

TO: Chair Basayne and Members of the Planning Commission
RE: Yountville Hill Winery DEIR and Project Application

AUG 03 2016

Agenda Item # 9B

On June 30th, 2014, two days before the original Yountville Hill application was to be heard, the attorney representing the Applicant contacted me to request that I recuse myself, as I am a partner in a vineyard, well beyond the 500-foot recusal threshold, that was in relative proximity to people who opposed the project. Legally I was able to participate in the hearing, but chose to excuse myself to ensure the integrity of the Commission's decision.

Following my recusal from hearing the original Yountville Hill Winery application, my family was free to participate in the ensuing discussions. Concurrently, I received a ruling from the California Fair Political Practices Commission on September 28, 2015 confirming my ability to participate in my role as a Planning Commissioner in any future Yountville Hill applications.

Prior to the County's release of the Yountville Hill Winery draft EIR on June 30, 2016, I was again contacted by the Applicant's attorney, and on July 11th the Applicant requested that I recuse myself based on a family members participation in the appeal process associated with the prior project application.

If I were not to recuse myself, I would need to either be prepared to personally retain legal counsel, which I am not in a position to do, or risk the possibility that the Planning Commission's decision could be challenged based on the Applicant's assertions with regard to my participation. As such, I feel I have little choice but to recuse myself from further consideration of this revised project application in the interest of ensuring the integrity of the Commission's process.

When one Planning Commissioner is targeted, we are all targeted – and all become vulnerable. When I recused myself from the APAC proceedings based on an anonymous complaint questioning my ability to act in my role, I pondered if we were seeing a pattern, and whether it would become an accepted tactic to attempt to tailor a Planning Commission. And what I think we learned from the APAC proceedings is that the process and its integrity suffer when this occurs.

Respectfully,

Heather Phillips
Napa County Planning Commissioner, District 1

AUG 03 2016

Extension:Agenda Item # 9B

Purpose of environmental review is to facilitate public input. Under CEQA, 45 days is absolute minimum amount of time the County must provide for public review of this EIR. Here, the EIR was not released until the Friday before 4th of July weekend. Right there, effectively took 5 days off review period. This is probably why staff recommended an extension of comment period.

We appreciate staff's recognition that additional time is needed. However, an additional 15 days is not nearly adequate to give public the opportunity it needs to effectively review and comment on the Draft EIR.

First and most important from the public's standpoint, is that the release in July puts review right during the harvest time for many members of the public who are concerned about this project. Appellants and members of Save Yountville Hill have been in contact with the Planning Department about the timing for the release of the draft EIR and have been repeatedly told since last January that the release was imminent. Not clear what caused the delay, but to release the document during the summer and during the harvest does not do justice to the public and its interest in the project. And, even adding 15 days, as recommended by staff, while better, does not provide much in the way of relief for people who don't have a choice right now but to tend to their land and harvest their grapes.

Second, staff just posted a number of corrections to the project, some of which are quite significant, and include—for example—significant changes to project alternatives. Courts have found that release of a draft EIR that failed to include just a few pages required an entirely new public comment period. Accordingly, the County should extend the comment period so that the public can effectively comment on these changes.

Finally, it took over 1.5 years to put out the DEIR. This time was completely in the control of the applicant and county staff. An additional 45 days for public review is negligible when compared to the time it has taken to put out the document in the first place. But, it is meaningful to the public, and given the recent modifications to the EIR, it is required by CEQA.

Therefore, we urge the Commission to grant our request for a 45 day extension.

Now I will turn to project itself: As the public has noted since beginning, this Project is completely out of proportion to the project site both in terms of physical scale and level of use proposed. What is remarkable, how little the project has changed since the Board determined EIR required—because it is the scale of the project that leads to its inconsistency with county policies and adverse environmental impacts

Site View: (Slide 2)

Yountville Hill is a prominent ridge that is clearly visible from highway 29.

As we can see from this slide, the site is constrained by steep slopes, which range from 30-50%, and it supports oak woodlands.

(slide 3):

In place of the former bed and breakfast, the Project will erect a nearly 13,000 square foot visitor center that will prominently cantilever out from the top of Yountville Hill. The Project would also erect a new 1,200 square foot “reception building” halfway up the hillside. The project also involves substantial excavation for the wine caves and production area.

Because of scale is inconsistent with numerous general plan policies, including the requirements to minimize grading and the removal of vegetation and to avoid the alteration of natural landforms and topography.

4. The proposed structure, access road and other site improvements, including earthmoving or grading, and benches or shelves minimize the removal of vegetation;

5. The siting and design of site improvements and access roads minimize grading and alteration of natural landforms and topography;

Instead, the Project would require substantial alteration to existing landforms and direct removal of 1/3 oak trees on the project site. Rather than minimizing impacts, the Project’s large scale grading and massive retaining walls will significantly alter the natural landform and topography of Yountville Hill.

Yet, despite substantial earthwork, there is no analysis of geotechnical hazards and modifications in the Draft EIR.

(Slide 4): This is the entirety of the Draft EIR’s discussion of geotech hazards and site modifications. In effect, the Draft EIR takes a pass on this issue.

This omission is significant because it fails to address numerous project impacts.

For example, the project will require on the order of 48,000 cubic yards of cut and fill and includes extensive alteration of the landscape on slopes that exceed 35%.

This grading and landform alteration will adversely impact oak trees on the site beyond what is disclosed in the draft EIR and it creates safety hazards from the use of excessively high retaining walls, which will be as high as 28 feet high and present risk of collapse in event of an earthquake.

Yet, none of this risk is addressed in the draft EIR.

Traffic/Traffic Safety (slide 5)

The Project will allow over 55,000 visitors per year and as a result will generate substantial traffic. (Number of visitors 142 daily/1,000 weekly/52,000 annually)

More than the traffic from the project itself, is the combined effect of the project's traffic on existing congestion and on traffic safety.

First, several other commercial uses along this stretch of HWY 29 (refer to slide 5).

