

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

DATE: October 5, 2023

TO: Agricultural Advisory Committee

FROM: Summer Burlison, Planning Staff, 650/363-1815

SUBJECT: Consideration of an Agritourism Event starting on November 18, 2023 and ending on January 1, 2024, located at 78 Pilarcitos Creek Road, unincorporated Half Moon Bay (Santa's Tree Farm).

County File Number: PLN 2023-00321 (Sare)

PROPOSAL

The applicant has applied for an Agritourism Event for the upcoming winter holiday tree season, November 18, 2023 – January 1, 2024, at 78 Pilarcitos Creek Road, unincorporated Half Moon Bay (Santa's Tree Farm). The proposed days and hours of operation are as follows: Daily from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. The proposed Event elements include Christmas tree sales, a train ride (rubber tires), and a pre-packaged snack bar (less than 25 sq. ft.) with seasonal Christmas tree related item sales. Parking for the Event will occur alongside of the tree farm fields. There will be 3-4 employees on the site. No changes are proposed from the previous year's Event operation.

DECISION MAKER

Community Development Director

QUESTIONS FOR THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. Is the agritourism use compatible with the long-term agricultural uses of the land?
2. Will the agritourism operation have any adverse effect on surrounding agricultural uses? If so, can any conditions of approval be recommended to minimize any such impact?
3. What decision do you recommend the Community Development Director take with respect to this application?

BACKGROUND

Report Prepared By: Summer Burlison, Project Planner

Owner/Applicant: Daniel and Natalie Sare

Location: 78 Pilarcitos Creek Road, unincorporated Half Moon Bay

APN: Portion of 056-380-110 (formerly 056-380-020 and portion of 056-380-060)

Parcel Size: 160 acres

Existing Zoning: Planned Agricultural District/Coastal Development (PAD/CD)

General Plan Designation: Agriculture

Local Coastal Plan Designation: Agriculture

Williamson Act: N/A

Existing Land Use: Christmas tree production, barns, residence

Water Supply: Private well

Sewage Disposal: Private septic system

Flood Zone: Flood Zone A (1% annual chance of flooding) and Flood Zone X (area of minimal flooding), pursuant to Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Insurance Rate Map, Community Panel 06081C0260E, effective October 16, 2012.

Environmental Evaluation: Categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15304, Class 4, of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, for the minor temporary use of land having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment.

Setting: The subject property is located on the north side of Highway 92 with the Event located approximately 1 mile north of the highway along Pilarcitos Creek Road. Intervening vegetation and mountains screen the Event location from the highway.

Chronology:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Action</u>
October 23, 2019	- Agritourism event permit, PLN2019-00434, approved.
November 10, 2020	- Agritourism event permit, PLN2020-00335, approved.
September 16, 2021	- Agritourism event permit, PLN2021-00329, approved.

- October 22, 2022 - Agritourism event permit, PLN2022-00248, approved.
- October 16, 2023 - Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting to consider agritourism event permit, PLN2023-00321.

Will the project be visible from a public road?

No, the Event site is located approximately 1 mile north of Highway 92, along Pilarcitos Creek Road, with intervening vegetation and mountainous topography that screens visibility of the Event area from Highway 92.

Will any habitat or vegetation need to be removed for the project?

No.

Is there prime soil on the project site?

Minimal areas of the parcels contain prime soils, see Attachment B. The Agritourism Event will not occur on prime soils.

DISCUSSION

A. KEY ISSUES

Planning staff has reviewed this application for conformance with the following Agritourism Guidelines and Performance Standards:

1. Temporary Seasonal Agritourism Uses and Activities

- a. The Agritourism operation will not interfere with agricultural production on or adjacent to the lot.

The Agritourism Event does not interfere with the agricultural use of the land for Christmas tree production.

- b. The Agritourism event will not exceed a maximum of 45 consecutive days and will not occur more than two times per year.

The proposed Agritourism Event is for the November 18, 2023 – January 1, 2024 winter holiday tree season.

