

Gail Sharpsteen
3355 Highway 128
Calistoga, CA 94515
(707) 942-4551
sharkey@napanet.net

Date: July 15, 2008

To: Napa County Planning Commission, jmcdowel@co.napa.ca.us

Via: email

Re: Lynch/Bennett Lane Winery expansion

Dear Commission Members:

I live on property off Hwy 128 close to Bennett Lane that has been in my family for over 100 years. When Vigil Winery was built (current site of BL Winery), I accepted and welcomed the new "family" winery across the road.

However, I am alarmed at the latest proposal by Bennett Lane Winery; apparently their last recent expansion did not satisfy their needs. This project footprint is too large for the size and shape of the 10 acre narrow piece of property. This little corner of the County is dotted with homes and ranches, many inhabited by families who have been here for many years. This huge project would feel like an invasion upon the neighborhood, and is out of character for this area. I am also concerned about the number of "events" proposed, which amounts to about one per week, also not appropriate for this area.

I hope that you as a commission will not merely "administratively approve" this proposal without carefully considering the people who live here and the presence on the landscape that a project of this magnitude would have.

Thank you for your consideration,

Gail Sharpsteen

Randy & Lisa Lynch
45 Red Alder Court
Danville, CA 94506
925-837-3877

May 20, 2003

Mr. And Mrs. Ellis Hamilton
3300 Highway 128
Calistoga, CA 94515

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton:

It was a pleasure to meet the two of you recently and I look forward to establishing a good neighbor relationship with you and others in the area. As a gesture of good will and our intent in this regard, we asked our planning consultant, Donna Oldford, to meet with you to decide what we might do to begin anew. She advised me after speaking with you recently that a letter I had prepared had not arrived, a mistake from my office for which I apologize.

In any event, Donna has also advised me of specific concerns that you have requested reassurance on. I hope that you will accept my word that we have every intention of complying with the provisions of the use permit and the conditions of approval contained in it. The use permit remains in effect on the property, regardless of ownership. If I become the new owner of the Bennett Lane Winery, I consider the use permit my contract with Napa County and with the neighborhood, so winery operations will be consistent with the provisions of my use permit. I give you my word on this.

Ms. Oldford has further suggested some specific things that we might do to make you more comfortable with the winery as a neighbor, most of which are already outlined as conditions of approval in the original use permit. I am reiterating these issues to reassure you that I am fully aware of my obligation in this regard. I hope that you receive this correspondence as reassurance of my intentions in this regard.

(1) Storage of grape bins: As you know, we have requested the present owner, Mr. Leonardini to have the winery employees remove the stacked grape bins from your viewpoint. While grape bins will be utilized on various areas of the property during harvest, we can easily store them behind the winery structure when not in use. I understand that this has already been accomplished.

(2) Pomace: Following harvest, pomace will be either removed by a private refuse company or spread in the vineyards. Stockpiling of pomace will not occur during protracted periods after harvest. However, we can make sure that any pomace

temporarily stockpiled prior to its ultimate disposal is accommodated to the rear of the winery structure, rather than on the north side of the building.

(3) Landscaping: As Ms. Oldford represented to you, it is our intention to add some landscaping to the winery to screen the building and enhance it. This landscaping will be consistent with the provisions for landscaping contained in the winery use permit. We envision the addition of some strategically placed trees of suitable species and specimen size, some additional landscaping on the existing arbors and trellises on the southwest side of the building, and possibly some vines for the winery walls.

(4) Lighting: I understand that you are very happy with the lighting conditions that exist at the winery at present and I am happy to continue those conditions. As you know, the County requires that all winery lighting be low-level and down-lit so as to be as unobtrusive as possible. Please be assured that we have no intentions of adding any bright lighting to the winery.

(5) Amplified Music and Parties: The winery use permit does not allow outdoor amplified music and we fully intend to comply with this requirement. It is not our desire to have large or loud parties. We will conduct winery marketing events consistent with the provisions of the winery use permit, and these are mostly small events. As Ms. Oldford represented to you, the modification request includes no request for a change in the level of marketing events already approved for the Bennett Lane Winery.

(6) Bottling Activities: I understand that you would like to have the mobile bottling truck operate from the rear of the winery, as opposed to from the front or north side, due to concerns about your views and temporary noise associated with bottling activities. Unfortunately, we are unable to comply with this request, due to the configuration of the building itself and the operations contained therein. The large doors on the north side of the building allow us the necessary connection with the mobile bottling van and this option is not available on the opposite side of the building because of its design. Bottling activities occur only once or possibly twice per year, however, and we would be happy to schedule these activities during hours that reduce the temporary disruption to you. Adding a bottling line inside the building is not a feasible option at this time and would result in an expansion of the winery structure, which I understand you are not in favor of, in any event.

