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MAR 05 2019

March 5, 2019

Sean Trippi, Planner  
Napa County Planning, Building and Environmental Services  
1195 Third Street, 2nd Floor  
Napa, CA 94559

Napa County Planning, Building  
& Environmental Services

RE: Opposition to the adoption of the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and opposition to the approval of the Darms Lane Winery – Use Permit #P16-0017 & ViewShed #P18-00152

Dear Mr. Trippi, Mr. Morrison and Planning Commissioners,

We object to the proposed hearing on the above referenced matter proceeding on March 6, 2019 as sufficient notice, required pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Section 15072(a)<sup>1</sup> and 15075, has not been provided and we are requesting an extension of time. According to Napa County Planning, Building, and Environmental Services (the Agency) documents, the application for this project was filed January 15, 2016. During a three year period, the Agency has received a significant number of reports and correspondence regarding the proposed project, the proposed project has had revisions, and a crucial report, titled Traffic Impact Report, Proposed Darms Lane Winery in Napa Valley, California, was not submitted until January 2019. Based on the volume and significance of the Agency documents on this matter, the Agency, in providing a mere three week notice period, has failed to comply with CEQA notice requirements. In addition, the notice is deficient as the three week period does not align Section 105(a) of the Agencies own Napa County Local procedures For Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (Local CEQA Procedures<sup>2</sup>) which states: "The Planning director should make a concerted effort to provide early notice and solicit comments on environmental documents from the public and interested organizations so that a broad range of interests and opinions are available to decision-makers regarding the impacts of projects." Providing only a three-week period on such a significant proposal does not evidence a concerted effort to provide early notice. What it does evidence is a concerted effort to rush through a project that has significant environmental impact without having affording impacted parties and opportunity to review or comment on the process. In the interest of a fair and just process, we request the Planning Commission postpone the current hearing and reset the hearing for a date in the future which provides residents of Darms Lane, and other interested parties, sufficient time to review and prepare a response to the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration.

In the event the Commission fails to grant the request for an extension of time and fails to provide sufficient time for review and preparation of a response, we object to the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and the proposed above named Darms Lane Winery Use Permits, as outlined below.

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<sup>1</sup> T14 CCR 3 §15072(a) states in pertinent part: "(a) A lead agency shall provide a notice of intent to adopt a negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration to the public, responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and the county clerk of each county within which the proposed project is located, sufficiently prior to adoption by the lead agency of the negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration to allow the public and agencies the review period provided under Section 15105."

<sup>2</sup> [Napa County's Local Procedures For Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act](#) (Revised February 2015).

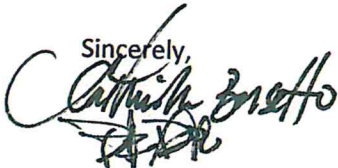
The proposed project will have adverse significant impacts on the environment that are not addressed through revisions to the project or the imposition of mitigation measures as such impacts will not be mitigated or avoided and significant impacts will remain. Traffic, Noise, the impact of heavy trucks on the roadway and the destruction of the neighbor's quiet enjoyment will not be reduced by a sign at the end of the Winery's driveway. The Agency has failed to appropriately assess the impact and has insufficient information on which to conclude all environmental impacts have been mitigated to a level of less than significant. For instance, there is no discussion regarding the impact of the heavy trucks on our road, the number of service truck, seasonal workers and drop in wine tasters that will frequent the Winery.

Darms Lane is a minor road with the only outlet onto Solano Avenue. Many of the houses sit close to the roadway with no buffer from the traffic noise. The proposed hours of operation – 7 days a week – 6:00 a.m. to in some instances 10:00 p.m. for events will increase traffic and noise exponentially. Peace and quiet will cease to exist.

The well and water usage and numbers claimed by the proponent are suspect and the lack of testing conducted on wells establishes that insufficient data exists for the Agency to conclude a Mitigated Negative Declaration is appropriate. Appropriate well usage and testing must be conducted before any determination can be made. In order to appropriately assess the significant environmental impacts of this project, preparation of an Environmental Impact Report is required. Over the many years we have lived at the property we have experience water shortages. In the valley basin the effect of water shortage due to drought is common. Add in additional draw for these winery and event operations and we fear a loss of the resource altogether. We demand the Agency conduct a thorough review - one which implements appropriate standards that apply to the specific area hydrology and water quality concerns and the significant impact this project will have for neighboring residents.

