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[Planning Director](#)  
Kenyon Webster  
[Assistant Planner](#)  
Jonathan Atkinson  
[Administrative Assistant](#)  
Rebecca Mansour

## City of Sebastopol Design Review Board Staff Report

Meeting Date: July 6, 2016  
Agenda Item: 8B  
To: Design Review Board  
From: Jonathan Atkinson, Assistant Planner  
Subject: Design Review Amendment  
Recommendation: Consider Request  
Applicant/Owner: Steven Sheldon / Handline, LLC  
File Number: 2016-34  
Address: 935 Gravenstein Highway South  
CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption: Section 15301: Class 1  
General Plan: General Commercial  
Zoning: CG: General Commercial

### **Introduction:**

This is a Design Review Amendment application, requesting approval to construct a series of gabion forms and revise an approved landscape plan for Handline, a proposed restaurant, at 935 Gravenstein Highway South. The site was formerly home to Foster's Freeze, which closed in 2014, after years of operation in Sebastopol.

This application is subsequent to a series of meetings in 2015 in which the Design Review Board provided Design Review comments on the project as part of a Preliminary Review application; approved a Design Review application for the reuse and expansion of the existing building, site improvements, and the reface of an existing freestanding pole sign; and approved a Design Review Amendment application for subsequent revisions.

On June 1, 2016, the Board approved another Design Review Amendment application, which resulted in the creation of an outdoor dining area, removal of four onsite parking spaces, relocation of a trash enclosure, and the minor adjustment of various plantings. This application also included a gabion wall on the south and west perimeters of the landscaped area with a height of six feet. The Board felt that the aesthetic of a solid six foot tall gabion wall would have a negative visual impact on the site so they did not approve this component.

### **Project Description:**

The project involves the revision of an approved landscape plan, which includes the following: The construction of a gabion forms intended as both a sound reduction wall and landscape feature and gabion columns with steel arches. The gabion forms will be constructed of rusted steel, filled with recycled onsite asphalt, and located on the west and south perimeters of the outdoor landscaped area. There will be a series of 2 feet (width) by 6 feet (length) by 5 feet

(height) forms that are situated in a staggered formation and surrounded by a variety of plantings, which will have a height of 3 feet and 6 inches. The project also involves the construction of multiple gabion columns with rusted steel arches and vine-cover, which will have a height of 7½ feet and be placed along the path of travel leading to the entrance of the restaurant. The path of travel throughout the site has been realigned and some plantings have been revised, as a result of the landscape plan changes. The applicant has prepared a written statement, which is attached to the staff report.

**Environmental Review:**

The project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the following:

*Section 15301: Existing Facilities:* 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 use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination.

The project is consistent with this categorical exemption in that it involves the construction of gabion forms and landscape revisions at an existing approved project, which will result in minor alterations to existing topographical features.

**General Plan Consistency:**

The General Plan Land Use designation for the site is General Commercial. The project does not have any land use implications because it only involves the construction of gabion forms and landscape plan revisions.

The project is subject to the following General Plan goal and policy:

**Land Use Element**

- *Goal 8: Create opportunities for economic development and redevelopment.*
- *Policy 28: Rehabilitate Existing Commercial Buildings: Rehabilitate existing commercial buildings and retrofit them to meet current market needs and code requirements.*

The project is consistent with the General Plan goal and policy in that the construction of gabion forms and landscape plan revisions contribute to greater improvement efforts to an existing commercial building on Gravenstein Highway South.

**Zoning Ordinance Consistency:**

The project is subject to the following provisions of the Zoning Ordinance:

*Gabion Forms:* Section 17.96.020.C of the Zoning Ordinance limits fences and all other types of vertical screening materials, such as hedges and plantings to a maximum height of six (6) feet in any required side or rear yard areas with the exception that two (2) feet of lattice may be attached to fences no more than six (6) feet in height. This section also establishes a three and a half (3½) foot height limit in the required front yard setback area.