(7) New Color Scheme for Winery: Ms. Oldford conveyed to me your wishes about painting the winery olive green with a dark red trim and I have the paint chips you provided for our consideration. At this time, we are focused on the production increase action with the County and on closing the purchase of the winery. My wife and I have discussed the paint colors you are suggesting and we will keep an open mind about this relative to future cosmetic improvements we envision for the winery. In the meantime, we believe that the introduction of some more landscaping elements will soften the visual impression of the winery from your viewpoint.

I genuinely wish to do everything possible and within reason to see that the winery is a good neighbor. Please feel free to contact me directly at any time with any questions you may have. If our sale closes, you will soon have a new neighbor, one who is intent upon establishing a new relationship based upon mutual respect and cooperation. I give you my word that I have every intention of operating this winery within the provisions of the use permit, should I become the new owner. I believe that an open line of communication between neighbors is the most important element in resolving potential issues before they become a problem between neighbors or to the County. Please feel free to contact me directly at any time with any questions you may have.

Respectfully,



Randy Lynch

Cc: Napa County Dept. of Conservation, Development & Planning

To Whom It May Concern:

Donna Oldford, in April 2003, came to our home to discuss the winery next door. We listened to her explanation of the pending sale of Bennett Lane Winery from Tom Leonardini, owner, to Randy and Lisa Lynch, potential buyer.

We informed Ms. Oldford of the many violations of the original permit regarding noise, lighting, bin storage, and general unsightliness of BLW, and lack of evergreen planting, amplified music, heavy traffic. We told her of Mr. Leonardini's use of our driveway and his threat to sue for right-of-way, causing us to hire and pay for a surveying company to delineate the boundary between BLW and our property and further spent money to erect a fence. BLW's planting of a new vineyard came within 1 foot of our property line. We believe BLW intended to use of our driveway for cultivation. And we were stunned by the excess traffic for a 20,000-gallon winery. 18 wheel transport vehicles brought grapes from Lodi. When we asked the Planning Commission about the permit, we were informed that we could not obtain the information regarding gallonage.

Ms. Oldford listened to our concerns. She then promised us that if we supported the request for 50,000 gallon permit (remember, BLW was already 23,000 gallons over their 20,000 gallon permit) and asked our neighbors to write letters supporting the increased gallonage, Mr. and Mrs. Lynch would promise to abide by the permit. **AND THEY WOULD NOT INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE WINERY.** While we were skeptical and had seen so many violations already, we followed through on Ms. Oldford's request to ask our neighbors to write letters in support of the requested increase in gallonage. We assured our neighbors that Ms. Oldford promised that in exchange for their support Mr. and Mrs. Lynch promised no increase in the size of the winery.

At the permit hearing, the neighbors of BLW were again assured several times by Mr. Leonardini that the plant would be enough for 50,000 gallons, that no addition would be needed and were again assured by attending members of the Planning Commission and the wording in the permit.

Living next to this winery has cost us what was once a beautiful view turned into an unsightly badly kept, deteriorating, noisy sight. (We have had to fight a proposed helicopter landing.) Our enjoyment of a quiet peaceful home has been severely lessened.

The promise made to us - **NO INCREASE IN THE SIZE OF THE WINERY** should be kept. We also request that the Planning Commission require the current owners to adhere to all of the permit requirements and oversee that these requirements are carried out.

Sincerely,

Anne Hamilton 1.18.2008
Anne Hamilton

Copies to the Planning Commission and Diane Dillon, Supervisor, Third District

Jack Mulkey
3355 Highway 128
Calistoga, CA 94515
(707) 942-4551

January 13, 2008

Napa County Planning Commission
1195 Third Street, Suite 305
Napa, CA 94559

To Whom It May Concern:

I am opposed to the proposed expansion of Bennett Lane Winery.

I am disappointed in the way the owners have not adhered to the rules and regulations governing their current winery permit. As a condition of the permit, there are signs attached to the entrance gates that say "TOURS AND TASTING BY APPOINTMENT ONLY". Ever since they were granted their permit to operate, they have allowed the vegetation to grow over the sign. It is obvious that by displaying their sandwich board with balloons out on the highway daily (and I question the legality of the sandwich board), and at the same time keeping their required sign covered, that they wish to attract as much traffic off the highway as possible. Their failure to follow the terms of the use permit has shown apparent disregard for the County guidelines.