- c. The Agritourism event will operate within the guideline's allowance of Sunday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to sunset; no lighting is allowed.

The Event will operate daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. No lighting is allowed in association with the Event; therefore, the proposal meets these requirements.

- d. The Agritourism event will consist of no more than the maximum allowed uses and activities indicated below:

Maximum Allowed Agritourism Use/Activity	Proposed (Quantity)
Two (2) inflatables ¹ allowed on all lands ²	
One (1) pony ride area ³	
One (1) farm animal petting zoo on all lands	
One (1) hayride on all lands	1
One (1) train with rubberized wheels on all lands	1
One (1) food vendor, mobile or on-site, including mobile prepackaged food/snack bar ⁴ , located on all soils	
One (1) prepackaged food/snack bar on non-prime soils ⁴	1
Other recreational/educational activities, see discussion below	
¹ Inflatables are subject to the standards of the Safe Inflatable Operators Training Organization. ² Subject to a 36-foot height limit as set forth in the Planned Agricultural District and Resource Management District Regulations. ³ Confined animal permit or exemption required. ⁴ Environmental Health Permit required.	

2. Performance Standards for Seasonal Agritourism Uses and Activities

- a. Adequate on-site parking is provided, as designated on the attached site plan, including conformance with applicable provisions from Local Coastal Program Policy 10.22 (*Parking*) for adequate parking facilities to accommodate the temporary seasonal uses that are appropriate for the site’s size, environmental sensitivity, and amount of land suitable for parking; and that are not visually prominent from public views.

Parking for the Event will occur in the same area as used in past years, alongside the tree farm fields. Up to 600 vehicles can be accommodated and the parking areas are not visible from San Mateo Road/Highway 92. Furthermore, no land modifications are necessary to accommodate parking.

- b. Any new signage will be temporarily established and maintained throughout the duration of the Agritourism event, as allowed pursuant to Local Coastal Program Policy 8.21 (*Commercial Signs*), will be simple and easy to read, and will not be brightly illuminated colored, rotating, reflective, blinking, flashing or moving signs, pennants, or streamers.

Temporary signage meeting these requirements, as provided in past years, will be erected for the duration of the seasonal operation.

- c. All Agritourism uses and activities shall meet the current standards for setbacks and buffers from watercourses, including creeks, and/or riparian vegetation.

Pilarcitos Creek meanders through the property; however, the Event is confined to previously used/disturbed areas only.

- d. On parcels forty (40) acres or more in size, all agritourism elements shall be clustered and shall consume no more than two (2) gross acres (excluding hayrides or trains with rubberized wheels); parking is excluded from this acreage calculation.

The proposal meets these requirements as the Event area does not occupy more than 1 acre.

- e. The agritourism operation shall not involve any land disturbance, including import of gravel or fill.

No land disturbance is necessary to accommodate the Event.

3. Recommended Findings for the Agritourism Event

- a. That the agritourism use is compatible with the long-term agricultural uses of the land because the proceeds from the Agritourism Event supports the economic viability of the farm and does not prevent future agricultural uses on the land.
- b. That the agritourism operation will not adversely affect the health or safety of persons in the area and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to agricultural property. Staff has evaluated the Event proposal and finds there will be no negative impacts on the agricultural uses of the land. Staff believes that use of the land for the proposed seasonal Event is a great benefit to the economic sustainability of the farm.

- c. That the agritourism operation is in substantial conformance with the goals set forth in the San Mateo County Agritourism Guidelines. Specifically, that the operation is secondary and supplemental to existing agricultural operation on the land.
- d. That the proposed use and activities comply with all relevant provisions of the General Plan, Local Coastal Program, Zoning Regulations as discussed throughout this report.