This entire stretch of Highway 29 has a center turn lane to facilitate left turns. The project will cause direct conflicts with already existing commercial uses and increase traffic hazards. **(Slide 6)** For example, the distance to Mustards driveway is approximately 200 feet away from the re-located driveway. However, the draft EIR does not discuss these potential traffic conflicts. **(scroll through slides to slide 14 to show conflict)**

This failure would be bad enough if we were only talking about automobile traffic, but draft EIR fails to address safety impacts resulting from increased truck traffic. Caltrans data indicate that over six percent of the traffic on SR 29 consists of heavy trucks. During the crush period, this percentage is certain to be higher.

This omission is all the more important because the Project is essentially a wine tasting and event center where many of the drivers will be under the influence. Napa County already exceeds the statewide arrest rate by as much as 50%.

Despite this, the traffic study includes no discussion or analysis of auto-truck conflicts and the potential safety issues associated with mixing automobile traffic (including wine-tasting tourists) with a considerable amount of heavy-vehicle traffic. In fact, the draft EIR's analysis virtually ignores the existing and anticipated volume of trucks at and near the site.

In addition to safety, county's method of dealing with cumulative traffic bound to avoid grappling with problem; the highway is currently operating at Level of Service F—the worst traffic rating. Regular operations of the Yountville Hill Winery will add hundreds of daily trips to Route 29, with an average of at least 250 daily trips during crush season.

However, the draft EIR dismisses these impacts under its 1% rule whereby the County deems insignificant any traffic increases of less than 1 percent of existing traffic levels.

The problem with this approach is that it ignores the cumulative effect of many smaller projects, which is what the cumulative impact analysis under CEQA is designed to address. So, if you do what the County has been doing in recent years in approving multiple winery projects, each of which adds less than 1% to existing traffic volumes, you miss the cumulative impact of all of these projects. And, you end up with roads that operate at level of service F, with no plan to address this impact. This approach makes no sense from a planning perspective, and it is illegal under CEQA.

Oak Woodlands

The DEIR dramatically understates tree removal by focusing only on the trees that will be directly removed by the project. Although the draft EIR acknowledged it will remove 111 live trees on the site, this number does not include trees that may need to be removed to comply with defensible space requirements by CALFire or the trees that are likely to be impacted because their roots are close to grading and improvements. Nor is there any discussion of how the excavation for construction of the caves will impact trees at the surface. These impacts will likely result in up to 50% or more of the native oaks and buckeyes being impacted and lost due to the project.

Beyond its failure to adequately disclose the project's impacts on trees, the draft EIR does not include adequate mitigation. For example, Napa County General Plan Policy Con-24 requires 2:1 mitigation for oaks. However, the applicant does not propose to mitigate at this ratio.

Moreover, the replanting they plan to do is unlikely to be as successful as they describe because they would be planting on steep, westfacing slopes (hot) with thin, rocky soil. Mitigation measure 3.3-1a states that the applicant will develop a Planting Plan but it is not provided. This deferred mitigation not adequate to show impacts to oaks will be mitigated

Views

Proposes to locate a massive building, 1,850 lineal feet of retaining walls up to 28 feet high, and parking lots on steep slopes. Given the prominence of the site and the extent of the project, it is bound to have significant impacts on public views from area roadways and existing uses (restaurants, wineries, residents, motorists)

Yet, the Draft EIR fails to include impacts on views from one of the most important perspectives—driving north along highway 29. (show **slide 15**, with viewpoints, then **slide 16** with perspective.) As you can see, the site is clearly visible and the cantilevered building will clearly project out from land.

Moreover, the draft EIR's proposed mitigation is entirely inadequate to address aesthetic impacts. Specifically, the draft EIR relies primarily on the planting of replacement vegetation to alleviate visual impacts.

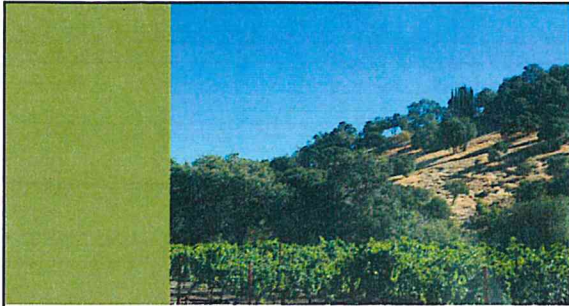
Show slide 17. As we can see, the building will be quite prominent even with the vegetative replanting. And, this simulation does not even show the building's profile from the viewpoint where it will be most visible.

Show slide 18. Draft EIR claims that visual impact will be mitigated over time, but as previously mentioned, the replanting plan is not likely to be successful because it does not take into account site conditions. It also assumes a rate of growth for the oak trees—18 inches per year—that is completely unrealistic. Therefore, even if the replanting plan could be successful, it will be years before the trees reach maturity.

Because the public has been given only a limited time to speak today, I've presented just the highlights of our comments on the Draft EIR. We will be providing more thorough comments in writing. However, given the size and detail of the document, together with the recent corrections submitted and the constraints due to the early harvest, we respectfully request a 45-day extension to the deadline.

AUG 03 2016

Agenda Item # 9B



Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill

Napa County Planning Commission Meeting
August 3, 2016

Project Site
(Highway 29, driving North)

A photograph showing a vineyard on a hillside, similar to the first image, with a clear blue sky and a road visible in the distance.

Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

Site Modifications

A site plan diagram showing a vineyard layout with various modifications. The plan includes labels for 'Proposed Site', 'Proposed Site', 'Proposed Site', and 'Proposed Site'. A legend at the bottom indicates 'Proposed Site' and 'Proposed Site'. The diagram shows a winding path through the vineyard with various structures and modifications.

