



# City of Stevenson

## Planning Department

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**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Ben Shumaker  
**DATE:** October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
**SUBJECT:** Shoreline Substantial Development Permit – SHOR2023-02 - Rock Cove Hospitality

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### **Introduction**

The Planning Commission is asked to review a proposal by FDM Development for a water-enjoyment commercial use on the shorelands of Rock Cove. The proposal is subject to review under SMC 18.08 and the Stevenson Shoreline Master Program (SMP). Complete application for the proposal was accepted on August 11, 2023 (Attachment 1). A template decision has been prepared (Attachment 2). The template is not a recommendation of approval as some key items of discussion are appropriate based on the site's history and public comments received on the project (Attachment 3).

The proposal is similar to a project approved by the City under the previous SMP SHOR2020-01. Underground site infrastructure was installed, however, the previous permit expired and the project was subsequently redesigned.

### **Key Discussions**

Three topics warrant additional Planning Commission Discussion.

**Cultural Resources** – A cultural resources report was prepared to advance the 2020 project. The report recommended inclusion of inadvertent discovery procedures during construction. Public comments were solicited on the cultural resources report, and the City received a request to require the presence of a monitor during construction activities. The City Council disregarded the request when they issued the Shoreline Permit. The Planning Commission is faced with the same decision in its review under the new SMP. Pink highlighted text is available should the Planning Commission seek to require cultural resource monitoring.

**Mitigation Sequence** – Before fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas are disturbed, proposals must do their best to avoid, then minimize, then rectify and compensate for impacts. Public comments from State agencies challenge the proposed efforts to avoid and minimize impacts. Staff expects applicant testimony to address these comments and is ready to draft findings and conditions if necessary to assist the Planning Commission discussion of the topic.

**Off-Site Mitigation** – The proposal includes enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. The enhancement is required by the Stevenson Critical Areas Code because riprap at the site reduces the regulatory base habitat buffer area to less than 50% of what it would be on a greenfield site. With the enhancement requirement, the code removes the opportunity for additional on-site mitigation. The application proposes on-site mitigation to compensate for buffer impacts. This would effectively double count mitigation efforts. The issue was brought to the City's attention via public comments and staff expects applicant testimony to address alternate—off-site—mitigation for the project impacts. Staff is ready to draft findings and conditions if necessary to assist the Planning Commission's discussion after testimony is received

Public Access – The proposal includes visual public access to Rock Cove via pedestrian pathways. The proposal alters the location of existing public easements to better suit the site’s redesign. The proposal also involves reducing and/or not developing public access where some easements already exist. The reduction makes it difficult to assess the approval criteria, in part because the issue of “feasibility” as that term is defined in the SMP is not addressed. Staff anticipates applicant testimony related to this topic and is prepared to draft findings and conditions if necessary to assist the Planning Commission discussion.

**Effect**

The project is very close to satisfying all applicable criteria, however additional information is necessary before a permit can be justified. Depending on the information provided at the hearing and the Planning Commission’s preferences, a decision could be made tonight. Alternatively, the record could be left open and the public hearing continued to a future date.

Prepared by,

Ben Shumaker  
Zoning Administrator

Attachment

- Application
- Template Decision
- Written Public Comments
- Public Access History
- Public Comment Responsiveness Summary (Available at the Meeting)