We also voice our objection as we believe permitting the commercial activities, such as a fully operational commercial kitchen, excavating a cave for events and building facilities on a 15% slope will have significant detrimental environmental impacts to our hillside and are contrary to Napa County's commitment to conserve and preserve the hillsides. Since when did the County allow restaurants to be built into the hillside. This is opposition to numerous zoning requirements and contrary to the uses permitted in the Agricultural Preserve.

We have additional concerns which we intend to raise with you. We hope you provide us with a sufficient opportunity to address all of our concerns on this very important issue.

Sincerely,  


Catherine and Robert Borsetto  
1115 Darms Lane  
Napa, CA 94558

CC: David Morrison, Director -Napa County Planning, Building and Environmental Services  
1195 Third Street, 2nd Floor, Napa, CA 94559

GARAVENTA  
1125 Darms Lane · Napa, CA 94558

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Napa County Planning, Building  
& Environmental Services

March 1, 2019

Mr. Sean Trippi  
Dept. of Planning, Engineering & Environmental Services  
Napa County  
1195 Third Street, Suite 210  
Napa, CA 94559

**RE: DARMS LANE WINERY USE PERMIT – 1150 Darms Lane**

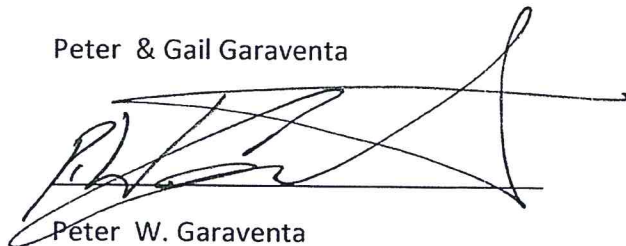
Dear Mr. Trippi:

We are writing as neighbors to the Darms Lane property, where the owners have recently filed an application for a winery use permit. We have been working cooperatively with our neighbor, to insure that the proposed winery improvements work well for our area.

We would like to express our support for this project. As envisioned and designed, this project will be compatible with other uses on our lane. We believe the Bump family is concerned with maintaining the rural agricultural character of Darms Lane.

Sincerely,

Peter & Gail Garaventa



Peter W. Garaventa



Gail A. Garaventa

## Trippi, Sean

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**From:** Donna Oldford <dboldford@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 5, 2019 2:33 PM  
**To:** Trippi, Sean  
**Subject:** Our review of all 30K-gpy wineries in Napa County  
**Attachments:** Comparable 30K-gpy wineries for Darms Lane Winery Hearing.docx

Sean,

Please include this with the materials for the Commission for tomorrow's hearing. One of the Commissioners asked me to submit it. Thanks.

Best,  
Donna

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Napa County Planning, Building  
& Environmental Services

COMPARABLE 30K-GPY WINERIES

DARMS LANE WINERY USE PERMIT

This list represents all 30,000-gallon per year production wineries in Napa County. Some were more recently approved than others. Some of the wineries were approved before the advent of direct-to-consumer sales.

Averaging all the wineries with daily visitation, the **average** number daily is **25**.

Averaging all the wineries with marketing events, the **average** annual marketing events is **17**.

