

**From:** Christine Taylor

Dear Moke, Bruno, Eddie, Tina, and Jessica,

My husband Patrick Taylor and I are the developers of the Rim Rock Ranch Subdivision on the eastern border of the proposed "We Grow LLC" development. We own four 20-acre parcels in the subdivision, which is adjacent to the "We Grow LLC" owned property to our west. Our addresses are 16759 and 16707 Ranch Rd., and 20477 and 20555 Vineyard Dr, Middletown. There are an additional 20 owners of various parcels in Rim Rock Ranch. Many of the parcels have been developed with beautiful homes, with more in process.

We are writing to oppose this project on our own behalf, not on behalf of the whole subdivision, although all whom we've contacted are also opposed. We would like to express deep concern about the Planning Commission's approval of the referenced cannabis development project, and request that you disapprove the project. There are several major issues that are most concerning.

### **1) The "We Grow LLC" Project**

#### Water usage and Environmental Impact

It's more than puzzling that during this drought where people aren't even planting their annual vegetable, and foregoing showers and flushing their toilets to conserve water, that you would allow a commercial enterprise to begin operation that will use ~5M gallons per year in the middle of a neighborhood community. Neighbor after neighbor expressed concern about the drought, and there was no response whatsoever in the Apr. 22 planning commission meeting by the applicant or commissioners re: any sort of mitigation. In fact, Christina Price asked that we quit repeating ourselves. There wasn't even acknowledgment that there is a water problem or how it might be mitigated. Likely because there is no mitigation possible the drought condition we are in. If the project is approved, there is potential to devastate neighboring water supply. Doesn't this at least deserve further study and analysis? Or a revisiting of the ordinance that you may believe compels you to approve this project?

#### Illegal Activity

Commissioner Hess expressed concern about a CHP report involving stolen equipment and illegal development activity on the property one month after applicant purchased the parcels. Eric Porter claimed ignorance of this activity, which just isn't true, of course he knew about it. After the applicant denied any knowledge of the illegal activity, Comm. Hess' question was, "did the equipment just fall from the sky?" A good question, and never answered. How can the applicant get away with just claiming ignorance? It happened on her property when she owned it. Can anyone just get away with a crime by pleading ignorance?

#### Impact on the Community

Are 40 - 80 additional trips per day through a quiet residential neighborhood really OK? Especially when the applicant is not required to contribute anything to road maintenance. In the Planning Commission minutes, it states the applicant has said she would contribute to the cost, but there is nothing in the report requiring her to do so. So again, we just take her word for it?

## 2) The Approval Process

### Agenda

This matter was scheduled to be discussed at the Planning Commission meeting on April 22 at 10 am. It began at 1:12 pm. Many concerned constituents took much of their day to listen to the Planning Commission meeting, patiently waiting their turns to speak. None of the concerns about water usage, neighborhood impact from traffic, or other issues were addressed by the commission. It felt like a sham, seemed the commissioners had their minds made up already. Why ask for input from the community then blatantly disregard all of it? Reading Scott DeLeon/Eric Porter's response to the appeal, they simply restate their recommendation, never addressing the key issues of objection. It should also be mentioned that the applicant, Ms. Otchkova, had employed a former planning commission employee as her consultant who spoke on her behalf. This seems like an obvious conflict of interest and should not be allowed.

### Neighbors' opposition

The Planning Commission minutes state they received 80 opposing letters. One of the neighbors mentioned there was also a petition that was signed by 347 people. In the PC meeting, people were given a chance to speak up. About an hour into the comment section, Christina Price expressed frustration with the repetition of the comments, and asked that people only bring up new concerns. This is not how the process is supposed to work. Don't these neighbors' voices matter? There was not a single voice in support of this project. Doesn't that tell you that you should be reconsidering not only this application, but the ordinance that you may think compels you to approve such projects? Especially since we entered unprecedented, severe drought conditions since you put these measures in place.

### Is this whole process a sham?

This next comment will be controversial, but you should know what constituents are saying. They are wondering why or how on earth the County is approving these projects, and this one in particular, when it should be so obvious that it will be detrimental to the community. We are not accusing anyone of anything, but there is speculation that some payoffs are involved in the whole area of cannabis development. When people are not given straight answers that make sense, they will default to believing the worst, that there is something rotten going on. You should care about this, and be as transparent and honest as possible, and show that you are listening by actually addressing constituents' concerns. If in fact the way the ordinance is written means that this project is in compliance, then we ask that you please revisit and modify the ordinance before approving this or any other such water consuming commercial developments.

### Summary and a Request

We are asking the Board of Supervisors to do two things.

- 1) disapprove the "We Grow LLC"; Zarina Otchkova project (i.e. uphold the appeal)
- 2) revisit agricultural development ordinances, in particular addressing environmental impact, especially considering water usage in extreme drought conditions

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick and Christine Taylor