

AGENCY:	CDD
MEETING DATE:	September 22, 2021
PREPARED BY:	H.Gurewitz
PRESENTED BY:	H Gurewitz

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY REPORT

APPLICATION NO.: DR 5-21

OWNER: Sabine Brunner

APPLICANT: Alleyway Art Project

AGENT: Lia Morsell

PROJECT: Install three (3) 6'X6' mural panels on west facing exterior wall of a building located in the Central Business District

LOCATION: 221 E. Redwood Ave.

APN: 008-154-28

LOT SIZE: 2,178 sq. ft.

ZONING: Central Business District

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: This project is exempt from CEQA per Statutory Exemption §15301 Existing Facilities – Operation, repair, maintenance, ... or minor alteration of existing public or private structures... involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use...

SURROUNDING LAND USES:

NORTH: Retail
EAST: Retail store
SOUTH: Retail stores and Restaurant
WEST: Vacant Commercial (CBD) lot

APPEALABLE PROJECT: **Can be appealed to City Council**

BACKGROUND

In 2018, the Alleyway Art Project was initiated by Lia Morsell. The project connects artists with buildings in the commercial areas of Fort Bragg to beautify the City and increase

access to public art. Examples of the murals that have been installed can be seen on their website at: <https://www.fortbraggalleywayart.org/our-murals.html>.

The City's approval process for murals associated with the Alley Way Art Project have generally been administrative design review in which the location and the proposed mural are submitted for review by staff and approved by the Director. In accordance with ILUDC Section 18.71.050, the Director has the authority (per Table 7-1) to defer the decision to the Planning Commission. Because of the size and high visibility location of the proposed mural, City staff have deferred the decision to the Planning Commission.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Install a mural on three six foot by six foot panels (total of 108 square feet) on the west facing exterior wall at 221 E Redwood Avenue (see image below). Artwork will be painted by Sally Rodriguez who will do a cubist interpretation of some of the unique history of that section of Redwood. The piece will be called "Redwood Frolic" and based on local oral histories of the block where her mural will be featured.



According to the applicant, the 200 block of Redwood holds some of the oldest buildings in Fort Bragg, and used to house a Finnish community plus a fish shop serving local dock workers. Ms. Rodriguez describes the mural as a playful Cubist mish-mash of history, bright colors, stray cats, fish, boats, and angels, all juxtaposed with contemporary businesses and local characters. See Attachment 1 for examples of Ms. Rodriguez's work.

ANALYSIS

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

ILUDC Section 18.71.050(F)(6) requires that the project be consistent with the General Plan. The proposed project is consistent with the following General Plan Goals and Policies:

Goal/Policy/Program	Project
Community Design Policy CD-2.5 Strengthen the distinctive identity and unique sense of place of the Central Business District	Public art and murals are a valuable means for creating a distinctive identity and a unique sense of place.
Community Design Policy CD-7.1 Public Art: Encourage the provision of murals, fountains, sculptures, and other forms of public art in public spaces and parks.	The proposed project is a mural that will be visible from the public right of way though it will not be placed on public property and is not adjacent to public property.
Land Use Goal LU-3 Ensure that the Central Business District remains the historic, civic, cultural, and commercial core of the community.	The addition of murals enhances the cultural aspect of downtown and the proposed mural is intended to honor the history of the neighborhood/block.

The project does not conflict with any Goals, Policies, or Programs in the General Plan.

DESIGN REVIEW

Section 18.71.050(G) of the ILUDC says that the review authority shall find that the project complies with all applicable criteria identified in Section 18.71.050(F) of the ILUDC. The following are the criteria from this section:

Criteria	Proposed Project
1. Complies with the purpose and requirements of this Section; 18.71.050A. Purpose: Design Review is intended to ensure that the design of proposed development and new land uses assists in maintaining and enhancing the small-town, coastal, historic, and rural character of the community.	The City of Fort Bragg has been a center for art on the Mendocino Coast for many years with no less than three art galleries. The provision of public art furthers the cultural character and enhances and maintains this image.
2. Provides architectural design, building massing, and scale appropriate to and compatible with the site surroundings and the community;	Not applicable to this project as there are no changes to architectural design or building massing.
3. Provides attractive and desirable site layout and design, including building arrangement, exterior appearance and	The mural can be found to comply with the criteria that it provides an attractive and

setbacks, drainage, fences and walls, grading, landscaping, lighting, signs, etc.;	desirable design and exterior appearance of the building.
4. Provides efficient and safe public access, circulation, and parking;	Not applicable to this project.
5. Provides appropriate open space and landscaping, including the use of water efficient landscaping;	Not applicable to this project.
6. Is consistent with the General Plan, any applicable specific plan;	See above.
7. Complies and is consistent with the City's Design Guidelines.	See below.

Compliance with City's Design Guidelines

The Citywide Design Guidelines do not provide guidelines for public art however, there are several places where exterior design and color are discussed:

Building Color guidelines are provided on pg. 2-15 for the painting of a building. It says that there should be a dominant color to serve as the primary base, a secondary color to emphasize architectural elements, and a minor color for trim. It also recommends that exterior building colors should reflect the architectural style or period of the building or its environs. It is the opinion of staff that it is inappropriate to apply this criterion to a mural as it would limit artistic expression and the ability of a mural to create a unique and distinctive identity.

Additionally, on page 2-15 through 2-16 the Guidelines state:

“Additions to existing structures should be well integrated with the existing structure. The design of the addition should follow the general scale, proportion, massing, roof line, and detailing of the original structure... New additions should be designed so that if the addition were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original structure would be unimpaired. “

The proposed mural would cover a wall and would be integrated with the structure and would cause little damage if removed in the future.

It is reasonable to make the finding(s) that this project complies with the criteria specified Inland Land Use and Development Code Section 18.71.050(F). However, design is subjective and it is at the discretion of the Planning Commission to determine whether the project meets the criteria.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

This project is exempt under Section 15301 Existing Facilities of the California Environmental Quality ACT (CEQA):

“Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The Types of “existing facilities” itemized below are not intended to be all-inclusive of the types of project which might fall within Class 1. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use.”

The proposed project is a mural which is negligible as related to the existing use of the property.

RECOMMENDED PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

Open the public hearing, receive staff report, take public comment, and consider whether to approve or deny the proposed mural project at 221 E. Redwood Ave. via resolution.

ALTERNATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIONS

- Continue the public hearing to a later date.
- Postpone review until a final design is provided.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Samples of Artist Sally Rodriguez’s artwork
2. Approval Resolution
3. Denial Resolution