Section 17.60.070 of the Zoning Ordinance does not require a front yard or side yard setback for this site but does require a twenty (20) foot setback for the rear yard in that the site abuts a Residential District.

The proposed gabion forms will have a maximum height of five (5) feet and are located seventy (70) feet from the rear property line. The project is consistent with the provision.

**Public Comment:**

The Planning Department has not received any comments from the public as of writing the staff report.

**City Departmental Comment:**

The Planning Department circulated the application to the following City departments for review: Building and Safety, Engineering, and Fire. The Building Official commented that the site will need to be reviewed for accessibility and that the gabion forms will require permits.

**Required Findings:**

Section 17.310.030.B.2 of the Zoning Ordinance establishes the following Design Review Procedure: In considering an application for design review, the Design Review Board, or the Planning Director, as the case may be, shall determine whether:

- a) The design of the proposal would be compatible with the neighborhood or and with the general visual character of Sebastopol.
- b) The design provides appropriate transitions and relationships to adjacent properties and the public right of way.
- c) It would not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood.
- d) The design is internally consistent and harmonious.
- e) The design is in conformity with any guidelines and standards adopted pursuant to this Chapter.

**Analysis:**

The applicant has returned to the Board with landscape plan amendments, including a revised gabion wall in response to Board member feedback at the June 1, 2016 meeting. The Board felt that a solid gabion wall with a height of six feet would have a negative visual impact on the site, and even detract from the aesthetic of the renovated building. The gabion wall has been broken-up into 5-foot tall gabion forms, which will be situated in a staggered formation, located 2 feet from one another, and surrounded by various plantings. The applicant has also revised the path of travel to the restaurant and added gabion columns with rusted steel arches.

Overall, the Board could find the revised landscape plan and gabion forms to be an improvement in that the applicant has addressed some of its main concerns, regarding the aesthetic of a solid wall on the site. The staggered formation and spaces in between each gabion form will allow for visibility of the restaurant and landscaped area. The vine cover on the gabion columns and various plantings around the gabion forms will also serve as a screen, which will also soften the aesthetic. The gabion forms will have a height of 5 feet and the plantings will reach 3½ feet in height, which means that at least 1½ feet of the gabion forms

would not have some form of screening. The Board may wish to add a condition of approval that the gabion forms shall be covered with vines to soften the visual impact.

**Recommendation:**

The Board should determine whether or not the gabion forms and landscape plan revisions are appropriate for the site. Staff recommends that the Board approve the application based on the facts, findings, and analysis set forth and subject to the conditions of approval contained in this staff report, if there is a consensus that the improvements are compatible with the site.

Alternatively, the Board may find that revisions are necessary and a continuance is appropriate. Staff recommends that the Board provide specific direction for redesign to the applicant in the event of a continuance or rationale in the event of a denial.

**DESIGN REVIEW AMENDMENT PERMIT: 2016-34**  
**Handline**  
**Gabion Forms and Landscape Plan Revisions**  
**935 Gravenstein Highway South**

**Findings for Approval:**

1. That the project is categorically exempt from the requirements of CEQA, pursuant to Section 15301, Class 1, in that it involves the construction of gabion forms and landscape revisions at an existing approved project, which will result in minor alterations to existing topographical features.
2. That the project is consistent with the General Plan in that the construction of gabion forms and landscape plan revisions contribute to greater improvement efforts to an existing commercial building on Gravenstein Highway South, which is a goal of the Land Use Element.
3. That the project is consistent with the Zoning Ordinance in that the gabion forms comply with the applicable development standards and the overall landscape improvements supplement greater efforts to develop a restaurant in the General Commercial District.
4. That the design of the project is compatible with the neighborhood and the general visual character of Sebastopol in that the gabion forms are a distinct feature in Sebastopol but the overall revisions are similar to existing commercial properties on Gravenstein Highway South and throughout the community, as multiple eating establishments have used various screening features to enclose outdoor dining areas.
5. That the design of the project provides appropriate transitions and relationships to adjacent properties and the public right-of-way in that the gabion forms and columns are set back from the adjacent sidewalk and do not obstruct pathways, and that site will contain a variety of plantings and trees to serve as a natural buffer with abutting properties.
6. That the project will not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood in that the landscape plan revisions contribute to the overall revitalization of the site and will result in the removal of impervious asphalt for more plantings and an outdoor dining area. The gabion forms and columns will also be screened with plantings as they mature, softening the overall aesthetic.