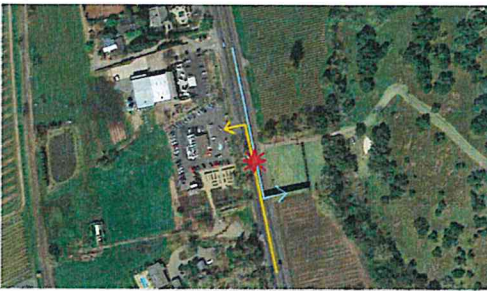
Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

Aerial View of Traffic Conflicts



Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

Aerial View of Traffic Conflicts



Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

Aerial View of Traffic Conflicts



Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

Aerial View of Traffic Conflicts



Comments on Behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 9, 2015

Aerial View of Traffic Conflicts



Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 8, 2016

Aerial View of Traffic Conflicts



Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

Aerial View of Traffic Conflicts



Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

Aerial View of Traffic Conflicts



Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

DEIR Viewpoints



Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

View Driving North



Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

Visual Simulation – Year 0

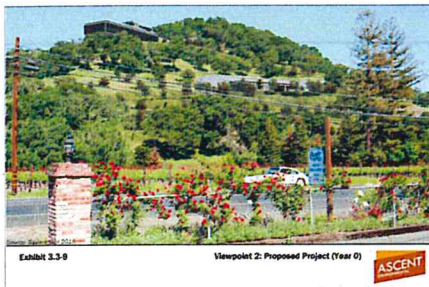


Exhibit 3.3-9 Viewpoint 2: Proposed Project (Year 0) ASCENT

Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016

Visual Simulation – Year 7

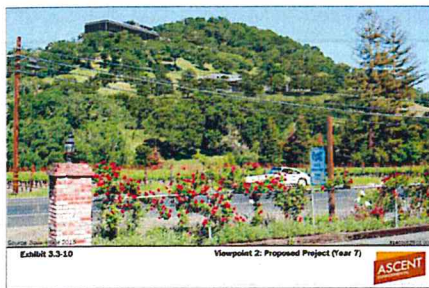
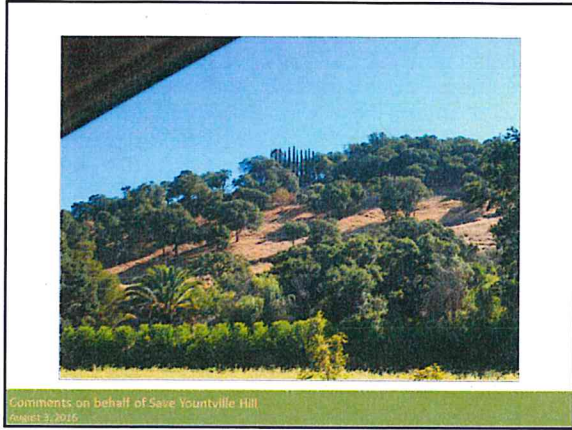
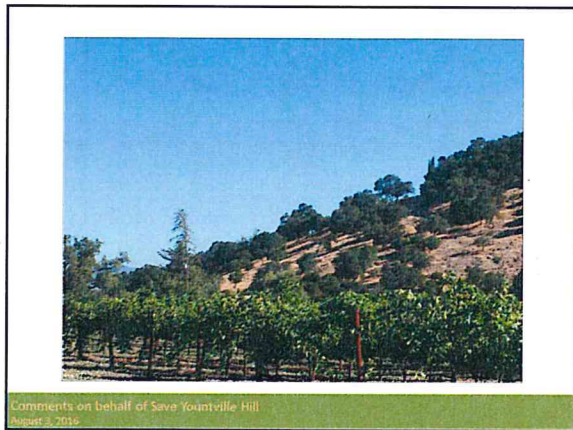
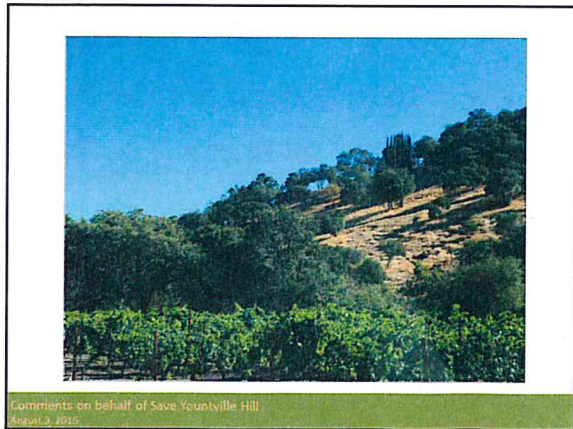


