

**PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

Date: December 18, 2024

To: Reno City Planning Commission

Subject: **Staff Report (For Possible Action): Case No. LDC25-00021 (Royse Casita) - A request has been made for a major deviation to allow a ±1,150 square foot accessory structure. The ±1.12 acre site is located on the north side of Sharpe Hill Circle at the intersection of Sharpe Hill Circle and Circle Stone Court. The site is zoned Somerset Planned Unit Development (Somerset PUD) and has a Master Plan land use designation of Large-Lot Neighborhood (LL).**

From: Jeff Foster, Associate Planner

Ward #: 5

Case No.: LDC25-00021 (Royse Casita)

Applicant: Brian Royse

APN: 232-603-20

Request: **Major Deviation:** To allow a ±1,150 square foot accessory structure.

Location: See Case Maps (**Exhibit A**)

Proposed Motion: Based upon compliance with the applicable findings, I move to approve the major deviation, subject to the conditions listed in the staff report.

Summary: The project site is a ±1.12 acre parcel located at 1735 Sharpe Hill Circle at the intersection of Sharpe Hill Circle and Circle Stone Court in Somerset. The applicant has requested a major deviation that would increase the allowable accessory structure square footage by ±44%, thereby allowing a ±1,150 square foot casita (**Exhibit B**). Key project issues include: 1) compatibility with surrounding uses and 2) site design. These issues are mitigated through project design, code compliance, and/or conditions of approval. Staff recommends approval, subject to the conditions listed in the staff report.

Background: The Somerset PUD handbook includes development standards for the Estate Homes villages in which the subject parcel is located. Standards specific to accessory buildings are defined on page 2-10. The PUD handbook limits maximum accessory building coverage to 800 square feet (provided that at least 500 square feet of useable rear yard area is maintained). The

PUD requires all improvements within the development to obtain written approval by the Somerset Aesthetic Guidelines Committee (AGC) prior to commencement of construction. The AGC uses Aesthetic Guidelines that are outside the scope of the adopted PUD when reviewing proposed plans in context with the PUD handbook and recorded CC&Rs. The Aesthetic Guidelines and CC&Rs are enforced by the Somerset AGC. The City of Reno has no authority to implement or enforce private standards per RMC 18.01.305(c); however, both the Somerset Aesthetic Guidelines and CC&Rs allow for detached servant or guest quarters of not more than 1,500 square feet, providing guidance in support of the major deviation request for larger building size.

Discussion: For Estate Homes, the PUD handbook states that the maximum coverage for accessory buildings is limited to 800 square feet and one story in height. The coverage square footage is inclusive of all components of the structure regardless of their occupancy (i.e. living area, garage, etc.). RMC includes processes/procedures that would permit increases to the allowed square footage of accessory buildings. The Planning Commission may approve or deny major deviations of no more than 50% from quantifiable development standards per RMC 18.08.802(b)(1). For the Estate Homes within the Somerset PUD, accessory building square footage could be increased to 1,200 square feet with the approval of a major deviation. As currently designed, the applicant is proposing a casita that exceeds the maximum 800 square feet by up to another ± 350 square feet, which is a deviation of $\pm 44\%$.

Analysis:

Compatibility with Surrounding Uses: Surrounding land uses include single-family residences. The zoning and land uses surrounding the site are summarized in the table below.

| Adjacent Properties | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|---|
| | Zoning | Use |
| North | PUD | Single-family residential |
| East | PUD | Single-family residential across Sharpe Hill Circle |
| South | PUD | Single-family residential across Sharpe Hill Circle |
| West | PUD | Single-family residential |

Per page 2-9 of the Somerset PUD handbook, one detached guest building (garage or casita with kitchen allowed) is an allowed use in the Estate Homes areas. While most of the homes in the area do not have separate guest quarters, the request is not unprecedented. There are at least three other Estate Homes with detached casitas, including two in the immediate vicinity (**Exhibit C**). The Estate Homes areas have large lots and there will be a significant distance between the proposed casita and adjacent homes. On behalf of the AGC, the Somerset Owners Association (SOA) has issued an approval letter for the proposed project (**Exhibit D**). Given the above, the proposed casita appears to be generally consistent and compatible with surrounding uses. Days and hours of

construction are restricted to lessen construction impacts on surrounding residences (**Condition 5**).