7. That the design is internally consistent and harmonious in that that the gabion forms and columns contain consistent heights and in its use of recycled asphalt, and that the landscaped area will contain a consistent variety of plantings. The plantings and gabion forms will also form a harmonious relationship with the overall site in that the plants will screen and cover the wall once they reach maturation.
8. That the design of the project is in conformity with the adopted Design Guidelines in that the landscape plantings and features will provide appropriate screening for the gabion forms and columns, which will minimize the visual impact.

**Recommended Conditions of Approval:**

1. Approval is granted for the Design Review submittal described in the application and plans date-stamped June 27, 2016 and June 28, 2016. This approval is valid for two (2) years, except that the applicant may request a one (1) year extension of this approval from the Planning Director, pursuant to Section 17.250.050 of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. All construction shall conform to the plans date-stamped June 27, 2016 and June 28, 2016, unless the design is modified herein. The applicant shall obtain a Building Permit prior to the commencement of construction activities.
3. All conditions of approval as originally contained in Design Review Permit (2015-63) and Design Review Amendment Permits (2015-83) and (2016-34) shall apply.

**Attachments:**

- Master Planning Application Form
- Location Map
- Written Statement
- Design Review Amendment Submittal



# City of Sebastopol

Planning Department  
7120 Bodega Avenue  
Sebastopol, CA 95472  
(707) 823-6167 (Phone) or (707) 823-1135 (Fax)  
[www.ci.sebastopol.ca.us](http://www.ci.sebastopol.ca.us)

## MASTER PLANNING APPLICATION FORM

### PROJECT INFORMATION:

### FOR CITY USE ONLY

ADDRESS: <u>935 GRAVWALSTEIN HIGHWAY SOUTH</u>	PLANNING FILE #: <u>2016 / 34</u>
PARCEL #: <u>A.P. 800-039-174-000</u>	DATE FILED: <u>05/03/16</u>
PARCEL AREA: <u>.55 ACRES</u>	TOTAL FEES PAID: <u>Existing Account</u>
	RECEIVED BY: <u>JA</u>
	DATE APPLICATION DEEMED COMPLETE: <u>05/03/16</u>

### APPLICANT OR AGENT:

Name: STEVEN SHELDON  
 Email Address: ssheldon@sonic.net  
 Mailing Address: 781 DUFRANC AVE  
 City/State/Zip: SEBASTOPOL, CA 95472  
 Phone: 707 823 6331  
 Fax: 707 823 4148  
 Business License #: SHE 0003  
 Signature: [Signature]  
 Date: 5/2/2013

### OWNER OF PROPERTY

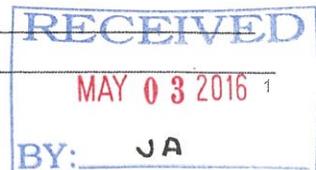
#### IF OTHER THAN APPLICANT:

Name: HEADLINE LLC  
 Email Address: LOWELL@PETERLOWELL.C  
 Mailing Address: 7385 HEALDSBURG AVE. 20'  
 City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: 707 338 5456  
 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Business License #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature: [Signature]  
 I certify that this application is being made with my consent.  
 Date: 5/2/2013

### OTHER PERSONS TO BE NOTIFIED: (Include Agents, Architects, Engineers, etc.).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_



**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

DESCRIBE IN DETAIL, the proposed project and permit request. (Attach additional pages, if needed):

SEE ATTACHED DESCRIPTION

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This application includes the checklist for the type of application requested:  Yes  No

Please indicate the type(s) of application that is being requested (example: Use Permit, Design Review, Variance, Planned Community Rezone, etc.):