Beautiful Day Winery

40 daily visitors

28 marketing events annually

Brandlin/Cuvaison Carneros

15 daily visitors

15 marketing events annually

Cade Winery

15 daily visitors

15 marketing events annually

Castelluci Winery

50 daily visitors

19 marketing events annually

David Arthur Winery

20 daily visitors

13 marketing events annually

Davis Winery

24 daily visitors

15 marketing events daily

Diogenes Winery  
15 daily visitors  
16 marketing events annually

Domain Carneros Winery  
15 daily visitors  
4 marketing events annually

Fisher Winery  
10 daily visitors  
23 marketing events annually

Fontanella Winery  
4 daily visitors  
5 marketing events annually

H&L Winery  
20 daily visitors  
11 marketing events annually

Hourlgass Winery  
20 daily visitors  
16 marketing events annually

Hyde Winery  
20 daily visitors  
11 marketing events annually

Ideology Winery  
15 daily visitors  
7 marketing events annually

Judd's Hill Winery  
8 daily visitors  
No marketing events

Napa Custom Crush Winery  
20 daily visitors  
18 marketing events annually

Paradigm Winery  
10 daily visitors  
1 marketing event annually

Rogers Winery  
20 daily visitors  
51 marketing events annually

Seavy Winery  
15 daily visitors  
1 marketing event annually

Sleeping Giant Winery  
10 daily visitors  
8 marketing events annually

Wallis Winery  
18 daily visitors  
3 marketing events annually

Young/Inglewood Winery  
16 daily visitors  
28 marketing events annually

Yountville/Washington Street Winery  
25 daily visitors  
11 marketing events annually

March 5, 2019

Sean Trippi, Planner  
Napa County Planning, Building and Environmental Services  
1195 Third Street, 2nd Floor  
Napa, CA 94559

David Morrison, Director  
Napa County Planning, Building and Environmental Services  
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& Environmental Services

RE: Opposition to the adoption of the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and opposition to the approval of the Darms Lane Winery – Use Permit #P16-0017 & ViewShed #P18-00152

Dear Mr. Trippi, Mr. Morrison and Planning Commissioners,

As a resident of Darms Lane since September of 1980, I am greatly troubled by the Darms Lane Winery proposal to expand operations and strongly oppose approval of the proposed use permits referenced above. The proposal to build a new 30,000 gpy winery with a 5,583 sq. ft. production building, a 3,303 square foot accessory building; close to 12,000 square foot caves, and include daily tours and tasting with events as set forth in their marketing proposal will destroy our quiet country lane and have an unacceptable significantly detrimental impact on our way of life.

First, and of great concern given the proximity of this project to my home and significant impact it will have on my quality of life, I object to this hearing going forward on March 6, 2019 and request the Commission extend the period of time for review. I did not receive a notice in the mail from the county that this hearing was scheduled. Nor was I aware the matter was posted in the newspaper. This hearing came to my attention through another neighbor, who likewise did not receive a notice in the mail regarding the scheduled hearing. I have not had sufficient time to review the large volume of documents filed with the county on this matter and request the hearing be continued to allow a sufficient time for review.

Darms Lane is a quiet county road which dead ends less than a 1000 feet from my home. Many of the approximately 30 residences sit within 20 feet of the narrow lane. There are no sidewalks. Kids, runners, bike riders and dog walkers can be seen throughout the day enjoying this small stretch of country road. It is unfathomable to think that, should this proposal be approved, this lane would become the major thoroughfare, seven days a week, for wine tasting tourists and event seekers who undoubtedly would jeopardize safety on the lane.

In addition, the increased traffic from permanent and seasonal employees, tourists, service vehicles and weekend drop ins will be significant and disrupt our use of the roadway, causing increased traffic noise and congestion. Their plan proposes only twelve parking spaces. With the number of proposed visitors – at times up to 125 people - parking on the lane will be a nightmare. The construction noise for the large building expansion and the digging of the almost 12,000 square foot cave, not to mention the bottling activities with the constant forklift alarms and heavy trucks (water trucks and semi-trucks delivering grapes for production), will ruin what is currently a quiet, peaceful neighborhood.



Even at the end of construction, we will be subject to ceaseless noise from the wine tasting and event activities.

Most importantly, this project – with the increased volume of water that will be required to sustain the operation, will result in detrimental effect on our well water supply. Further studies are needed to ensure any such project does not impact neighboring wells and water supply. The County has made little, to no effort, to assess the viability of water production from the wells in this area and has not accurately reported on the impact this project will have to neighboring wells. In the many years that I have resided here, I have personally observed the strain to water supply and the effect on water quality due to such activities. Adding a production facility, Event center and the sheer scope of the cave and construction project will negatively impact, and likely reduce, water supply for my parcel. The failure by Napa County to appropriately review these significant environmental impacts and afford the protections to the neighboring residents who rely on well water as their sole source of water is unacceptable.