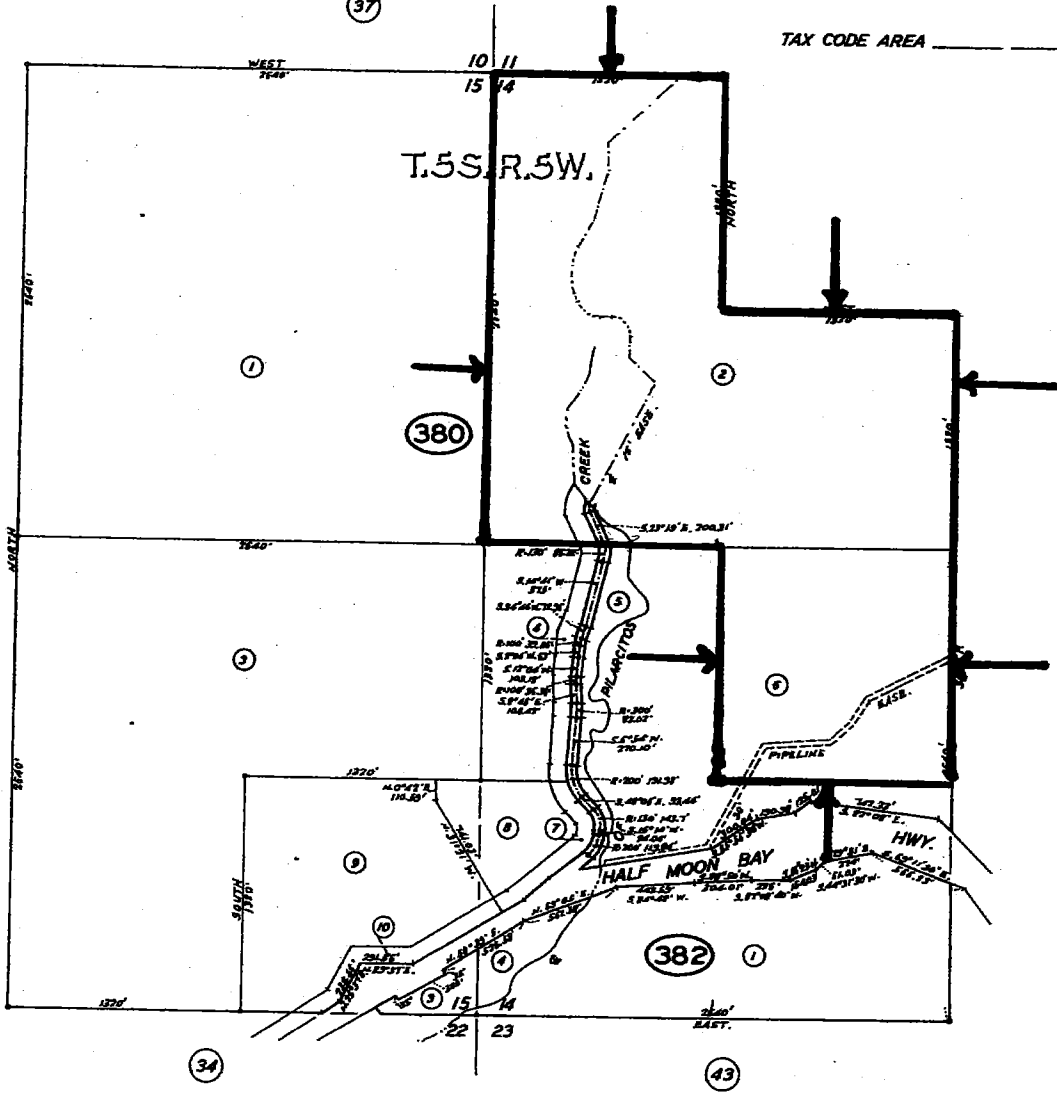
ATTACHMENTS

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Prime Soils Map
- C. Site Plan

56-38

TAX CODE AREA

T.5S. R.5W.