Exhibit 3.3-10 Viewpoint 2: Proposed Project (Year 7) ASCENT

Comments on behalf of Save Yountville Hill
August 3, 2016





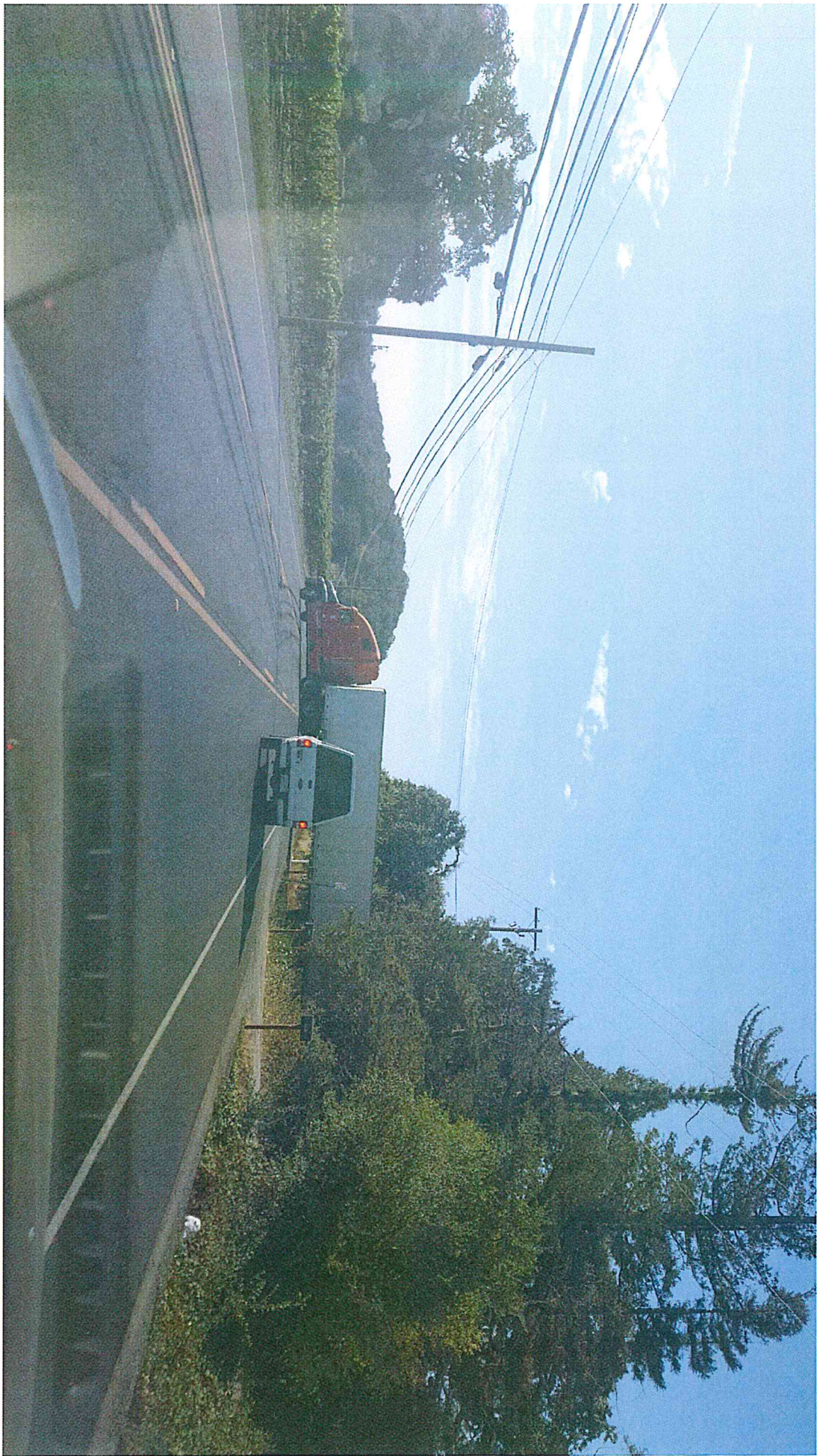




Planning Commission Mtg.

AUG: 03 2016

Agenda Item # 9B







AUG 03 2016

Agenda Item # 9B

8-3-2016

Napa County Planning Building & Environmental Services
1195 Third St. Suite 210 - Napa, CA

Re: Yountville Hill Winery Project (P13-00279-UP, P13-00416-VIEW and P13-00417-VAR)

Dear Board of Supervisors;

In the early eighties, the then existing businesses were required to contribute to the safety of this stretch of Highway 29 by constructing a turning lane. The new business to the East will potentially change the turning lane into a suicide lane.

In this small stretch of Hwy 29 between Washington St. and Dwyer lane there are eight or more residences most of which have access to the highway. There are several wineries and restaurants also having access to the highway. The two new wineries to the East of the turn lane will potentially contribute to safety problems

During the approval process of Cosentino Winery, some of the neighbors brought to the attention of County staff that highway 29 is used as a turning area for large semi trucks and for shipping and delivery. This non-conforming use of the highway is ongoing and could create potential accidents.

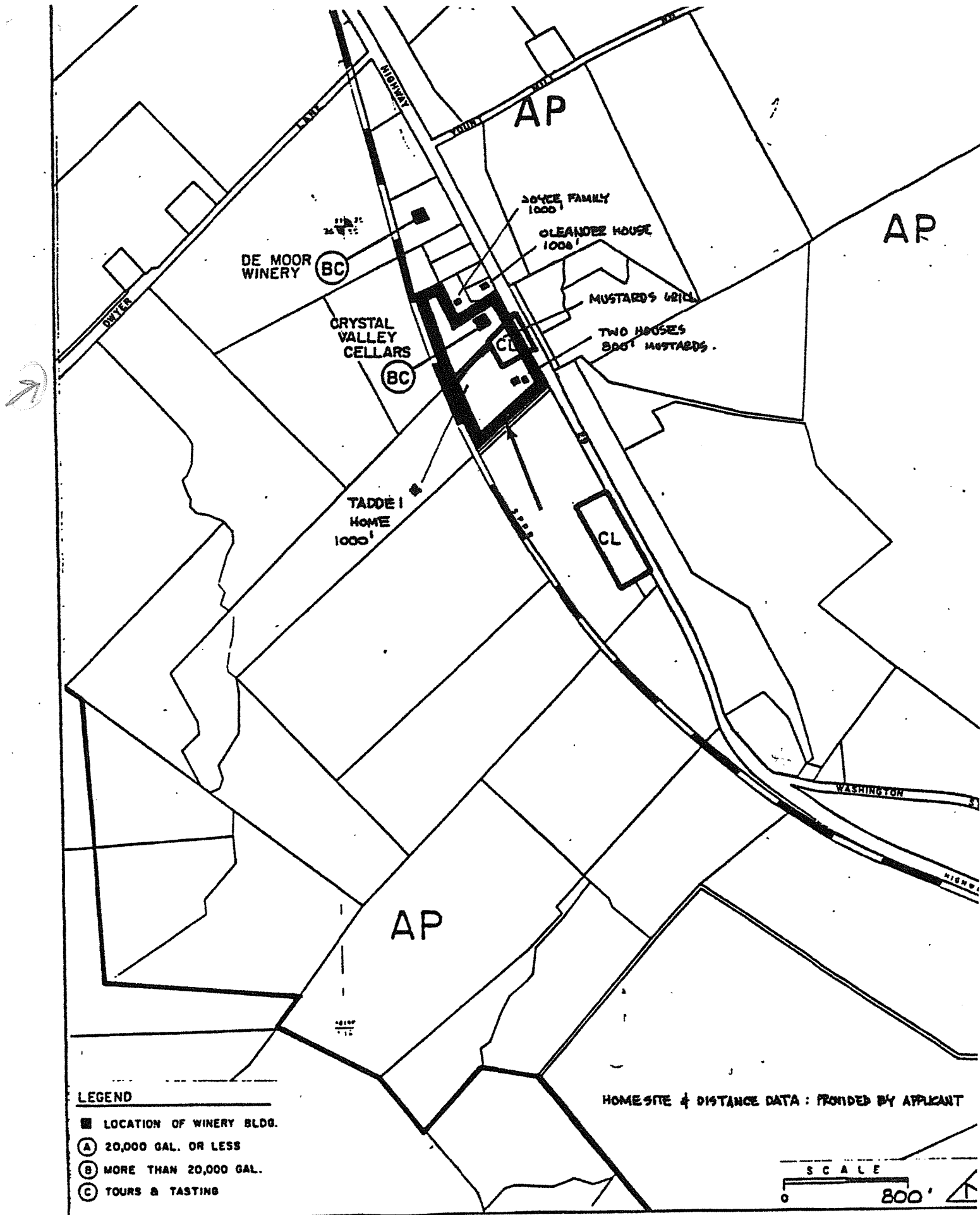
Cosentino Winery covered shipping and receiving activity area as required by their use permit no longer exists. It is now a storage space for an additional business that relies on deliveries of wine on tap containers by large semi trucks. It is an activity that should take place in an industrial zoning, not a very small winery in agricultural zoning without a receiving area to accommodate that use.