The expansion project will also have a detrimental impact on the complex and delicate ecosystem that sustains all kinds of life in our neighborhood – from the migratory birds and animals to the aquatic life in the creeks and the precious plant life. There has been foam run-off from the chemicals used in the existing vineyards at the end of the lane and I am afraid there will be more with the increased activity from this project. There was a time when Napa was committed to preserving the hillsides and conservation – with this project it is apparent the County has tossed aside any care or concern for the environmental impact of such an expansive endeavour. I object to permitting this detrimental environmental project to move forward.

When I moved to the lane, I accepted that agricultural activities were part of life here – but how in the world are wine tasting and events with 125 people and running commercial kitchens – a.k.a. a restaurant - agriculture? When did Napa abandon the commitment to land use for agricultural uses and effectively abandon the interests of the residents?

Sincerely,

*Kathrine L. Borsetto*

Kathrine L. Borsetto  
1119 Darms Lane  
Napa, CA 94558

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March 01, 2019

Mr. Sean Trippi  
Dept. of Planning, Engineering & Environmental Services  
Napa County  
1195 Third Street, Suite 210  
Napa, CA 94559

Napa County Planning, Building  
& Environmental Services

RE: DARMS LANE WINERY USE PERMIT – 1150 Darms Lane  
<http://ca-napacounty.civicplus.com/718/Darms-Lane-Winery>

Dear Mr. Trippi:

We are writing as neighbors to the Darms Lane property, where the owners have recently filed an application for a winery use permit. Our home and vineyards lie immediately north-northeast of the proposed winery. We have a direct and unobstructed view of the proposed site from our home and its adjacent grounds. As such, we have been working cooperatively with our neighbor to insure that the proposed winery improvements work well for our area. We have reviewed the winery application and the architectural plans, in discussion with Tricia Bump Davis, and had all of our questions and concerns addressed to our satisfaction. We do not have any issues with potential noise, changes to our hillside views, or any concerns that this project will adversely affect the wonderful oak forest.

We would like to express our support for this project. As envisioned and designed, this project will be compatible with other land uses in our area. We personally know Larry Bump, the property owner, and his daughter, Tricia Bump Davis, the winery manager. We have never known the Bump family to be anything but conscientious stewards of the land. We believe the Bump family is concerned with maintaining the rural agricultural character of Darms Lane and see the winery design and use consistent with this.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or need any additional information.

Best regards,



Thomas C. Johnson, DMD  
Claudia T. Johnson  
Johnson Family Vineyards  
1375 Hillview Lane  
Napa, CA 94558  
707-255-2370

# COMMENTS REGARDING DARMS WINERY USE PERMIT, March 5, 2019

To: Planning Commission of Napa County

Regarding Agenda Item 7C, Planning Commission meeting of March 6, 2019

Cc: Sean Trippi, Principal Planner, David Morrison, Director of Conservation and Planning

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**MAR 05 2019**

**Napa County Planning, Building  
& Environmental Services**

I am Dennis Groth, Chairman of Groth Vineyards & Winery (GVW), located at 750 Oakville Cross Road, Oakville, Ca. Our primary operation is in Oakville where our winery is located. We also own 44 acres of vineyard on three parcels farmed in the area between Darms Lane on the south and Hillview Lane on the North. One of these parcels that GVW owns (Parcel 034-211-055) is the location of the well referred to in supporting document F regarding water availability. Additionally, we have a general interest in this project because our President and CEO, Suzanne Groth Jones, lives at 1094 Darms Lane in her family home that was built on one of the parcels owned by GVW.

We have some objections to this project.

## **1. THE MAJORITY OF WATER SUPPLY COMES FROM PROPERTY OWNED BY GVW.**

This project relies on the existing well on our owned parcel for the most of its water supply. This well is projected to be used for vineyard irrigation (See Water Availability study in Supporting section F). This water has been made available to the owners of the project property according to an existing easement agreement that was executed prior to the date when GVW purchased the property in 1982 (Parcel 034-211-055). We object to the continued reliance on this well and easement as this winery begins operation. The well is operated on our property, and the supply line that delivers the water to the vineyard crosses a Blue-Line stream in the area. I refer the planning commission to the photographs on page 47 and 48 in section M, Site Photos. I do not believe that such a violation of a Blue-Line stream would be allowed today. This project proposes to make a significant investment in a new property use, a winery. The owners propose to develop new water sources. Napa County should demand as a condition of granting this new use permit, water sourcing be developed on their own property. The water line crossing the blue line stream should be eliminated, and the well operation on our parcel should be shut down. They should also be required to cancel the easement agreement.

