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Planning Services Division

**SOLANO COUNTY ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**

**Staff Report  
 MU-20-01**

<b>Application No.</b> MU-20-01 (Araceli Farms) <b>Project Planner:</b> Eric Wilberg, Planner Associate		<b>Meeting of March 26, 2020 Agenda Item No.</b>	
<b>Applicant</b> Justina Salinas 7389 Pitt School Road Dixon, CA 95620		<b>Property Owner</b> Robert Payne Araceli Salinas-Payne 7389 Pitt School Road Dixon, CA 95620	
<b>Action Requested</b> Consideration and approval of Minor Use Permit MU-20-01 to establish and operate a Roadside Stand, future Cottage Industry, Special Events Facility of up to 12 events per year and 150 persons per event, Agricultural Education Facility, and various temporary Community Events located at 7389 Pitt School Road, one mile south of the City of Dixon, within the Exclusive Agriculture "A-40" Zoning District; APN: 0109-200-080.			
<b>Property Information</b>			
Size: 61.42 acres		Location: 1 mile south, City of Dixon	
APN: 0109-200-080			
Zoning: Exclusive Agriculture "A-40"		Land Use: Agriculture, Single Family Residence	
General Plan: Agriculture		Ag. Contract: n/a	
Utilities: Domestic well, septic system		Access: Pitt School & Midway Roads	
<b>Adjacent General Plan Designation, Zoning District, and Existing Land Use</b>			
	<b>General Plan</b>	<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Land Use</b>
<b>North</b>	Agriculture	Exclusive Agriculture "A-40"	Agriculture, Equestrian Facility
<b>South</b>	Agriculture	Exclusive Agriculture "A-40"	Agriculture (Row Crop)
<b>East</b>	Agriculture	Exclusive Agriculture "A-40"	Agriculture (Orchard)
<b>West</b>	Agriculture	Exclusive Agriculture "A-40"	Agriculture (Orchard)
<b>Environmental Analysis</b> A Notice of Exemption shall be prepared for the project pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), General Rule exemption.			
<b>Motion to Approve</b> The Zoning Administrator does hereby ADOPT the attached resolution and APPROVE Minor Use Permit No. MU-20-01 based on the enumerated findings and subject to the recommended conditions of approval.			

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The subject property is located within unincorporated Solano County, 1 mile south of the City of Dixon. The 61.42 acre parcel is generally flat exhibiting slopes of less than six percent. Residential development on-site is clustered near the northeast corner of the lot and consists of a Primary residence, 1,920 square foot agricultural accessory barn, and associated utilities including a domestic water well and private septic system. The balance of the lot is in agricultural production including 6 acres of lavender situated near the residence and 50 acres of rotational crops extending towards the western property line and Southern Pacific Railroad. Parcels surrounding the property exhibit characteristics similar to that of the subject site. Lots are relatively flat, generally 20 - 80 acres in size, and engaged in agricultural production.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Araceli Farms is a 6 acre lavender farm situated south of the City of Dixon. The applicant is requesting approval of Minor Use permit application MU-20-01 to establish and operate a variety of land uses on-site. The proposal includes a Roadside Stand, future Cottage Industry, Special Events Facility, Agricultural Education, and various temporary Community Events.

A 96 square foot Roadside Stand currently operates seasonally selling lavender product grown on site; including dried bundles, buds, and wreaths. In addition, an assortment of lavender infused products including candles, soaps, lotions, and oils are retailed on-site and online. A future phase of the project may include manufacturing these products as part of a Cottage Industry home based business. Activities associated with the Cottage Industry – Limited may occur within an area of up to 1,500 square feet of the existing residence or within a detached accessory or within a combination thereof.

The proposal also involves conducting Special Events on-site. A Special Events Facility is defined in Section 28.01 of the County Zoning Regulations as *a facility offered for use by third parties for hire for the conduct of social gatherings or similar types of events*. These events are proposed to occur within the existing 1,920 square foot agricultural accessory structure (barn). Conversion of the agricultural building to a public assembly use and occupancy triggers the need for upgrades and improvements to the structure and its surroundings. These improvements shall be achieved through the building permit process and shall be finalized prior to the operation and conduct of commercial activities on-site. A maximum of 12 events may be held annually with up to 150 persons per event.

In addition to Special Events, the project involves utilizing an approximate 4 acre outdoor area to host a variety of Araceli Farms marketing events, lavender education workshops, and Community Events. Temporary tents selling crafts, wares, and food preparation and service would be utilized during these events. Parking for approximately 400 vehicles is provided within the 4 acre field adjacent to the lavender farm. Events of this nature have been conducted on-site since 2018.

Building permit application B2019-1074 has been filed for a residential patio cover with outdoor kitchen adjacent to the existing Primary Residence and private swimming pool. This structure is intended to be utilized for residential purposes and shall not be used by the public or for any commercial activities conducted on the property.

A 4 ft. x 4 ft. freestanding wooden sign advertising Araceli Farms exists near the corner of Pitt School and Midway Roads.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

The project requires minimal physical improvements to the existing Araceli Farms operation. Converting the use and occupancy of the agricultural storage building to function as the Special Events Facility requires upgrades and improvements to meet various Building and Safety and Fire Code standards;

however, those improvements are generally limited to the footprint of the existing 1,920 square foot structure.

Other improvements to the site will need to be made to ensure that adequate ingress and egress, fire access, and circulation requirements are being met. Those improvements include but are not limited to turn radius, turnaround provisions, access width, and driving surface.

With minimal changes to the site, the project would not create additional population dependent impacts such as increased traffic, overuse of public facilities, nor impact community character. The project site is developed with an existing farm and residence and does not contain any major slopes or prominent topographical features; rare, endangered or regionally significant species of native flora and fauna, or known culturally significant archeological sites. The project does not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.

A Notice of Exemption shall be prepared for the project pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), General Rule exemption.

## **LAND USE CONSISTENCY**

### **General Plan and Zoning Consistency**

The subject site is designated Agriculture by the Solano County General Plan. Table LU-5 of the General Plan provides a description and intent of the Agricultural designation:

*The (Agricultural Designation) provides areas for the practice of agriculture as the primary use, including areas that contribute significantly to the local agricultural economy, and allows for secondary uses that support the economic viability of agriculture. Agricultural land use designations protect these areas from intrusion by nonagricultural uses and other uses that do not directly support the economic viability of agriculture.*

Further the General Plan identifies ten Agricultural Regions throughout the County, the subject site being located within the Dixon Ridge Agricultural Region. Table AG-3 of the General Plan highlights the unique characteristics of each region and summarizes desired land uses.

*The (Dixon Ridge) provides for agricultural production, agricultural processing facilities, and agricultural services.*

The subject site is zoned Exclusive Agriculture "A-40" consistent with the General Plan designation. Section 28.21 of the County Zoning Ordinance provides a table of allowed uses and permit requirements applicable to this zoning district. As seen on Table 28.21A, Cultivate and Irrigated Farming, residential development, Roadside Stand, future Cottage Industry, Special Events Facility, Agricultural Education Facility, and various temporary Community Events are allowed or conditionally allowed land uses within the A-40 Zoning District.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Department recommends that the Zoning Administrator **ADOPT** the resolution enumerating the mandatory and suggested findings, and **APPROVE** Minor Use Permit No. MU-20-01, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

### **Attachments:**

A – Draft Resolution

Zoning Administrator Staff Report  
Minor Use Permit No. MU-20-01 (Araceli Farms)

- B – Assessor’s Parcel Map
- C – Site Plan