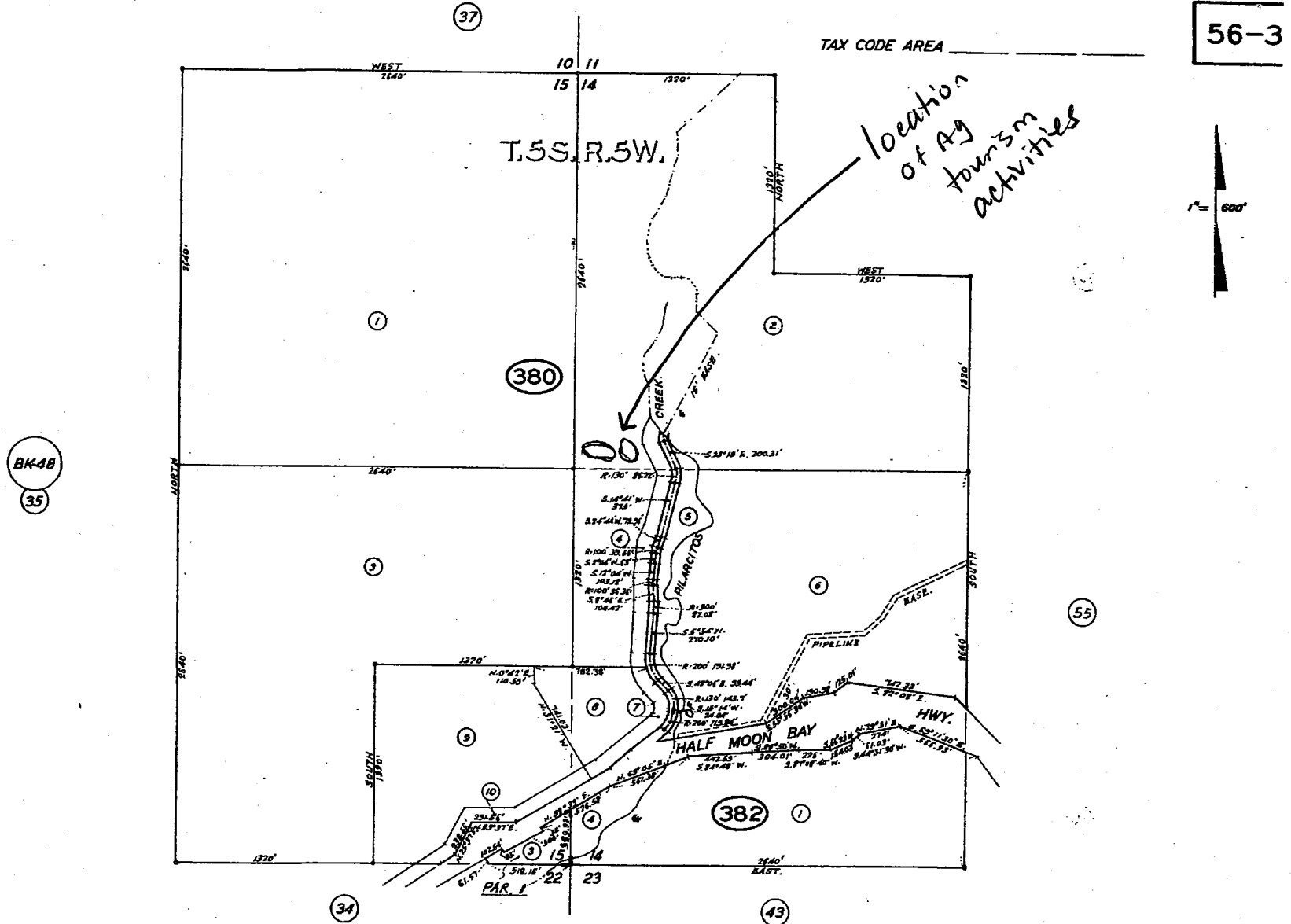
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ASSESSOR'S MAP COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, CALIF.

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Site plan 3.



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Site plan 1.



Circles represents location of ag tourism activities

Same location as all past years.

↓ Highway 92

Site plan 2.



Close up picture of site plan 1.

Circles represents location of ag tourism activities.

Same location as all past years.