DESIGN REVIEW MODIFICATION

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Please describe existing uses (businesses, residences, etc.) and other structures on the property:

SOON TO BE RESTAURANT

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**DEVELOPMENT DATA:**

SQUARE FEET BUILDING EXISTING:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
SQUARE FEET BUILDING DEMOLISHED:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
SQUARE FEET BUILDING NEW:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
NET CHANGE IN BUILDING SQUARE FEET:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS EXISTING:	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 Bedrooms <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Bedrooms <input type="checkbox"/> 4+ Bedrooms	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Bedrooms <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Bedrooms <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS PROPOSED:	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 Bedrooms <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Bedrooms <input type="checkbox"/> 4+ Bedrooms	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Bedrooms <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 Bedrooms <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
NET CHANGE IN DWELLING UNITS:		<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
SETBACKS:	<b>Existing:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Front Yard _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Side Yard _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Rear Yard _____ <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<b>Proposed:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Front Yard _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Side Yard _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Rear Yard _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

EXISTING LOT DIMENSIONS:	Front: _____ Rear: _____ Left: _____ Right: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
PROPOSED LOT DIMENSIONS:	Front: _____ Rear: _____ Left: _____ Right: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
EXISTING LOT AREA:	_____ Square Feet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
PROPOSED LOT AREA:	_____ Square Feet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
BUILDING HEIGHT:	Existing: _____ Proposed: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
NUMBER OF STORIES:	Existing: _____ Proposed: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
PARKING SPACE (S):	Existing: <u>25</u> Proposed: <u>21</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
ZONING	Existing: _____ Proposed: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

Will the project involve a new curb cut or driveway?  Yes  No

Are there existing easements on the property?  Yes  No

Will Trees be removed?  Yes  No

If yes, please describe (Example: Type, Size, Location on property, etc.)


Will Existing Landscaping be revised?  Yes  No

If yes, what is square footage of new or revised landscaping?

<u>363 SQ. FT.</u>

Will Signs be Changed or Added?  Yes  No

Business: Hours of Operation? Open: \_\_\_\_\_ Close: \_\_\_\_\_

Is alcohol service proposed?  Yes  No

If yes, what type of State alcohol license is proposed? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, have you applied to the State Alcoholic Beverage Control for a license?  Yes  No

If this is a restaurant, café or other food service, bar, or nightclub, please indicate total number of seats: \_\_\_\_\_

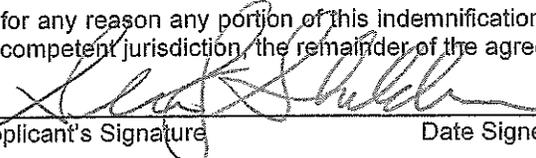
Is any live entertainment proposed?  Yes  No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

## INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT

As part of this application, applicant agrees to defend, indemnify, release and hold harmless the City, its agents, officers, attorneys, employees, boards and commissions from any claim, action or proceeding brought against any of the foregoing individuals or entities, the purpose of which is to attack, set aside, void or annul the approval of this application or the adoption of the environmental document which accompanies it or otherwise arises out of or in connection with the City's action on this application. This indemnification shall include, but not be limited to, damages, costs, expenses, attorney fees or expert witness fees that may be asserted by any person or entity, including the applicant, arising out of or in connection with the City's action on this application, whether or not there is concurrent passive or active negligence on the part of the City.

If, for any reason any portion of this indemnification agreement is held to be void or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of the agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

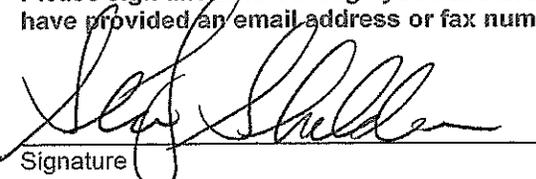
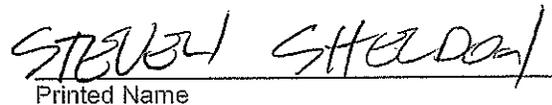
 5/2/2016 2016 - 34  
Applicant's Signature Date Signed Planning File Number

**NOTE:** The purpose of the indemnification agreement is to allow the City to be held harmless in terms of potential legal costs and liabilities in conjunction with permit processing and approval.

