



COUNTY OF LAKE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Courthouse - 255 N. Forbes Street
Lakeport, California 95453
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission, Interested Parties; Applicant

FROM: Eric Porter, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: File no. UP 20-22, WeGrow Power Analysis

LOCATION: 16750 Herrington Road, Hidden Valley Lake (cultivation site); 17610 Sandy Road and 19678 Stinson Road, Middletown (cluster sites)

APNs: 013-060-40 (cultivation site); 013-014-03 and 11

DATE: October 8, 2021

ATTACHMENTS: 12a. Letter – ‘WeGrow Power Source’; Oct. 1, 2021
12b. Summary – Lake County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance references to Power

SUMMARY

The Lake County Planning Department is reviewing a project known as WeGrow, file no. UP 20-22. This project has the potential of requiring a significant amount of power that would be drawn from the Hidden Valley Lake power grid, which is near capacity at the present time.

The applicant originally requested a 4000 amp service to power 34 greenhouses and four (4) 50’ x 100’ drying buildings to be used for curing mature cannabis flowers. A typical dwelling uses a 200 amp service; the 4000 amp service requested is significant.

Staff has spoken with Ivan Castro and Justin Newell at PG&E between August 26, 2021 and present. Mr. Newell communicated the probably grid upgrade time-frame to staff on October 1, 2021, and Mr. Castro contacted staff on October 8, 2021 to confirm that (1) power could be provided; (2) the applicant would need to upgrade the grid in this location at their own expense; and (3) that the grid would not be able to be upgraded until possibly year 2025 due to PG&E backlog. Mr. Castro recommended that the applicant apply for the power upgrade in year 2024 to prepare for the year 2025 upgrade.

Staff communicated this to the applicant following the October 1, 2021 discussion that occurred with PG&E. The applicant responded by submitting a letter dated October 1, 2021 (Attachment

12a), and stated that they were only going to use power that was available to them, and that the greenhouses would use ‘light deprivation’ (minimal lighting) until more power were made available to their site.

The applicant is proposing fifteen (15) ‘A-Type 3B Medium Mixed Light’ cannabis cultivation licenses. Lake County Zoning Ordinance, Article 68, ‘Definitions’ defines these license types as follows: “A - Type 3B: "mixed-light": Cultivation for adult use cannabis in a greenhouse, glasshouse, conservatory, hothouse, or other similar structure using light deprivation and/or artificial lighting below a rate of 25 watts per square foot between 10,001 and 22,000 square feet, inclusive, of total canopy size on one premises.” (emphasis added)

The applicant has stated that they would use minimal lighting in the greenhouses based on whatever power were reasonably available at the time they were to begin cultivation.

CONCLUSION

The General Plan has several policies related to power (Attachment 12b), and the Zoning Ordinance requires power sources to be identified for commercial cannabis cultivation. Neither document describes any courses of action for power grids that are at capacity.

The Planning Commission has the ability to limit power that is available to this project. A typical house requires a 200 amp service. The 309 acre subject properties (three properties in total) could support two houses per property for a total of six potential houses. Each potential house could have two 200 amp services, for a total of 1200 amps. This could occur through building permits for dwellings, which are ministerial decisions that do not require any planning review other than typical ‘over the counter’ reviews for verifying height and setbacks from property lines.

The Planning Commission could decide to issue two 200 amp services for the entire site, or six 200 amp services, which would be the equivalent of the power requirement for six dwellings.

RECOMMENDATION

Given the limited power available in this location, staff is recommending that the Planning Commission limit the power allowed to this cultivator to two (2) 200 amp services until the power grid is upgraded in this location.