Now, when the owners of this project want to significantly increase the nature of their operations, is the time to eliminate this reliance on water from land owned by a neighbor and clean up this Blue-Line stream mess.

## **2. THE TRAFFIC STUDY CONCLUSIONS ARE ILLOGICAL.**

The traffic study contained in Part H of the supporting documents concludes that "The project would result in no significant off-site circulation system operational impacts to the Solano Avenue/Darms Lane...". That conclusion on Page 7 of the Traffic Study (Supporting section H" seems illogical to me. As we well know from living next to our winery at 750 Oakville Cross Road since 1982, wineries have a significant impact on traffic.

## COMMENTS REGARDING DARMS WINERY USE PERMIT, March 5, 2019

My reaction to the illogical conclusion of the Traffic Study is supported by experience from 37 years with vineyard and winery operations at GVW. I doubt very much that the head count numbers supplied to the Traffic Study experts (See Page 8, Project description) of only "4 full-time and 2 part-time employees at all times, with an additional 2 seasonal employees during harvest" will really be adequate to operate a winery of this nature. Darms Lane Winery is very dependent on direct to consumer sales. You cannot make 30,000 gallons of wine, operate tours and tastings by appointment 7 days per week from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm, conduct 4 food and wine pairing events per month for from 12 to 24 visitors at each event, and support wine auction events and wine club release events for larger numbers of visitors with a staff level as outlined in the traffic study project description. The project facilities and marketing visitation numbers are consistent with a visitation dependent operation, but the staffing levels are under projected, which colors the traffic results.

Also, the traffic study Project Description states that 90 percent of the grapes will be grown on site and concludes from that statement that traffic will be reduced because fewer trucks hauling grapes will travel to or leave the property. The experts proudly state that there will be 8 fewer grape haul trips on Darms Lane. That 90% sourcing statement is inconsistent with the fact that there are about 14 acres of vineyard on the property. 14 acres of grapes would produce about 3,600 cases per year, which is about 36% of the 30,000-gallon use permit. That 36% computation made by me in the prior sentence, is consistent with a Napa County Staff forecast of 38% estate grapes proposed which I found on the second page of supporting document L, Winery Comparison Analysis. The 30,000-gallon use permit clearly allows Darms Lane Winery to haul in far more truck loads of grapes than it used to haul out.

Also, the traffic study description says simply "Bottling on-site." That is a small description of a traffic intensive operation. A 30,000-gallon use permit allows the production of about 10,000 cases of wine per year. The Darms Lane Winery web site lists 6 different wines for sale. That means six separate bottlings. The drawings of the winery contained in the supporting documents does not show a bottling line. Therefore, I assume that they will employ a mobile bottling line, which is a large truck that must be brought onto the property. There are staffing requirements to run a bottling line that are not insignificant. Additionally, supplies for a bottling line are bulky and require trucks for delivery. It takes a lot of delivery truck trips (usually large trucks) to deliver glass, corks, bottles, labels, and pressurized gasses. I question that the traffic study truly contemplates this traffic flow.

These inconsistencies and my experience cause me to doubt the conclusion of the traffic study.

I plan to be at the Planning commission meeting on March 6, 2019. I would like to comment further on my concerns about this project.

Sincerely,

Dennis Groth,  
Chairman, Groth Vineyards & Winery  
707-944-0290, [dgroth@growthwines.com](mailto:dgroth@growthwines.com)

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MAR 05 2019

Napa County Planning, Building  
& Environmental Services

Dr Ali and Sally Vaziri  
1057 Darms Lane  
Napa, CA 94558

March 1, 2019

Mr. Sean Trippi  
Dept. of Planning, Engineering & Environmental Services  
Napa County  
1195 Third Street, Suite 210  
Napa, CA 94559

RE: DARMS LANE WINERY USE PERMIT – 1150 Darms Lane

Dear Mr. Trippi:

We are writing as neighbors to the Darms Lane property, where the owners have recently filed an application for a winery use permit. We have been working cooperatively with our neighbor to insure that the proposed winery improvements work well for our area.