## NOTICE OF MAILING

Email addresses or facsimiles will be used for sending out staff reports and agendas to applicants, their representatives, property owners, and others to be notified.

Please sign and acknowledge you have been notified of the Notice of Mailing for applications and have provided an email address or fax number.

 Signature  Printed Name

**NOTE:** It is the responsibility of the applicant and their representative to be aware of and abide by City laws and policies. City staff, Boards, Commissions, and the City Council will review applications as required by law; however the applicant has responsibility for determining and following applicable regulations.

## NEIGHBOR NOTIFICATION

In the interest of being a good neighbor, it is highly recommended that you contact those homes or businesses directly adjacent to, or within the area of your project. Please inform them of the proposed project, including construction activity and possible impacts such as noise, traffic interruptions, dust, larger structures, tree removals, etc.

Many projects in Sebastopol are remodel projects which when initiated bring concern to neighboring property owners, resident and businesses. Construction activities can be disruptive, and additions or new buildings can affect privacy, sunlight or landscaping. Some of these concerns can be alleviated by neighbor-to-neighbor contacts early in the design and construction process.

It is a "good neighbor policy" to inform your neighbors so that they understand your project. This will enable you to begin your construction with the understanding of your neighbors and will help promote good neighborhood relationships.

Many times development projects can have an adverse effect on the tranquility of neighborhoods and tarnish relationships along the way. If you should have questions about who to contact or need property owner information in your immediate vicinity, please contact the Building and Safety Department for information at (707) 823-8597, or the Planning Department at (707) 823-6167.

I have informed site neighbors of my proposed project:

Yes

No

If yes, or if you will inform neighbors in the future, please describe outreach efforts:

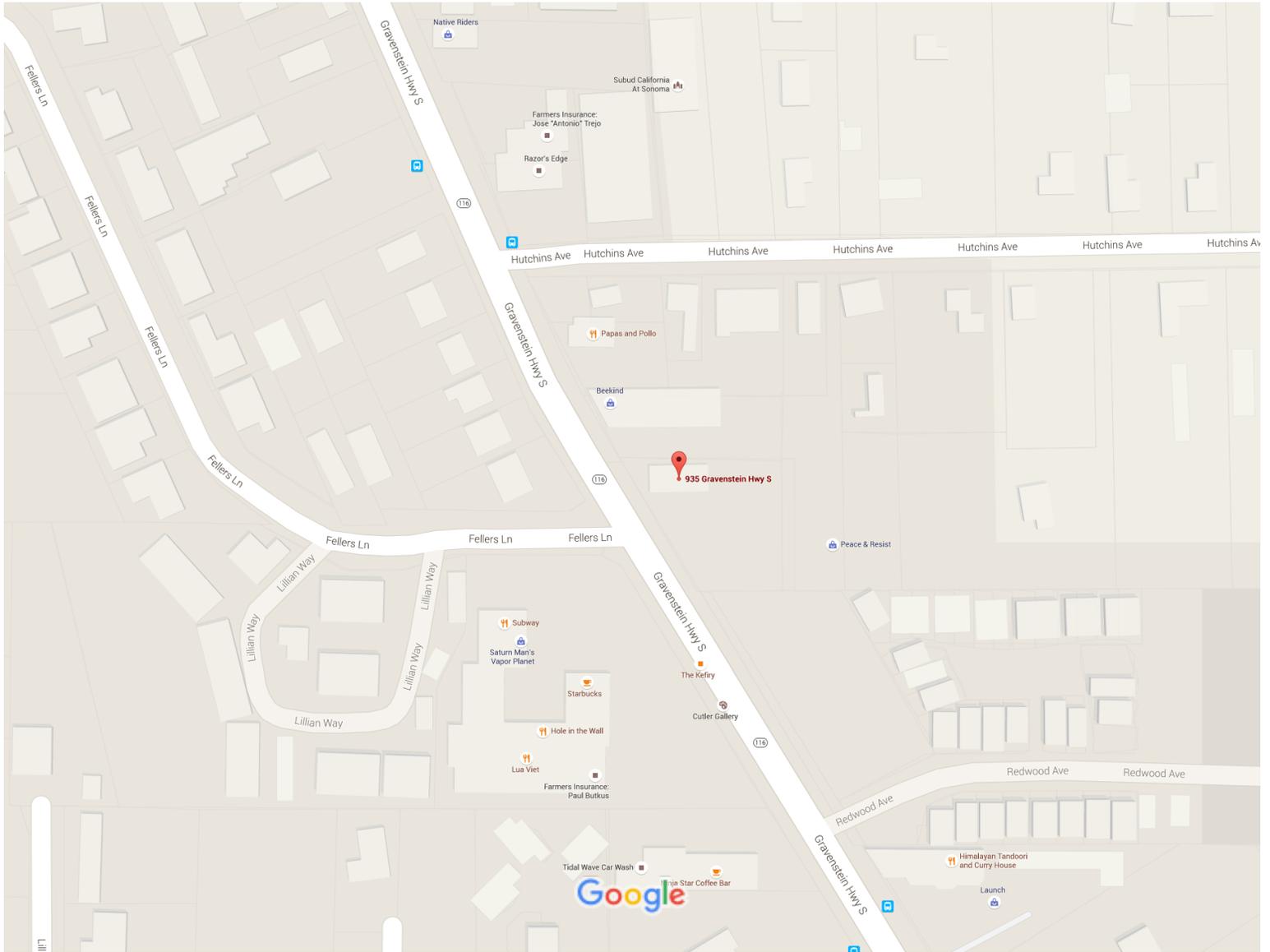

## WEBSITE REQUIRED FOR MAJOR PROJECTS

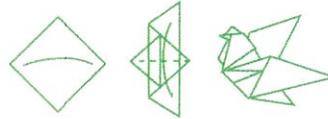
Applicants for major development projects (which involves proposed development of 25,000 square feet of new floor area or greater, or 25 or more dwelling units), are required to create a project website in conjunction with submittal of an application for Planning approval (including but not limited to Subdivisions, Use Permits, Rezoning's, and Design Review). Required information may be provided on an existing applicant web site.

The website address shall be provided as part of the application. The website shall be maintained and updated, as needed until final discretionary approvals are obtained for the project.

Such website shall include, at a minimum, the following information:

- ✓ Project description
- ✓ Contact information for the applicant, including address, phone number, and email address
- ✓ Map showing project location
- ✓ Photographs of project site
- ✓ Project plans and drawings





ibisbuilds

June 27, 2016

To: City of Sebastopol  
Sebastopol, CA

Re: Sound barrier  
Detailed Description  
Design Review Modification  
935 Gravenstein Highway South

We have developed a revised proposal in response to the discussion that took place during the Design Review hearing on June 1, 2016.