On September 4, 2013 at the hearing for Cosentino Winery Permit Modification, the County Report states as follows: *"A covered receiving area of 1,682 square feet was also approved with the understanding that this area would not be further enclosed without use permit modification approval."* The County should enforce the winery condition of approval or prohibit semis on this private access road till the winery can establish a receiving area large enough to accommodate semi trucks on their lot area so as to minimize potential accidents.

The traffic in this congested part of Highway 29 should be made to slow down by installing a stop sign at Dwyer's Road. This will not only give more time to maneuver in and out of traffic but will also be safer for the residents that live by the highway and on Dwyer lane who may have children that have to cross the highway to catch the school bus for both the Napa and St. Helena school district, which is the last and first stop of the school bus at the corner of Yount Mill road.

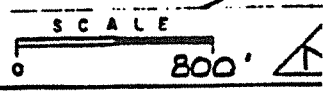
Sincerely; Giovanna Scruby – 7429 St. Helena Hwy. Napa, CA 94558

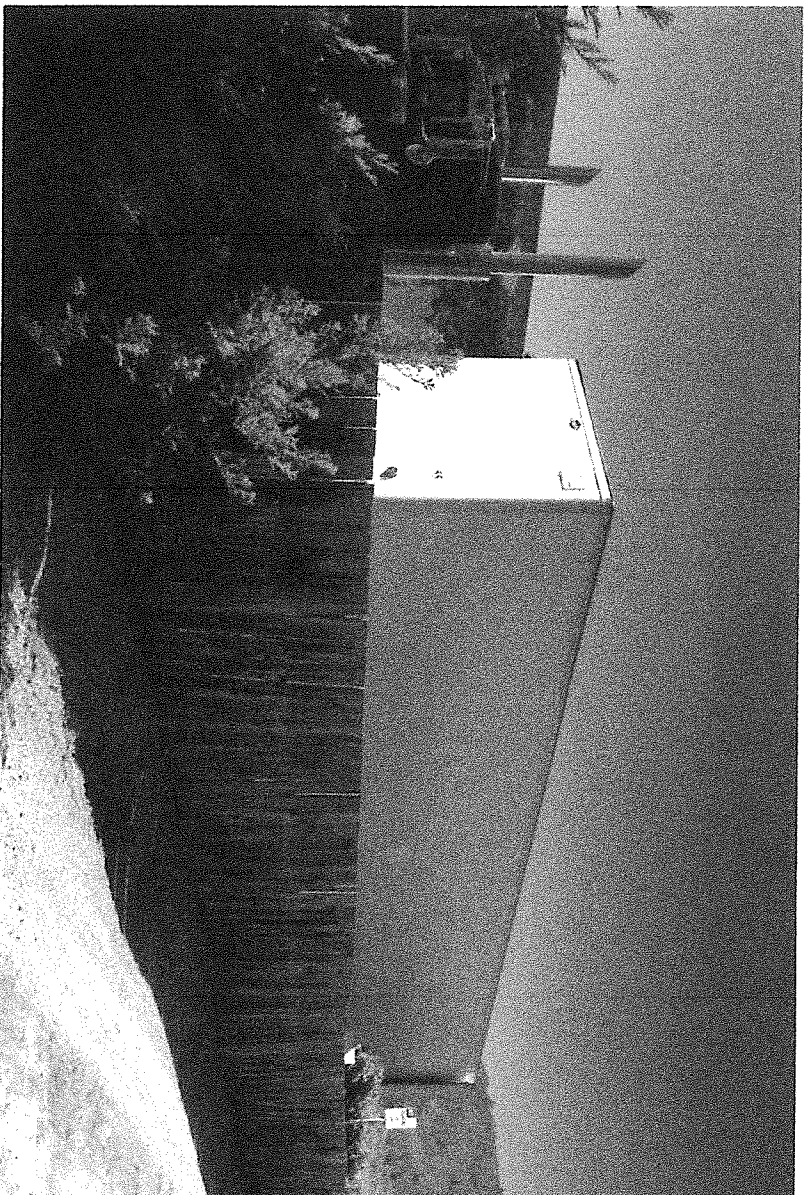




- LEGEND**
- LOCATION OF WINERY BLDG.
 - (A) 20,000 GAL. OR LESS
 - (B) MORE THAN 20,000 GAL.
 - (C) TOURS & TASTING

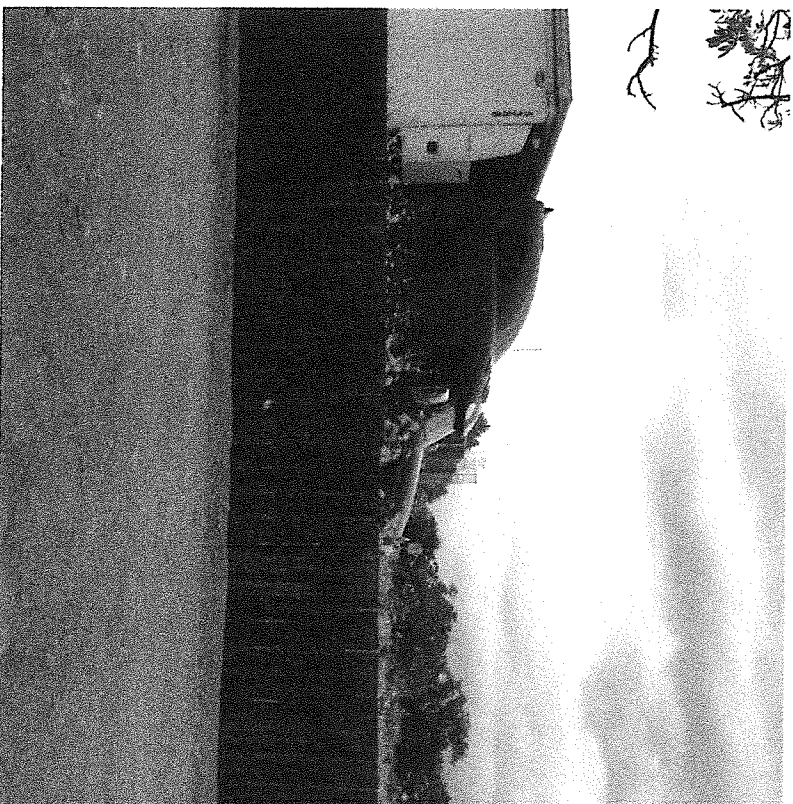
HOME SITE & DISTANCE DATA : PROVIDED BY APPLICANT





August 2, 2016

**Large semi truck backed onto fire lane on access road
from Highway 29 for shipping and receiving activities.**



Large semi backing out onto Hwy 29 after shipping and
Receiving on fire lane

Frost, Melissa

Subject: FW: Safety of Yountville Hill Winery

Planning Commission Mtg.

AUG 03 2016

Agenda Item # 9B

-----Original Message-----

From: Maria Lorraine Binchet [<mailto:mariabinchet@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, August 02, 2016 7:23 PM

To: info@saveyountvillehill.org; info@smwlaw.com

Cc: Trippi, Sean; McDowell, John

Subject: Safety of Yountville Hill Winery

Just a quick comment after a brief review of the documents.

The angle of ascent and descent of Yountville Hill Winery is much too steep for driving safety.

Or, to put it another way, the angle of descent on the driveway, after drivers have been drinking, is an accident (or many accidents) waiting to happen.

It's much too dangerous. Lives will be lost, bodies harmed, property damaged.

It may take that before the foolishness of this enormous enterprise located high up on a hill is realized.

My biggest concern is SAFETY. That seems to be greatly ignored in the proposal.

It should be of paramount importance here.

Lots of traffic up and down that hill combined with drinking. Wow.

But I have other concerns also:

The size of the winery -- too large for so high up.

Look at Silverado Winery, as a comparison:

- they make a much smaller number of cases on a larger footprint of land
- they are located lower in elevation
- the angle of ascent on the driveway is much less steep
- the business partners have far more business experience.

So, where that puts me is:

The project is

- too dangerous -- safety is a huge largely ignored issue -- remember people will be drinking and then driving down that hill.
- too large a winery for the size of the land, and its elevation
