



Public Comments

Maxville Lake Winery P17-00225-MOD & Conservation Regulations
Exception P18-00189
Planning Commission Hearing September 5, 2018

Hade, Jason

From: Lailand Oberschulte <loberschulte@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 21, 2018 10:09 AM
To: Hade, Jason; joellegPC@gmail.com; Whitmer, David; anne.cottrell@lucene.com; tkscottco@aol.com; JeriGillPC@outlook.com
Subject: Maxville Lake Winery Expansion

Lailand Oberschulte
3928 Chiles Pope Valley Road
St. Helena, CA 94574

To: Napa County Planning Commission
Re: Maxville Lake Winery Expansion

Dear Council Members,

I am writing this letter to you to express my concern in regards to the requested permit alterations and expansions proposed by Maxville Lake Winery.

As a nearly 30 year resident of Chiles Valley, I have to protest the requested visitor increase.

Maxville Lake is proposing to add an additional 14,830 guests to their current permit of 11,220. Regardless of their style of transportation, it is an increase of 132%. That seems excessive, even by today's standards in the valley.

They requested an increase in their production as well and state that they have a distribution plan already in place. As the winery facility already exists and if it can support the increased production, I have no objection to the production increase – only the visitor count.

My primary concern is safety. Chiles Pope Valley Road, Lower Chiles Road, Highway 128, Sage Canyon Road and Howell Mountain Road are all narrow, windy and often, not well-maintained byways. Visitors who are unfamiliar with the roads create significant safety issues, especially if there is alcohol involved. Even if they visit the winery via bus, it still means there are more vehicles on roads that can barely support the current traffic, especially during harvest season. Large trucks (grape, construction, heavy equipment or otherwise) can barely make it through the narrow lanes of Chiles Pope Valley Road without coming across the double yellow line, or without getting hung up on the canyon walls. Add large tour or shuttle buses to that and you have a recipe for disaster.

Another concern is costs. With such a heavy increase in traffic, there will be a greater need for road maintenance, which is costly and time consuming, as well as more Napa County Sheriff and California Highway Patrol presence. The law enforcement members who serve our rural communities are already stretched thin. With a greater number of (possibly inebriated) drivers, there will be greater odds for accidents. Most of the roads are out of cellphone service coverage and in high wildfire danger areas. Any major incidents could possibly require helicopter medivac services, due to the remote area and delayed response times.

If you have not, I highly recommend that each council member drive each of the above named roads and experience them for yourselves. Then try to imagine driving the road in the dark, or after a few glasses of wine. Try to imagine a large passenger buss trying to navigate the narrow roads while dodging cyclists and grape trucks.

Chiles Valley's remoteness and rural location are part of its charm but also part of its danger. For the safety of all local residents and drivers who travel the roads daily, please decline their request for an increased visitor permit.

Sincere regards,
Lailand Oberschulte