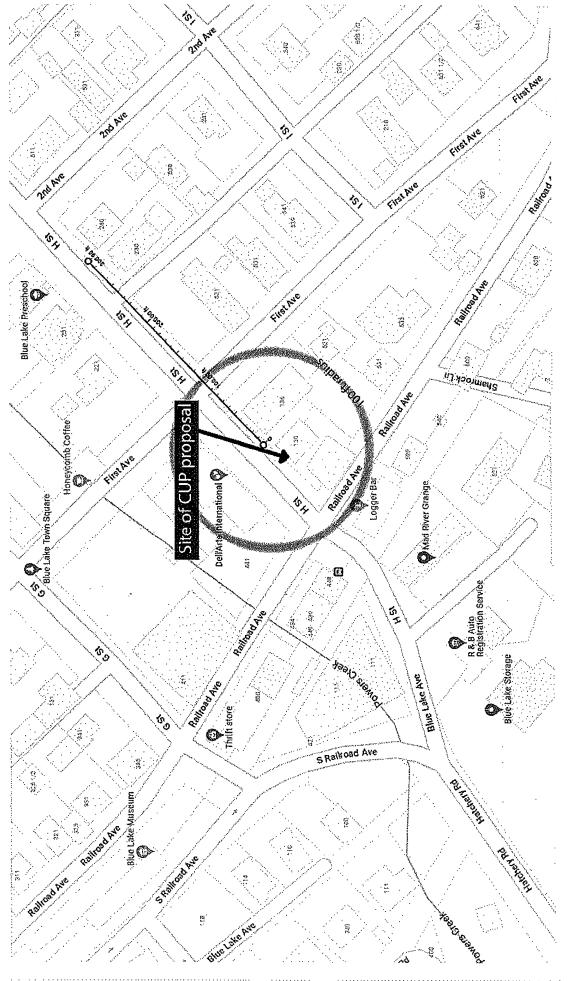
I kindly ask you commissioners to support welcoming another resident to beautiful and sunny Blue Lake by allowing us a conditional use permit to bring this residence into compliance with the City so that we may return it to the same use it has been seeing for the past 30 years. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Attached you will find the site map from Google Maps as well as the floor plan of the residence.

For further questions or details please feel free to reach out to my wife and I when you see us around town or you can call us at 707-616-3325.