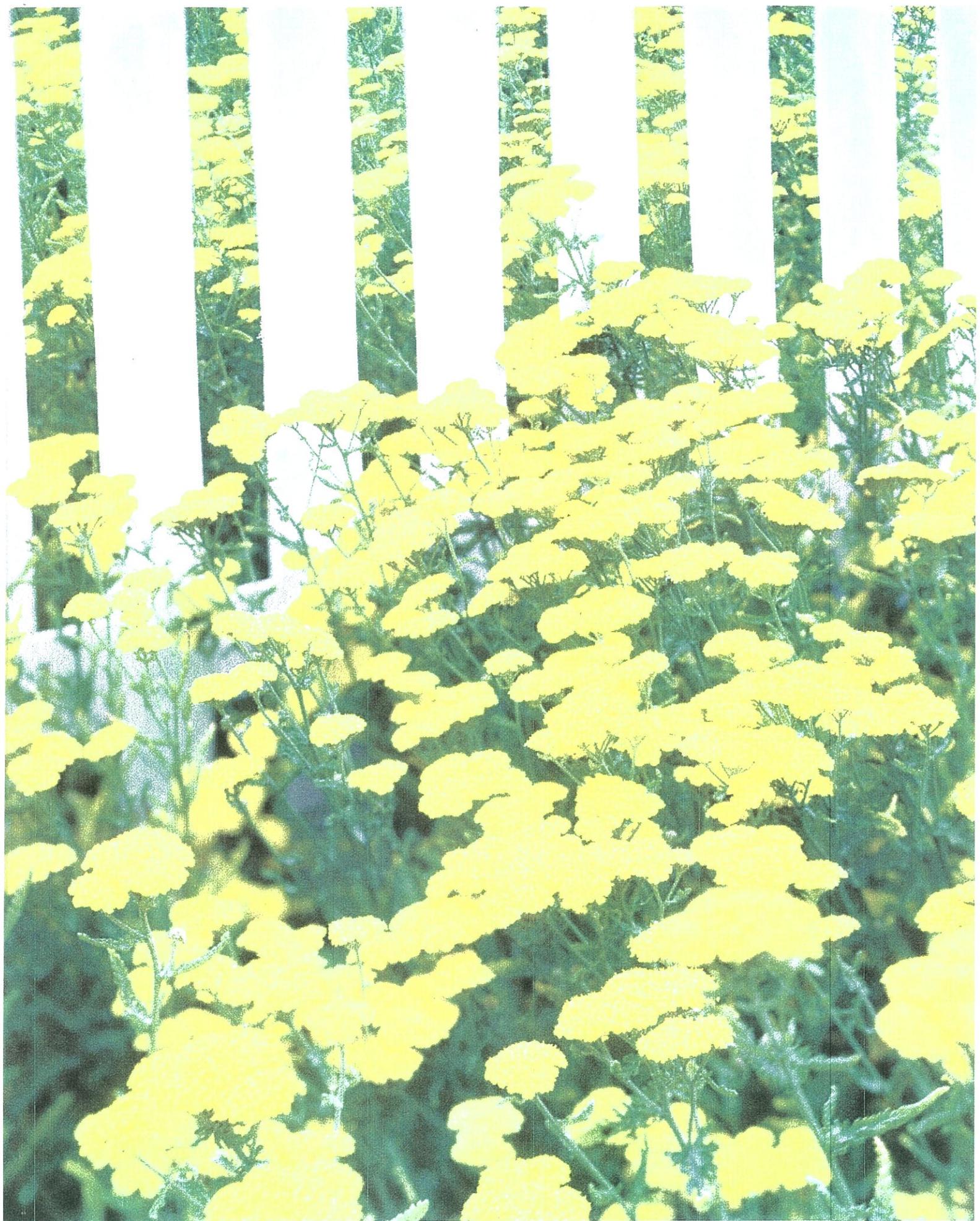
The board expressed concern about the fortress nature of the solid 6' gabion wall along the street frontage and parking lot.

In order to address the solid, impenetrable appearance of our previous proposal we have broken the wall up into a series of 2' wide by 6' long by 5' high gabion forms that are spaced 2' from each other and skewed at about 45 degrees from the sidewalk. This allows those viewing the project from the street or sidewalk to see beyond the wall to the building but also provides a degree of sound attenuation. These gabion forms will be surrounded by a sea of *Sanguisorba officinalis*, *Achillea taygetea* and *Eryngium 'Sapphire Blue'* about 3'6" tall. The gabion forms will be composed of rusted steel cages filled layered broken asphalt – thus recycling on site the material we are replacing with landscaping

Architect/Project Facilitator  
LEED Accredited Professional  
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Sebastopol, CA 95472  
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steve@ibisbuilds.com  
www.ibisbuilds.com