We would like to express our support for this project. As envisioned and designed, this project will be compatible with other uses on our lane. We believe the Bump family is concerned with maintaining the rural agricultural character of Darms Lane.

Sincerely,



## Trippi, Sean

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**From:** Janet Patrino <jpatrino@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 5, 2019 11:57 AM  
**To:** Trippi, Sean  
**Subject:** Proposed winery and tasting room at 1150 Darms Ln Napa Ca 94558

To Whom It May Concern:

My husband and I have owned and resided at 1109 Darms Lane since 1984. It has been an ideal residential property to raise a family and now to retire and enjoy the peace and beauty that Napa County has to offer. This is a sleepy narrow dead end lane without sidewalks and throughout the day there are children riding bikes and residents walking their dogs and enjoying this unique rural setting. It is a scene that unfortunately is disappearing in our county and more representative of bygone days.

We believe to grant permission to build a winery and tasting room at the end of our lane, would have an immediate and long term impact on the quality of life for the residents on Darms Lane.

The traffic problem alone would be monumental. When the facility is in operation the vehicles coming and going would increase significantly not to mention the 54 events per year wanted in the proposal. The increase in heavy commercial traffic, hauling grapes, barrels, bottles etc. is another inconvenient reality. I'm also wondering why they would want permission to produce 30,000 gallons of wine when their property does not grow enough grapes to do so. Will they truck in grapes too?? This sounds like it would be better located in an industrial site rather than a residential area.

Parking is also a troublesome concern. 54 events per year means 1 every weekend. Where will these 12 to 50 estimated vehicles park? The facility also does not provide enough space to accommodate commercial catering and rental equipment trucks. Our narrow lane does not lend sufficient space for street parking without invading private properties.

My husband and I grew up in the Santa Clara Valley in the 1950s and 60's. We watched what was known as the 'Valley of Hearts Delight' turn into 'Silicon Valley' due to greed and haphazard city planning. The Darms' family is part of our county's heritage. Let's not destroy their once rural farm and turn it into a driveway for tourists to taste wine and attend events.

It is for these reasons that we respectfully request that the proposed permit be denied.

Thank you for your consideration,

Janet and Armond Patrino

Sent from my iPad

March 4, 2019

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MAR 04 2019

Mr. Sean Trippi, Principal Planner  
Napa County Planning, Bldg. & Environmental Services Dept.  
1195 Third Street, Ste. 210  
Napa, CA 94559

Napa County Planning, Building  
& Environmental Services

RE: Darms Lane Winery – Use permit #P16-00117 & Viewshed #P18-00152

Dear Mr. Trippi,

I am writing to ask for serious reductions in the Darms Lane Winery permit requests. Though I don't live on Darms Lane, I do live nearby and close enough to have some of the cumulative impacts of development affect our lives. We live at the end of West Oak Knoll where the proposed Oak Knoll Hotel project is being considered. So we are quite aware of Permittee's asking for the moon regardless of the surrounding environment and neighborhood concerns. We are also in a direct line of site from this proposed winery and noise travels – so we will be affected by the noise and traffic congestion from activities, equipment, tanks, trucks and events on Darms Lane.

Issues that I am concerned with are:

Hours of Operation – tasting room open until 6:00 p.m. This should be reduced to 4:30 at the latest. This is compatible with the neighboring winery hours. This gives our neighborhood the opportunity to quiet down after a busy day of vineyard workers, tractors, trucks, traffic and cars.

On Site parking for 12 vehicles with 8 full time/part time employees? How does 12 parking spaces accommodate the visitation and production staff? It is too little and too few. What happens during harvest when more staff are required? Will they encroach on the local road? Speaking of the road – it is a LANE. How can you allow two wineries (Schifflett and Darms Lane) at the end of a dead-end road? What Fire truck needs are being addressed? This is no small question considering the fire seasons we have had. I raise these issues because as you "vote" for fewer parking spaces here I wonder what you will consider at the Oak Knoll Hotel project. How wide is the road and can it accommodate two way winery/grape truck traffic? Does it meet county standards for that?