Site Design: The proposed casita with kitchen, which is $\pm 1,150$ square feet and one story in height, is set back approximately two feet farther than the existing primary structure and is therefore outside of the front yard. Per page 2-9 of the PUD handbook, one off-street parking space shall be provided per bedroom, including any guest unit. The proposed one-bedroom casita includes a single vehicle garage and there is room on the driveway for two additional vehicles. The proposed landscape trees will comply with the minimum size requirements listed in the SOA approval letter. As required by the SOA approval letter, no uplighting is proposed.

Master Plan Conformance: The subject site has a Master Plan land use designation of Large-Lot Neighborhood (LL) and is located in the Foothill Neighborhoods per the Structure Plan Framework of the Reno Master Plan. As proposed, and with the recommended conditions, the project is in conformance with the LL Master Plan land use designation and the following applicable Master Plan goals and policies:

- N-G.4: Garage Orientation
- N-G.6: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
- N-FN.4: Retaining Walls
- SD.19: Light Pollution

Public and Stakeholder Engagement: The proposed project was reviewed by various City divisions and partner agencies. No comments of concern were received. A courtesy notice was sent out to surrounding property owners upon initial submittal of the project. No comments have been received. The December Ward 5 Neighborhood Advisory Board meeting was cancelled. NAB members were advised of the project request per RMC 18.08.305(c)(3) “Advisory Board Notice” and no comments were received. Any future comments will be forwarded to the Planning Commission as they are received.

Recommended Conditions of Approval: All conditions shall be met to the satisfaction of Development Services Department staff, unless otherwise noted.

1. The project shall comply with all applicable City codes, plans, reports, materials, etc., as submitted. In the event of a conflict between said plans, reports, materials and City codes, City codes in effect at the time the application is submitted shall prevail.
2. The owner or developer shall apply for a building permit for the entire project within 18 months of the date of approval of the major deviation application and maintain the validity of that permit, or the major deviation approval shall be null and void.

3. Prior to the issuance of any building permit associated with this project, the applicant shall attach a copy of the final approval letter. The approval letter shall accompany a narrative provided by the applicant that describes how the requested permit addresses each of the approved conditions of approval.
4. The applicant, developer, builder, property owner, or business proprietor, as applicable, shall continuously maintain a copy of this approval letter on the project site during the construction of the project. The project approval letter shall be posted or made readily available upon demand by City staff.
5. Hours of construction shall be limited to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. There shall be no construction on Sundays. This condition shall not apply to dust control or storm water management operations. A note to this effect shall be placed on the title sheet of all building permit plan sets. A sign with the approved construction hours shall be posted on site for the full duration of construction activity. If the construction hours need to be varied for the pouring of concrete slabs, interior construction hours or other modifications, a plan detailing the construction operations and provisions to minimize impacts on nearby residential areas shall be submitted and approved to the satisfaction of the Administrator.

Findings:

General Review Criteria: The decision-making body shall review all development applications for compliance with the applicable general review criteria stated below.

- 1) Consistency with the Reno Master Plan: The proposed development shall be consistent with the Reno Master Plan. The decision-making authority:
 - a. Shall weigh competing plan goals, policies, and strategies; and
 - b. May approve an application that provides a public benefit even if the development is contrary to some of the goals, policies, or strategies in the Reno Master Plan.
- 2) Compliance with Title 18: The proposed development shall comply with all applicable standards in this Title, unless the standard is lawfully modified or varied. Compliance with these standards is applied at the level of detail required for the subject submittal.
- 3) Mitigates Traffic Impacts: The project mitigates traffic impacts based on applicable standards of the City of Reno and the Regional Transportation Commission.
- 4) Provides Safe Environment: The project provides a safe environment for pedestrians and people on bicycles.
- 5) Rational Phasing Plan. If the application involves phases, each phase of the proposed development contains all of the required streets, utilities, landscaping, open space, and

other improvements that are required to serve or otherwise accompany the completed phases of the project, and shall not depend on subsequent phases for those improvements.

Major Deviation: In addition to meeting the criteria in Section 18.08.304(e), *Approval Criteria Applicable to all Applications*, the following findings shall be made prior to granting a major deviation:

- 1) Granting the major deviation will not significantly impact nearby property;
- 2) Project changes enabled by the major deviation enhance the overall design of the project, operations of the project or the public benefits resulting from the project;
- 3) Granting of the major deviation does not constitute a special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the vicinity and land use district in which the property is located; and
- 4) Granting the major deviation will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare.

Attachments:

Exhibit A. Case Maps

Exhibit B. Site Plan

Exhibit C. Nearby Estate Homes with Casitas

Exhibit D. Somerset Owners Association Approval