

**From:** Barbara Barrera  
**To:** [joellegPC@gmail.com](mailto:joellegPC@gmail.com); [Whitmer, David](#); [anne.cottrell@lucene.com](mailto:anne.cottrell@lucene.com); [tkscottco@aol.com](mailto:tkscottco@aol.com); [JeriGillPC@outlook.com](mailto:JeriGillPC@outlook.com); [Fuller, Lashun](#); [Balcher, Wyntress](#)  
**Cc:** [Thomas Adams](#)  
**Subject:** Benessere Vineyards Winery Use Permit Modification #P16-00432  
**Date:** Monday, August 13, 2018 11:15:56 AM  
**Attachments:** [Benessere Neighbor Letters Permit Mod App 2018.pdf](#)

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Dear Commissioners: attached please find letters in support of the Benessere Winery use permit application for your review.

Regards,

*BARBARA BARRERA*  
**LEGAL SECRETARY TO THOMAS S. ADAMS,  
PETER J. KIEL, JOSHUA S. DEVORE AND LOUISE MERCIER**  
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*Tudal Family Winery*

To Whom It May Concern

This letter is to support the Benish family and their request to modify the number of visitors and events allowed at Benessere Winery. I worked for the family from 1992-1996 on the wine making end of the business. Chris Deardon was general manager and head winemaker and the Benish's turn a closed facility into one of the most sought after custom crush operations in the St Helena.

When the Benish Family acquired the property, it was in a great state of disrepair. I watched it turn into the beautiful place it is today under John and Ellen Benish's guidance. They have upgraded the landscaping along Big Tree Road, enhanced the appearance and health of the trees along the Napa River and the vineyard and grounds are show extremely well.

They have been wonderful neighbors and we have been cooperating with each other whenever something is needed, as all good neighbors should do especially within a farming community. It would be a shame to not let them continue upgrading the grounds. The Benish Family has successfully taken a once abandoned winery and place it back on the map of very successful venues. Owners like the Benish Family are a large part of the ambience and draw of the Napa Valley.

Ron Vuylsteke

Wine Maker

## Stephanie Grubbs

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**Subject:** FW: Benessere Vineyards

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Isabelle Selby <[iamselby@gmail.com](mailto:iamselby@gmail.com)>

**Date:** Fri, May 26, 2017 at 11:20 AM

**Subject:** Benessere Vineyards

**To:** [wyntress.balchere@countyofnapa.org](mailto:wyntress.balchere@countyofnapa.org)

*Dear Planning Department,*

*I live at 1015 Bale Lane and have been informed by both the General Manager of Benessere Vineyards and the County of Napa that Benessere Vineyards (my neighboring property) is seeking to modify their County Use Permit. I fully support that initiative.*

*I am aware that the proposal:*

- allows visitors to the winery by prior appointment with a maximum of 60 guests on any given day with a maximum of 300 per week – a slight increase over current levels.*
- means an average of four small events per month, such as dinners with wine tasting for 10 to 25 guests. The winery may also have a few larger events, with up to 80 guests 4 times a year and 4 events with up to 150 guests, the last being for events such as our annual harvest celebration and participation in county wide activities such as Auction Napa Valley and the Napa Valley Film Festival.*
- includes physical improvements proposed to the winery of the addition of a small outdoor tasting area next to the winery and reconstruction of a deck above an existing carport that would be available for tastings.*

*If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone [\(415\) 577-5292](tel:4155775292) or by email: [iamselby@gmail.com](mailto:iamselby@gmail.com)*

*Sincerely,  
Isabelle Selby*

## Stephanie Grubbs

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**From:** Peter Collins <Peter@pjcaarchitects.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 08, 2017 7:20 PM  
**To:** Wytress.Balcher@countyofnapa.org  
**Cc:** Kathy Collins (kkcollins@napanet.net)  
**Subject:** Benessere Vineyards - Use Permit Modification

Ms. Wytress Balcher,

I am writing and sending this email on behalf of my mother, Kathleen Kelly Collins, and myself.

We run Collins Family Vineyards LLC, with our ranch and driveway located on Big Tree Lane, just down from Cal-Fire, and on the way to Benessere Vineyards.

We have learned from both the General Manager of Benessere and the County of Napa that Benessere Vineyards is seeking to modify their County Use Permit and we fully support that initiative.

We recognize that the proposal:

- allows visitors to the winery by prior appointment with a maximum of 60 guests on any given day with a maximum of 300 per week – a slight increase over current levels.
- means an average of four small events per month, such as dinners with wine tasting for 10 to 25 guests. The winery may also have a few larger events, with up to 80 guests 4 times a year and 4 events with up to 150 guests, the last being for events such as our annual harvest celebration and participation in county wide activities such as Auction Napa Valley and the Napa Valley Film Festival.
- includes physical improvements proposed to the winery of the addition of a small outdoor tasting area next to the winery and reconstruction of a deck above an existing carport that would be available for tastings.

This summer our family celebrates fifty years of farming Collins Holystone Vineyards on Big Tree Lane. As long-time farmers and residents, we appreciate both the care and consideration that Benessere Vineyards brings to their operations and to the community.

Benessere Vineyards and its employees are wonderful neighbors and we strongly encourage Napa County Planning to approve the proposed modifications to the Benessere Vineyards Use Permit at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully,

Kathleen K Collins and, Peter J Collins  
Managing Members, Collins Family Vineyards, LLC

PETER J. COLLINS – PRINCIPAL

AIA, USGBC, CGBP

**Peter J Collins Architects** | 1212 MAIN STREET | SAINT HELENA, CA 94574-2029 | v: 707.967.8383 | f: 707.967.9335



*Tudal Family Winery*

To Whom it May Concern:

Tuesday, April 3, 2018

We are the next-door neighbors across Big Tree Road contiguous and south of Benessere Vineyards / Winery. We have known John and Ellen Benish since 1995 when they acquired the property. We feel very fortunate to have the entire Benish Family and the Winery Team as our neighbor. Frankly, we could not ask for a better neighbor as they exemplify the spirit of cooperation between neighbors and wineries upon which this Valley was built. We have never had any issue with the winery, their visitors, employees and family members. More importantly and to your concern, we do not expect to have any issues or concerns after the granting of their modification as applied.

We are aware that the proposal will allow visitors to the winery by prior appointment with a maximum of 60 guests per day and a maximum of 300 guests per week. We fully endorse their request to have small events and even larger events at the winery and certainly the right to have larger events for the mutual benefit of the winery, their guests and of course local charities that the winery and Benish family have supported over the years. The Benish's have done an excellent job continuing the reuse of the existing facility and keeping their improvements to the scale of their property. We have no issue with the outdoor tasting area and reconstruction of the deck above the existing carport which will make a beautiful tasting venue for their guests.

I have personally seen John Benish with his children and their grandchildren sweeping and cleaning along Big Tree Road all the way to Highway 29. Who else in the Valley does that but good down to earth real folks passing along values of stewardship to their family. John and Ellen have a passion and love for their property, it shows and they have a great deal of respect for the farming values which run deep in this Valley. Our family came to this valley in 1972 as farmers and we need more proprietors with the skills, values and good neighbor attitude like the Benish's have shown for almost 25 years along Big Tree Road and the Napa Valley.

We give our unconditional support of their request. Certainly, should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to call or email.

John Tudal  
Managing Member

C: 510.384.2631

Email: [john@tudalwinery.com](mailto:john@tudalwinery.com)