- not an appropriate number of cases/gallons for its size
- the inexperience of the owners -- yes, they have experience, but not the level of experience they need to make this large an enterprise successful.
- the environmental impact upon the area
- the increased traffic glut on Highway 29 that this size winery would cause. The highway is already glutted with traffic.
- We are close to saturation point for wineries in Napa Valley, meaning, only the very best and smartest applications to proceed. This is not one of them.

We can't be so greedy for the tax monies that we make foolish decisions.

Yountville Hill should not be built.

Maria Lorraine Binchet

Wine and Food Writer, Commentator:

Sensory Analysis/Flavor Chemistry, Food History, Gastronomy P.O. Box 2415 Yountville, CA 94599 USA Office Telephone:

707.942.2200

Cell/Text: 707-477-7978

Email: mariabinchet@gmail.com

On 6/30/16, Trippi, Sean <Sean.Trippi@countyofnapa.org> wrote:

> Good Afternoon -

>

> The Napa County Planning, Building and Environmental Services

> Department and its consultant have completed a Draft Environmental

> Impact Report (EIR) for the Yountville Hill Winery. Please see the

> attached document for information about the project, its location,

> public comment period, meeting date, and contact information.

>

> Here is the link to the DEIR:

> <http://www.countyofnapa.org/Pages/DepartmentContent.aspx?id=4294982436>

>

> Sean Trippi

> Napa County

> Planning, Building & Environmental Services

> (707) 299-1353; sean.trippi@countyofnapa.org

>

>

>

> CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email message is intended only for the

> use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may

> contain information that is privileged, confidential, and/or exempt

> from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended

> recipient of the message, please contact the sender immediately and

> delete this message and any attachments. Thank you.

>

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email message is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is

addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law.

If you are not the intended recipient of the message, please contact the sender immediately and delete this message and any attachments. Thank you.

Frost, Melissa

Subject: FW: Request for 45 day Extension on Yountville Hill DEIR Response

From: McDowell, John
Sent: Monday, August 01, 2016 12:57 PM
To: Trippi, Sean; Frost, Melissa
Cc: Gallina, Charlene; Anderson, Laura; Morrison, David
Subject: FW: Request for 45 day Extension on Yountville Hill DEIR Response

Planning Commission Mtg.

AUG 03 2016

Agenda Item # 9B

Public comment for Wednesday's meeting

From: Kara Taddei [<mailto:ktaddeivineyards@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, August 01, 2016 12:54 PM
To: McDowell, John
Subject: Request for 45 day Extension on Yountville Hill DEIR Response

Hi Mr. McDowell-

I hope all is well with you. I am writing to you in hopes that you can pass on to the Planning Commissioners my request to extend the response period on the DEIR for the Yountville Hill project for 45 days. That additional time would be very helpful. Please let me know if you have any questions or need more information on anything. Thank you.