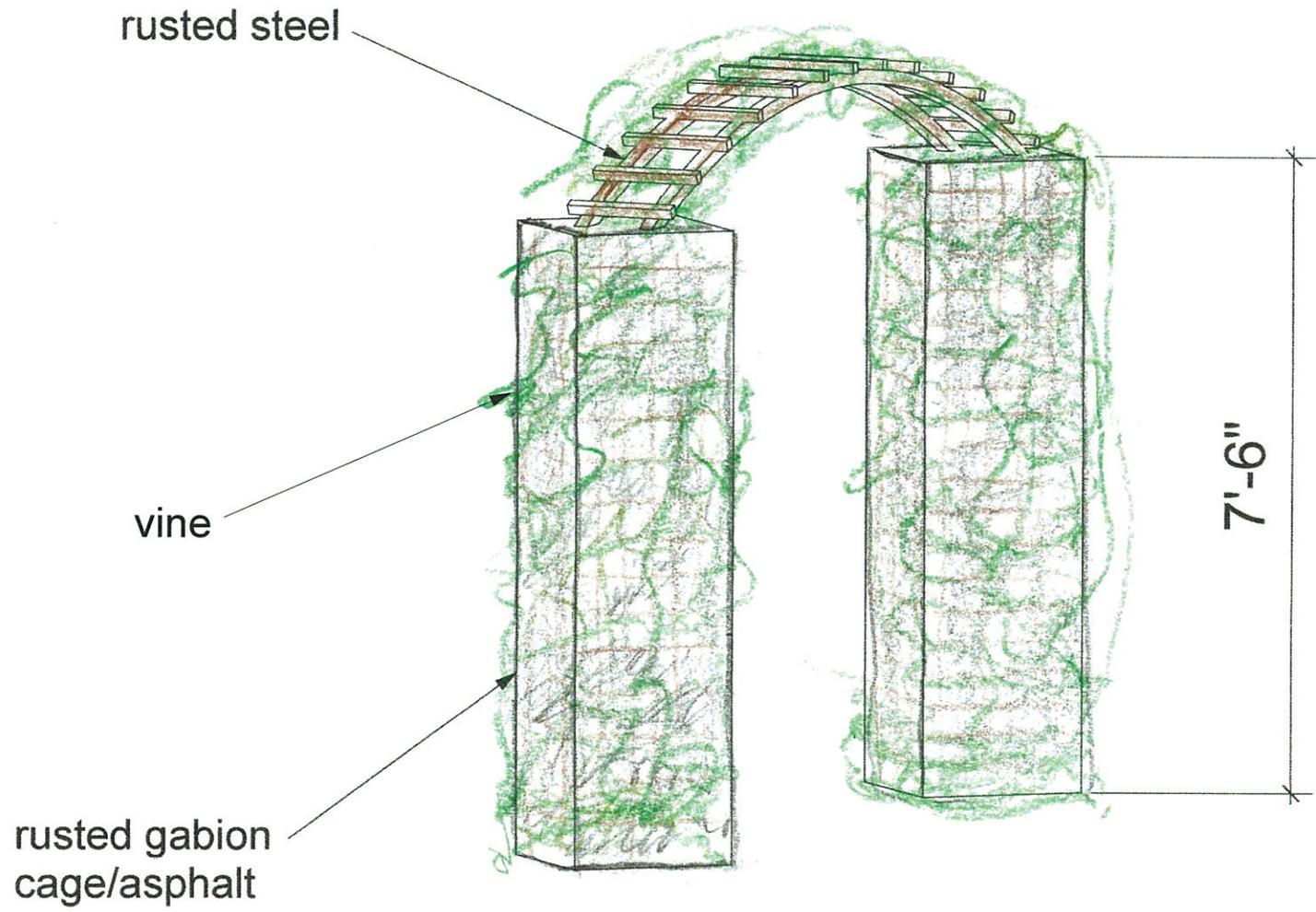












RECEIVED  
JUN 28 2016  
BY: JA

Handline  
gabion column w/  
steel arch  
6/27/2016