Events – It is frustrating to see wineries continue to believe they must do on-site events in addition to tasting room visitations to sell their wines. Silicon Valley Bank Report on Wineries recently wrote: "Today, if your full focus is on a tasting room and club strategy and you put balloons in the driveway to capture a random consumer's attention as they drive by, or if you are working with hotels to have them send consumers to you, or paying limousine drivers to deliver a diminishing supply of tasting room visitors to your winery, or even spending all of your time and energy focusing on tasting room metrics, you are not paying attention to the obvious signs of change. While each of those tactics has an important place in the still-critical sales channel, your winery needs to find new growth and new consumers, and **they aren't going to come from the**

present tasting room approach.” The entire report can be found at: [svb.com](http://svb.com) Silicon Valley Bank State of the Wine Industry Report 2019. Worth a read if you are in the Planning Department!!

**Do more tasters mean more sales? No. Consider this from Wine Industry Advisors, Tasting Room Trend and Review Forecast published 2/7/19:** “Taster count normally influences the results of a winery more than anything else. Typically, the more tasters you see in the tasting room, the harder it is to convert, the harder it is to sell per taster. Historically we’ve seen that club conversion and sales per taster goes down as taster count increases.” Statistics from VingDirect report which included California wineries.

Darms Lane Winery is asking for multiple events in addition to winery visitations for tasting with 12, 24, 75, and 125 persons in attendance. That is 1,414 visitors plus 7,500 tasting rooms visitors totally 8,914 people on Darms Lane each year. And this is for a winery that is only going to produce 12,500 cases of wine. This doesn’t count the traffic, trucks, and other vehicles that will be coming in for Schifflet Winery. Please eliminate or significantly reduce the events at this location.

Then there is the whole issue of ViewShed request to build on a slope greater than 15%. I do not think we should be giving an exception to any rules to allow this to happen. Has anybody looked at the Yountville mudslide? Telling.....

When will enough be enough? When does the small family winery (12,500 cases!!!!!!) operate successfully without putting so much pressure on the rural community and neighborhoods? I realize many of the neighbors of Darms Lane Winery like and respect the winery owners and want to support them. Bravo – but let’s reduce the size to fit the environment.

Thanks for listening.

Morgan Morgan, 2200 West Oak Knoll Ave., Napa CA 94558 (415) 640-6535 cell



MAR 04 2019

Napa County Planning, Building  
& Environmental Services

Mr. Sean Trippi  
Principal Planner  
Napa County Planning, Building & Environmental Services Department  
1195 Third Street, Suite 210  
Napa, CA 94559

March 4, 2019

**RE: Proposed Winery & Tasting Room at 1150 Darms Lane, Napa, CA  
94558: USE PERMIT #P16-00117 & VIEWSHED #P18-00152**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN;

We are the owners and residents of 1088 Darms Lane, Napa, CA 94558.

After reviewing the proposal for the above mentioned permit we assert that assumptions supporting the projections for the amount of traffic, the amount of heavy commercial traffic and the parking issues have been minimized and some aspects significantly overlooked, reducing the negative impact of the proposed project.

Darms Lane is a quiet, rural, dead-end, residential street serving 42 residences.

Based on the information provided we assert that the proposed commercial facility will have an immediate and long term negative impact on the quality of life in this community and a negative financial impact on the residents. The reasons for this are ascertained by the following:

**Significant Increase in Traffic:**

According to a traffic study conducted in 2003 the average number of cars traversing Darms Lane was **333** daily (167 and 166 in each direction respectively). There has been no reason for this to change significantly over the past 15 years. When the proposed facility is in operation the number of vehicles would increase significantly adding upwards of 18,000 additional trips annually down Darms Lane. Annual vehicle trips could be as high as **20,000** if you include daily UPS, FEDEX and other deliveries, equipment maintenance workers, outside contractors, etc. not addressed in the proposal.

