

Attachment 4

Dear Appeals committee,

This appeal is regarding the building project at 1800 New Long Valley Rd in Spring Valley, and we would like to thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

In November of 2020 we purchased the property and proceeded to have plans drawn up by Curt Winchester. Mr. Winchester is an established architect in Lake County and has completed various builds within the county. He was the architect who built the Cashe Creek winery in our Valley. We proceeded with Mr. Winchester with complete faith in his understanding of all requirements the County would require in building our house in Spring Valley.

We then proceeded to submit the plans to the county for approval and pay all permit fees with each required department. On 3/23/21 our plans were approved, and we were ready to get started. Upon obtaining the permits to build and our temp dwelling permit we proceeded to install a septic system as per our (original) plans. The next step was to obtain water on our property, this is when we had our first delay. We looked into water from our local water department through Special Districts and were surprised with a capacity expansion fee of over 23,000 dollars plus meter and connection. This gave us a bit of sticker shock as this would be a huge chunk of what we could initially accomplish on the build... this amount (at that date) would have completed the foundation and a complete shell for our house. We then investigated drilling for a well and found out that it would cost about the same amount with no guarantee in hitting water. Scott and I decided that we would spend our money in our community and pay the expansion fund as it would help strengthen our water treatment plant out in the Valley as we are part of this community and want to see it thrive.

During the installation our water meter on Indian Hill (the closest water main to our property) it was discovered that the neighbor had built a fence on top of the pipes and broke the antiquated pipes in various areas. This required the water company to trench and lay new pipe in order to install our meter on our property. This process took a minute to resolve as we had to have a discussion on where they were going to place the meter. On our property or 300 yards away through another undeveloped property, we finally agreed to place the meter on our property for safety and shutoff reasons.

We now have utilities on the property and 6 months after obtaining our permits we were able to move on to the property and start work. We proceeded to install the long driveway and a pad for the trailer to sit on while we built, we tied into the septic system and connected water. We were ready to get started and then we came home to a red tag (6/11/21). We were informed that we needed to stop building immediately and contact the planning office as our building plans were now not approved.

We contacted Bill Collins in the building department to inquire on what had changed with our plans. We then found out that there was a miss-calculation on where or property was located, and we fall under the Spring Valley POA and our plans were not signed off by them.

When we started our building project it was at the end of the Covid shutdown and the system was difficult to manage due to very limited office hours and staffing at an all-time low, as I'm sure you remember, as you all were in the thick of things doing your best to keep everything going for our community. The initial submission and approval of plans were viewed by multiple employees within the building and planning department, along with the various other entities we paid permits fees to and was approved by each of them. I am not sure where the miscalculation of where our project's location was, and how it was completely missed that we were under the jurisdiction of a POA. Zoning splits New Long Valley Road down the middle the properties on the west side of the road along the creek are county parcels and the properties on the east side of the road belong to a failed subdivision called Spring Valley Development. It is these parcels that fall under a POA and have certain building requirements and an Architectural Design committee who is required to approve and sign off on all plans.

We contacted Mr. Winchester regarding the needed required revisions and was informed by him that this was at no fault of his and we would have to have the entire plans re-engineered for an additional cost of \$2500 and he would get us on his books as soon as he could. Once we obtained the corrected set of plans and then submitted them to the Architectural Review Committee – a Mr. Jim McDole, we were now at the mercy of his skills to read and understand the new set of plans according to the requirements asked for by the building department and the POA. All committee appointments are in the style of – “oh you did this somewhere at some time and know something about it so tag you are it” no recent knowledge of Lake County code is required, and I only mention this because it did cause an additional delay in re-submitting our plans. Scott sat with Mr. McDole and showed him the areas that were in question and the corrections that were done to be in compliance with the CC&Rs of the POA, this was a frustrating long process, but we were able to get the plans signed off.

We were now ready to submit the plans, concerned that the septic would still be the correct size for the additional square footage and the additional cost of permits because of the increase in size of the project. We originally worked with Bill Collins to see what possible steps needed to be taken to correct this and obtain our building permit again. We ended up working with Jack Smally to continue moving forward and paying all the correct fees. It was 4/28/23 when we received our new building permit along with the extension of our temporary dwelling permit, we could start moving forward again, all with the understanding that substantial improvement would be accomplished. We were then able to place much needed power to our property approved and permitted on 5/10/23 completing the building departments requirement of a major inspection every year.

We spent the majority of the next year re-building the needed funds to complete the next phase of the project. September of 2024 we were able to set and complete the foundation for our house along with the required yearly inspection, it was so exciting to see it starting to come together. We knew we would have to wait until the following spring: after the rain, to start the sub-flooring, walls, and put a roof on it. At this point we need to be extremely careful

with recourses and not have building supplies in the weather warping. We ordered the cut sheet from Kelseyville Lumber and now have the exact cost of the materials needed and the funds to proceed.

This brings us to the current situation of needing our temporary dwelling permit approved for an extension. We are currently ordering all the supplies and start the sub-flooring within a couple of weeks of the date of this appeal and our goal is to have the “shell” completed before the weather starts late fall, early winter.

Scott and I have established ourselves on our property and in our community, completing mandatory land improvements including building a fence to hide our living space as requested by code enforcement, purchased and breed livestock, completed building of coops and pens, an extensive garden area, which provides food to for our neighbors in need, we plan on extending this vision as the building project concludes. We are active with the SVLPOA and CSA#2 meetings along with community events such as the bi- monthly food giveaways, monthly breakfasts and holiday celebrations. Simply Sarah Solutions (our cleaning company) provides organizing and cleaning solutions for our widowed and disabled neighbors, along with assisting in minor home or land repairs. It has been recommended that we move into the local trailer park until completion of the project, and this is not a solution. Unfortunately, the trailer parks that take travel trailers to live in are not the areas I as a tax paying property owner would feel safe or comfortable in ever. We could attempt to find a housing rental in the Valley that would take all our livestock but the cost of this (\$2500+ a month) would delay our building project into a timeline that I don't think we would recover from, not with this volatile social and political environment our state is in.

Scott and I understand the code and understand the nature the code was intended, the underlying need to protect our communities and property values from individuals who have every intention to take from the community and destroy property in the process along with leaving the county the cost to clean up the mess. From the first day we started this project we were committed to bring this project to completion in a timely manner. I am also sure you can agree that we have come up against and overcame situations that were beyond our control and some that were in our control. We are currently \$158,000 (\$25,000 of that is cost of delays/inflation and miss-calculations) into our project and have completed substantial improvement every year that we had a valid permit. I believe that we can build a mortgage free house in California and bring value to our community, and that this entire situation can be corrected for us and future homebuilders in defining what is significant progress. Scott and I have looked for an exact definition regarding this regulation and the only basis we have, is to go by what the building department requires for inspections and complete that. We have confirmed with Jack Smalley and his department, and we are in good standing with them and are set to continue and complete this project.

Scott and I thank you for your time and hearing our story and working with us to bring our dream into fruition.

Scott and Sarah Renkes

All these changes nearly doubled the square footage of the original plans, along with the loss of building time and increased cost of goods