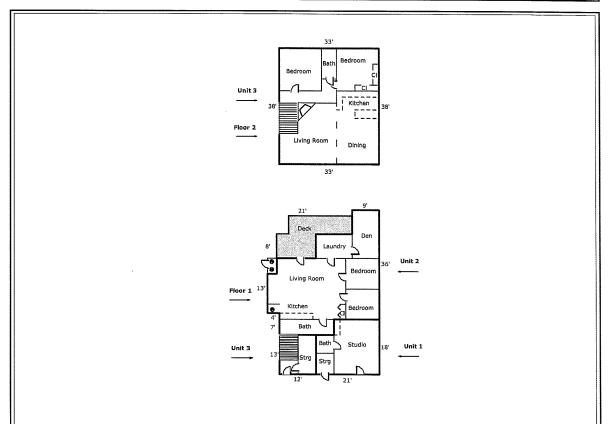
Sincerely,

Chris and Amelia Gonzalez



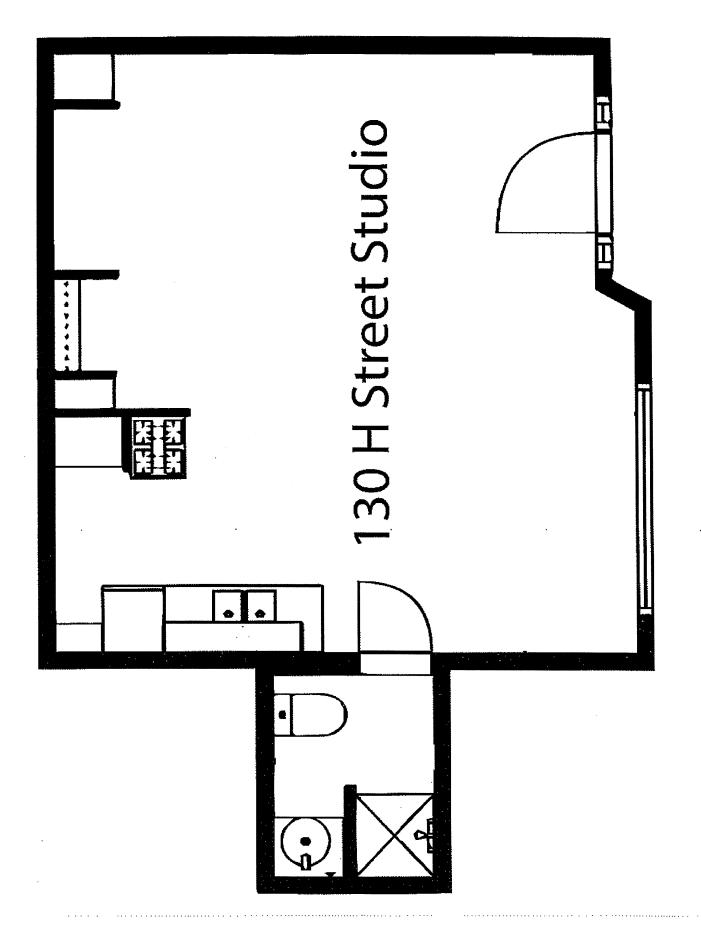
FLOORPLAN SKETCH

Client: Tonine Nielsen	File N	lo.: b2208-130H-gpar-multi
Property Address: 130 H St	Case	No.: Nielsen
City: Blue Lake	State: CA	Zip: 95525



Sketch by Apex Sketch v5 Standard 1th
Comments:

	Description	Net Size	Net Totals	Brea	kdown	Subtotals
GBA1	Unit 1	348.00		Unit 1	en van die 156	
	Unit 3	156.00		21.0	£ 13.0	273.00
	Unit 2	1047.00	1551.00	5.0 >	15.0	75.00
GBA2	Second Floor	1254.00	1254.00	Unit 3		
?/P	Deck	230.00	230.00	13.0 1	k 12.0	156.00
TH	Mechanical	15.00	15.00	Unit 2		
				33.0	k 2.0	66.00
				5.0 3		90.00
				37.0		481.00
				5.0 3		170.00
				8.0		168.00
				8.0		72.00
		하다 하는데 아니다(1614) 11		Second Floor		- 1
				33.0	к 38.0	1254.00
	이 경기에 가는 사람들이 살았다.					
						Part I a real from the control of th



Attachment 2

Resolution No. 5-2023

Gonzalez CUP

RESOLUTION NO. 5-2023

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF BLUE LAKE APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION FOR CHRIS & AMELIA GONZALEZ TO ALLOW THE TEMPORARY USE OF A COMMERCIAL SPACE AS A RESIDENTIAL UNIT IN THE RETAIL COMMERCIAL ZONE

WHEREAS, Chris & Amelia Gonzalez filed a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application, dated October 6, 2023, to allow the temporary residential use of an approximately 340 s.f. commercial space located on the street-side ground floor of the Stewart Building at 130 H Street (APN 025-081-003) in the City's Downtown. The building currently contains two permitted residential units and the project proposes to allow the commercial space to be used as a third residential unit pursuant to Blue Lake Municipal Code (BLMC) Sections 17.16.061.B.2, 17.16.061.B12, and 17.16.061.D.8.c. The applicant is requesting a minimum three-year permit term for the CUP. Application materials provided by the applicant include a project description, floor plans, and a justification for the findings for approval;

WHEREAS, City planning staff has reviewed the submitted application and evidence and has referred the application and evidence to involved reviewing City departments and agencies for comments and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, after due notice of public hearing, the matter came on for consideration before the Blue Lake Planning Commission at their regularly scheduled meeting on December 18, 2023;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Planning Commission of the City of Blue Lake as follows:

- 1. The Planning Commission finds that the project is categorically exempt pursuant to the following sections of the City's duly adopted CEQA guidelines:
- A. Categorically exempt per CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Class 1) exempting the permitting of existing public and private structures involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The exemption is applicable to the proposed project because it proposes the permitting of a portion of an existing private structure for residential purposes, which according to the applicant, was used for similar residential purposes for several decades.
- B. Categorically exempt per CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 (Class 3) exempting the installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another. The exemption is applicable to the proposed project because it proposes to convert a small commercial space to residential use and proposes minor interior improvements to the space.
- 2. The project, as proposed and subject to existing laws and regulations, is consistent with the City of Blue Lake General Plan and Municipal Code.
- 3. Per Section 17.16.061 of the Blue Lake Municipal Code, the Planning Commission finds as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 5-2023

	The proposed temporary				
will not adversely aff	ect the commercial charac	cter of the district	(BLMC 17.16	.061.D.8.c).	