Not mentioned above will be a significant increase in heavy commercial traffic due to the trucking in and/or out of grapes, barrels, bottles, bottling trucks, catering trucks and other supplies and equipment necessary to the production and sale of 30,000 gallons of wine, (approximately 12,000 cases). This is significantly more wine than could be produced from the grapes actually grown on the property. Realistically the property could produce 5,000 to 7,000 gallons of wine

from estate grown grapes (17% to 25% of the total capacity requested), essentially making this a commercial operation better suited for an industrial site rather than a quiet residential lane.

Service for the proposed 54 events per year would require commercial catering and equipment rental trucks to access the property as well as parking for the trucks and service personnel, not mentioned in the proposal.

**Parking:**

The 12 parking spaces proposed at the facility will accommodate the employees, owners and tasting room visitors. Event visitors and vendors, an estimated 12 - 50 vehicles per event, would have to park on the street.

Darms Lane is a narrow two lane road, in questionable condition, with fences and property lines directly adjacent to the road. There is literally nowhere to park without encroaching on someone else's property or blocking traffic creating serious threats to safety in the event of an emergency.

**Negative Impact:**

There are no sidewalks on Darms Lane. On a daily basis you will see multiple people out for a stroll, walking their dogs, pushing strollers and children playing and riding bikes. The extra traffic and cars parked along the road will destroy this environment, impede access for emergency vehicles and present increased and unnecessary risk to residents.

This is a rural neighborhood. Existing property owners sought out this peaceful, quiet place because it is where they wanted to live. While acknowledging the right of property owners to develop their own property we believe that the addition of a Commercial Winery of this magnitude on this country lane would undoubtedly have a negative impact on the quality of life of the residents and the real estate value of the properties and residences located here.

**While some negative impacts of the operation of this winery may be mitigated it is not possible to mitigate the negative impact and risk associated with the increased traffic, heavy commercial traffic and associated noise and serious parking issues as well as damage to the quality of life of this residential community.**

**It is for these reasons that we request that the proposed permit be denied or restricted to the production of wine from estate grapes only with no tastings nor events on site.**

Sincerely,



Robert and Alicia Ringstad  
1088 Darms Lane  
Napa, CA 94558

MAR 04 2019

Napa County Planning, Building  
& Environmental Services

Mr. Trippi,

We are Ron and Barbara Houle and we live at 1054 Darms Lane and we are writing this letter to voice our concerns about the expansion of Darms Lane Winery.

Darms Lane is a quiet dead- end rural residential county road that ends at the Darms Lane Winery. The winery is asking for an expansion to 30,000 gallons of which the property is only capable of producing 10,000 gallons from the vineyards on site. That means 20,000 gallons will have to be trucked in by tanker trucks, or 130 tons or 260 half ton bins of fruit will need to be brought in for processing. That 30,000 gallons translates into 12,000 cases of wine which will need to be bottled with 30 to 40 ft. tractor trailers delivering glass and taking case goods to the warehouses traveling up and down Darms Lane. These trucks would take up the width of the lane not allowing residents to use the lane at certain times. Darms Lane will become the winery's private driveway. With the exception of the Shifflett Ranch Winery, all other neighboring wineries have private drives not residential roads to get to them. On any given day there are several neighborhood people walking on Darms Lane.

This expansion is also allowing Darms Winery to hold 54 events a year which is way more than any of the surrounding wineries. The total guest allowance would be 9200 per year with all of

them having to travel the length of Darms Lane to get to and from the winery. There are no street lights on the road making it very dark on the nights when the winery is allowed to be open until 10pm. The proposed hours of operation 10AM – 6PM seven days a week is also more than neighboring wineries.

The expansion states that there will be 12 parking spaces scattered about the winery. With 8 employees and a daily visitor allowance of 24 per day there isn't enough onsite parking. Where will all the temporary employees during harvest and bottling park? Where will the guests park for all the private events?

There is also the consideration that there is only one way in and out of Darms Lane Winery. In case of an emergency it could become a nightmare trying to get everyone out and the lane cleared for emergency vehicles. And we all know for a fact that emergencies seem to be the norm now.

The owners of Darms Lane Winery are asking for the moon without any consideration as to what impact it will have on their neighbors, we the residents who live on Darms Lane.

Respectfully submitted,

*Ron Houle*  
*Barbara Houle*

Ron and Barbara Houle