Kara Taddei

--

Kara Taddei
Taddei Vineyards
7391 St. Helena Hwy.
P.O. Box 121
Oakville, CA 94562

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email message is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient of the message, please contact the sender immediately and delete this message and any attachments. Thank you.

Frost, Melissa

Subject: FW: Safety of Yountville Hill Winery

-----Original Message-----

From: Maria Lorraine Binchet [<mailto:mariabinchet@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, August 02, 2016 7:37 PM

To: Trippi, Sean; McDowell, John

Subject: Re: Safety of Yountville Hill Winery

Planning Commission Mtg.

AUG 03 2016

Agenda Item # 9B

Please approve the extension for the review of the DEIR as well.

Thank you.

On 8/2/16, Maria Lorraine Binchet <mariabinchet@gmail.com> wrote:

> Just a quick comment after a brief review of the documents.

>

> The angle of ascent and descent of Yountville Hill Winery is much too

> steep for driving safety.

>

> Or, to put it another way, the angle of descent on the driveway, after

> drivers have been drinking, is an accident (or many accidents) waiting

> to happen.

>

> It's much too dangerous. Lives will be lost, bodies harmed, property

> damaged.

> It may take that before the foolishness of this enormous enterprise

> located high up on a hill is realized.

>

> My biggest concern is SAFETY. That seems to be greatly ignored in the

- > proposal.
- > It should be of paramount importance here.
- >
- > Lots of traffic up and down that hill combined with drinking. Wow.
- >
- > But I have other concerns also:
- > The size of the winery -- too large for so high up.
- >
- > Look at Silverado Winery, as a comparison:
- > -- they make a much smaller number of cases on a larger footprint of
- > land
- > -- they are located lower in elevation
- > -- the angle of ascent on the driveway is much less steep
- > -- the business partners have far more business experience.
- >
- > So, where that puts me is:
- > The project is
- > --too dangerous -- safety is a huge largely ignored issue -- remember
- > people will be drinking and then driving down that hill.
- > -- too large a winery for the size of the land, and its elevation
- > -- not an appropriate number of cases/gallons for its size
- > -- the inexperience of the owners -- yes, they have experience, but
- > not the level of experience they need to make this large an enterprise
- > successful.
- > -- the environmental impact upon the area
- > -- the increased traffic glut on Highway 29 that this size winery
- > would cause. The highway is already glutted with traffic.
- > -- We are close to saturation point for wineries in Napa Valley,
- > meaning, only the very best and smartest applications to proceed. This

> is not one of them.

>

> We can't be so greedy for the tax monies that we make foolish decisions.

>

> Yountville Hill should not be built.

>

> Maria Lorraine Binchet

> Wine and Food Writer, Commentator:

> Sensory Analysis/Flavor Chemistry, Food History, Gastronomy P.O. Box

> 2415 Yountville, CA 94599 USA Office Telephone: 707.942.2200

> Cell/Text: 707-477-7978

> Email: mariabinchet@gmail.com

>

>

> On 6/30/16, Trippi, Sean <Sean.Trippi@countyofnapa.org> wrote:

>> Good Afternoon -

>>

>> The Napa County Planning, Building and Environmental Services

>> Department and its consultant have completed a Draft Environmental

>> Impact Report (EIR) for the Yountville Hill Winery. Please see the

>> attached document for information about the project, its location,

>> public comment period, meeting date, and contact information.

>>

>> Here is the link to the DEIR:

>> <http://www.countyofnapa.org/Pages/DepartmentContent.aspx?id=429498243>

>> 6

>>

>> Sean Trippi

>> Napa County

>> Planning, Building & Environmental Services

>> (707) 299-1353; sean.trippi@countyofnapa.org

>>

>>

>>

>> CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email message is intended only for the

>> use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may

>> contain information that is privileged, confidential, and/or exempt

>> from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended

>> recipient of the message, please contact the sender immediately and

>> delete this message and any attachments. Thank you.

>>

>

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email message is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient of the message, please contact the sender immediately and delete this message and any attachments. Thank you.

Frost, Melissa

Subject: FW: Yountville Hill Project

-----Original Message-----

From: Bill Hocker [mailto:bill@wmhocker.org]

Sent: Tuesday, August 02, 2016 4:54 PM

To: Trippi, Sean

Cc: Morrison, David; Heather Phillips; Anne Cottrell; terry scott; JeriGillPC@outlook.com; napacommissioner@yahoo.com

Subject: Fwd: Yountville Hill Project

Planning Commission Mtg.

AUG 08 2016

Agenda Item # 9B

Mr. Trippi,

Since the correspondance from the original planning commission hearings on Yountville Hill doesn't seem to have carried over into the DEIR hearing I am forwarding the letter I wrote two years ago.

The issues are the same. The project is a tourist attraction with the production of wine (which will be made in some existing winery if not here) an incidental and subordinate aspect of the operation. It is damaging the natural landscape of a very prominent viewshed of the valley and exacerbating the problems of an already congested stretch of highway. It is too small for the site. Its current uses can return an income for the owner - land use in this county is not about maximizing profits.

From the vision statement of the Napa County General Plan:

"While other Bay Area counties have experienced unprecedented development and urban infrastructure expansion over the last four decades, Napa County's citizens have conscientiously preserved the agricultural lands and rural character that we treasure."

This citizen is asking you to live up to that vision and to approve the "no project" alternative.

Bill Hocker

> Begin forwarded message:

>

> From: Bill Hocker <bill@wmhocker.org>

> Subject: Yountville Hill Project

> Date: June 27, 2014 at 3:43:22 PM PDT

> To: Sean.Trippi@countyofnapa.org

> Cc: David Morrison <David.Morrison@countyofnapa.org>, John McDowell <John.McDowell@countyofnapa.org>,
brad.wagenknecht@countyofnapa.org, mark.luce@countyofnapa.org, Diane.Dillon@countyofnapa.org,
bill.dodd@countyofnapa.org, keith.caldwell@countyofnapa.org

>

> Mr. Trippi,

>

> My name is Bill Hocker and I am a resident of 3460 Soda Canyon Road. I am writing to request that you deny the use permit for the Yountville Hill Winery.