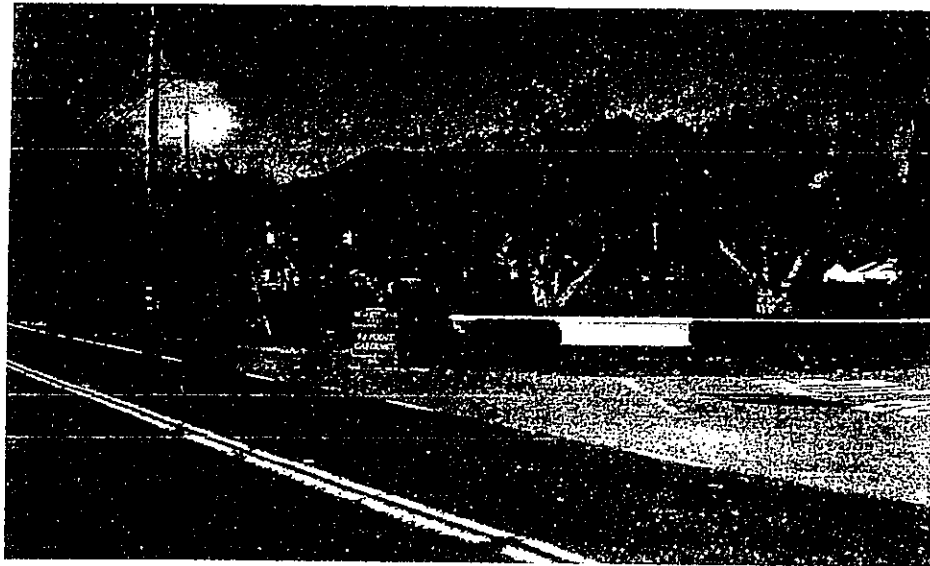
When they had applied for the volume increase a few years ago, they had affirmed that they would not increase the size of the winery facility. I guess they would say anything to get their use permit, and then do whatever they want to do.

Sincerely,



Jack Mulkey

Cc: Diane Dillon, Supervisor, Third District



Gail Sharpsteen
3355 Highway 128
Calistoga, CA 94515
(707) 942-4551

January 13, 2008

Napa County Planning Commission
1195 Third Street, Suite 305
Napa, CA 94559

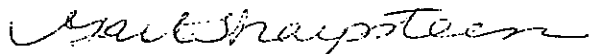
To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you about my concerns for the proposed expansion of Bennett Lane Winery.

This winery lies adjacent to agricultural watershed land. When our family had our parcels reconfigured so that my husband and I could build a house on our own parcel, all of us signed a covenant so that no more homes could be built on the parcels. My aunt's property which fronts along Hwy 128, across from the winery and the neighboring property to the south are all in the Land Trust, thus preventing further development. That's how important preserving open space and the rural character of this area is to us.

While Bennett Lane Winery in its present size might represent an appropriate land use, I strongly feel that granting an expansion will create something huge and more industrial-like that will contrast sharply with the rural landscape, and violates promises made by the winery owners of this very idea.

Sincerely,



Gail Sharpsteen

Cc: Diane Dillon, Supervisor, Third District

Patricia P. Haynes
3305 Highway 128
Calistoga, Ca 94515

Planning Commission
1195 Third Street Suite 305
Napa, CA 94559

To whom it may concern:

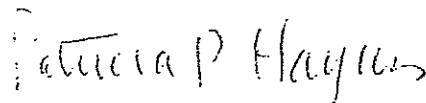
This letter is in regard to the proposed expansion of Bennett Lane Winery in Calistoga.

In 2003 Anne and Ellis Hamilton,, next door neighbors of Bennett Lane Winery, were promised by the then potential owners, Randy and Lisa Lynch, and then reassured at a Planning Commission meeting that if the Hamiltons supported an increase in production of 30,000 gallons (from 20,000 to 50,000) the winery would not expand its facility. The owners now want to expand. A promise is a promise and for that reason alone the expansion should not be permitted.

There are, however, other important reasons to be concerned. I live across the highway from the winery and am concerned about increased traffic along the already dangerous strip of road between Tubbs Lane and Bennett Lane. I am also concerned about increased water usage in an area where wells can go dry in the fall. The winery buildings are extensively lighted in the evening wasting electricity and causing light pollution.

Please do not allow this expansion.

Sincerely yours,



Patricia P. Haynes