- B. Due to specific project design and amenities provided by the existing building and site layout, the proposed temporary use of the commercial space as a residential unit is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Retail Commercial zone (BLMC 17.16.061.B.12).
- 4. Per Section 17.28.030.F of the Blue Lake Municipal Code, the Planning Commission finds as follows:
- A. That the proposed location of the temporary residential unit is in accord with the purpose and intent of the Retail Commercial zone and the proposed use is similar to and compatible with the uses permitted in the Retail Commercial zone.
- B. That the proposed location of the temporary residential unit and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity.
- 6. The Planning Commission of the City of Blue Lake hereby grants and approves the Conditional Use Permit application for Chris & Amelia Gonzalez to allow the temporary residential use of the approximately 340 square foot commercial space located on the street-side ground floor of the Stewart Building at 130 H Street, subject to the terms and conditions contained in Exhibit "A", attached hereto and made a part hereof, and as set forth in the Floor Plans, which are marked as Exhibit "B", attached hereto and made a part hereof.

INTRODUCED, PASSED, AND ADOPTED this 18th day of December 2023, by the following vote:

Chairman, Planning Commission, City of Blue Lake

RESOLUTION NO. 5-2023

ATTEST:	
	_
Secretary, Planning Commission	

EXHIBIT "A" To Resolution 5-2023

Conditions of Approval

General

1. Applicant shall reimburse the City for all fees involved in processing this application including any costs incurred ensuring compliance with the conditions of approval.

Planning

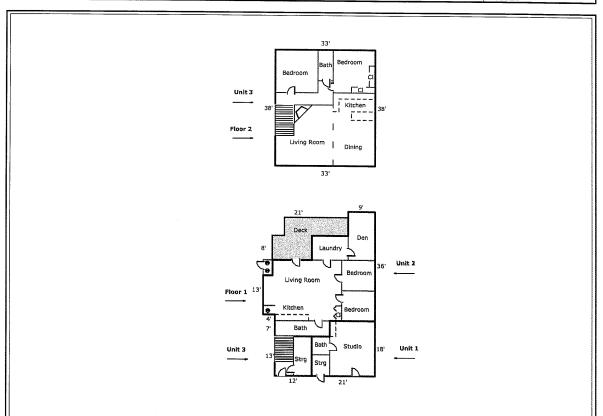
2. The Conditional Use Permit allowing the residential use of the approximately 340 square foot commercial space shall expire within three years of the effective date of the approval.

Building Department

- 3. The applicant shall notify the Building Official of any proposed improvements to the building so they may determine if a building permit is required.
- 4. Due to the information provided by the applicant regarding unpermitted residential use occurring in the building for several decades, an inspection of the building shall be conducted by the Building Official prior to residential occupancy of the approximately 340 square foot commercial space.

FLOORPLAN SKETCH

Client: Tonine Nielsen		File No.: b2208-130H-gpar-multi
Property Address: 130 H St		Case No.: Nielsen
City: Blue Lake	State: CA	Zip: 95525



Sketch by Apex Sketch v5 Standard™

Comments:

	Description	Net Size	Net Totals	Bı	reakdo	own	Subtotals
SBA1	Unit 1	348.00		Unit 1	11.70		
	Unit 3	156.00		21.0	x	13.0	273.00
	Unit 2	1047.00	1551.00	5.0	ж	15.0	75.00
BA2	Second Floor	1254.00	1254.00	Unit 3			
P/P	Deck	230.00	230.00	13.0	×	12.0	156.00
TH	Mechanical	15.00	15.00	Unit 2			
				33.0	ж	2.0	66.00
				5.0	×	18.0	90.00
				37.0	×	13.0	481.00
				5.0	×	34.0	170.00
				8.0	×	21.0	168.00
				8.0	×	9.0	72.00
				Second Floor			
				33.0	×	38.0	1254.00
			Table 100000				