>

> As the owner of a property adjacent to another proposed tourism-winery I have become aware of the concerns of other communities facing similar projects and of the cumulative impacts that these projects may pose to the rural environment that is the reason we, grower, vintner and resident alike are here.

>

> Commissioner Pope at the joint BOS/ Planning Commission meeting on May 20th [2014] well summarized the situation that the county now faces in the winery approvals granted in the last couple of years and in the many dozens more of these projects currently making their way toward the planning department. He asked: "Do we want to maintain an agricultural economy that benefits from tourism, or do we want to transfer into a tourism economy that capitalizes on agriculture?"

>

> That question is especially germane to the Yountville Hill project.

>

> As a winery, this project, like most of those recently approved or proposed, is unnecessary. Currently there is almost 4 times more permitted capacity in Napa County now than is necessary to process Napa grapes. Permitted capacity between 2007 and 2013 alone - as noted in a planning department staff report in 2013 - increased by 7 million gallons, while crop reports for the same period show that only about 1200 more acres had been added to production, enough for 1 million gallons of 75% napa wine. Each new winery, including this one, must take grapes from an existing winery in the county, the increased competition and cost for grapes reducing profitability and forcing vintners to seek profits in tourism rather than winemaking.

>

> As a tourist venue, located in a highly prominent location, unavoidable on Hwy. 29, this project will be a significant landmark of the emerging tourism landscape. That is the real reason why it and its 65,000 [now 55,000?] tourist slots/yr are before you.

>

> At a cost, of course. The hillside that its parking lots will gash and that its box will dominate is the face of an unspoiled island in a sea of vines at the heart of the valley, which would be better used for the public enjoyment of future generations than sacrificed to private profiteering in the here and now. No doubt, more developers will want to take advantage of the prominent locations on adjacent lots. [I didn't yet know about the Del Dotto kitch!] Add that loss to all the requested variances, the size of the project on such a small parcel, the steepness of the site, the visual impacts, the vast amounts of earth moved and spoils created, the shortage of parking and traffic congestion created and it is clear that this project should not be in this place.

>

> It is, in fact, time to put the brakes on the many such tourist attractions in the development pipeline until the County can come to grips with the decisions already committed to, and until a long-term strategy is put in place to deal with future tourism that doesn't involve the consumption of agricultural land, the defacing of the landscape, the increased clogging of roads, the ever increasing pressure for more development. That pressure to transfer to a tourism economy coming from investors, developers, financiers, real estate agents, contractors, consultants, tourism operators, gains strength with each new approval. Almost every recent project has spurred that transfer - over 500,000 new tourist slots approved in the last 2 years alone.

>

> It should be clear that the cumulative impact of these as yet un-built tourist facilities are at odds with the intent of maintaining the agricultural character and substance of the ag preserve. Contrary to the WDO, tourism is not agriculture. If

profitability is the measure, small-scale agriculture cannot compete, and it was to counter the pernicious effects of maximized profits that the ag preserve was created. Yet with each economic downturn, agriculture is redefined to the developers' advantage. The developers now turn vineyards into wine-themed tourist attractions. A tourism economy will increasingly turn the vineyards into resorts and hotels and restaurants, and then into housing and malls for the tourism work force. And then it will turn the vineyards into anything other than agriculture because there is too little rural land left to care about. There will, of course, still be vines adorning the driveways and parking lots.

>

> From the 1990 WDO:

>

> "The interspersing of non-agricultural structures and activities throughout agricultural areas in excess of what already exists will result in a significant increase in the problems and costs of maintaining vineyards and discourage the continued use of the land for agricultural purposes."

>

> Tourism is not the savior of agriculture, it is an existential threat.

>

> You are the current stewards of a rural environment that exists now only because of a previous generation's commitment to resist development pressure. Your decisions will determine whether the Napa Valley a generation hence will look more like it does now or more like Silicone Valley. I would urge you to consider Commissioner Pope's question - and to weigh this project carefully - before you tell us what you see as the future of Napa County.

>

> Thank You.

>

> Bill Hocker

>

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email message is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient of the message, please contact the sender immediately and delete this message and any attachments. Thank you.

Trippi, Sean

From: Maria Lorraine Binchet <mariabinchet@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2016 5:38 PM
To: Trippi, Sean
Subject: Safety of Yountville Winery

Planning Commission Mtg.

AUG 03 2016

Agenda Item #

9B

Sean,

Just a quick comment after a brief review of the documents...

The angle of ascent is much too high for driving safety.

Or, to put it another, the angle of descent on the driveway, after drivers have been drinking, is an accident (or many accidents) waiting to happen.

It's much too dangerous.

Look at Silverado Winery -- the angle of ascent is much lower in approach to the winery.
Steep, but safe. Not here.

This should not be built. Not only because of the safety issues, but because of the combination of issues.

Maria Binchet

On 6/30/16, Trippi, Sean <Sean.Trippi@countyofnapa.org> wrote:

> Good Afternoon -

>

> The Napa County Planning, Building and Environmental Services
> Department and its consultant have completed a Draft Environmental
> Impact Report (EIR) for the Yountville Hill Winery. Please see the
> attached document for information about the project, its location,
> public comment period, meeting date, and contact information.

>

> Here is the link to the DEIR:

> <http://www.countyofnapa.org/Pages/DepartmentContent.aspx?id=4294982436>

>

> Sean Trippi

> Napa County

> Planning, Building & Environmental Services

> (707) 299-1353; sean.trippi@countyofnapa.org

>

>

>

> CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email message is intended only for the
> use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may
> contain information that is privileged, confidential, and/or exempt
> from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended
> recipient of the message, please contact the sender immediately and
> delete this message and any attachments. Thank you.

