



# Vote Amber! 20 years of "growth" is killing Napa

Bill Hocker | Feb 14, 2020

on the web at: <http://sodacanyonroad.org/forum.php?p=2078>

I urge every resident of District 4 to vote for Amber Manfree for Supervisor.

While claiming concern for environmental stewardship, Supervisor Pedroza, in fact, continues to pursue the pro-development growth agenda championed by his predecessor and mentor, Bill Dodd, elected to the Napa County Board of Supervisors (BOS) 20 years ago (I would recommend this refresher at [http://sodacanyonroad.org/docs/dodd\\_12-24-2000.jpg](http://sodacanyonroad.org/docs/dodd_12-24-2000.jpg)).

Together, they have led the BOS in promoting more tourism and industrial growth than the county can handle, clogging county roads with traffic, creating an affordable housing crisis, and consuming small town life to serve a growing tourist population. Mr. Pedroza continues to craft and support county policies that level woodlands for vineyard estates, fill farmlands with tourist attractions and pave wetlands for warehouses. His decisions benefit the entrepreneurs that contribute to his substantial campaign war chest while residents suffer the impacts. Mr. Pedroza worked to water down the BOS response to Agricultural Protection Advisory Commission recommendations intended to curb winery proliferation. He approved the 2,300 acre Walt Ranch vineyard estate project, the remote Mountain Peak Winery and supported, through his commissioner, the Palmaz personal heliport, each to benefit plutocrats in the face of overwhelming opposition from his own constituents. He opposed Measure C's woodland protections, instead backing a toothless alternative. He supported the redefinition of agriculture in county code to lock in tourism as an agricultural activity. He supports bringing in ever more tourists by generously funding Visit Napa Valley and streamlining winery use permits for new venues to accommodate them. He supported the expansion of the Syar excavations up against Skyline Wilderness Park. He supported the development or expansion of Woolls Ranch, Girard, Raymond, and other winery projects all vigorously opposed by residents defending their neighborhoods against commercialization. He appointed a developer to the County Planning Commission to advance his land use agenda there.

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## New supervisor to impact Napa's future growth

**Dodd**  
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A moderate voice  
Dodd said he looks to be a voice of moderation. He said he would have voted the same as Winters in all but two or three votes in the past few years.

One of those votes was a proposed moratorium on hillside development. Winters supported it, although it failed.

Dodd would have made the vote more decisive.

"There's nothing that shouldn't be any more planning in Napa Valley," he said.

"To argue that makes he's against any restrictions on hillside development," he said.

Dodd said he has not prioritized on the board but to foster better cooperation between the county and cities on traffic, housing and land-use issues.

"The city and county will come together and work on these issues," he said.

"I will only support as the board project moves forward, the Traffic Avenue and Highway 29 interchange project, light and transit and other developments are needed."

"It's going to be a mess," he said.

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begins his term in the Watershed Task Force recommendations.

The board must soon decide how to fund the process of drafting the recommendations into law, studying their environmental impact and holding public meetings. The process is expected to cost at least \$500,000 and take 1 1/2 years.

Dodd said the board should look for funding from the state and other sources. It might be going too far to saddle the winery industry with these costs, he said.

He supports the Watershed Task Force plan, he said, and thinks most grape growers agree with it in concept.

The plan would protect the Napa River watershed by maintaining development on hills and near streams. It was crafted by a task force of environmentalists, grape growers and other community members at an update of the 1991 Hillside Ordinance.

Butbacks near waterways for vineyard replanting was one issue the coalition couldn't agree on. A compromise was reached by the Sierra Club, Farm Bureau and Napa Valley Wineries Association would allow vineyard replanting in some instances where hillsides that would take large hillsides replanting vineyards.

Dodd said he's unsure whether the compromise truly has widespread support.

"I'm not sure the compromise ... was reached by consensus of the entire winery industry," he said.

Dodd said the goal of the watershed plan should be mitigating erosion. More weight should be given to farmers' ability to manage erosion as opposed to strict controls, he said.

"People have to understand ... if they don't want to deal with it on the Napa River," he said.

The task force also recommended an ordinance to restrict the removal of certain types of vegetation on hillsides.

Dodd said he supports the ability to retain as many acres as possible, but doesn't want to overreach.

"I'd generally prefer not to see large stands of trees cut down for any purpose," he said.

"The people of Napa are used to seeing trees on the hillsides."

He said the economic impact of the ordinance should be considered. Maybe certain environmentally sensitive areas should be singled out for protection, he said.

Before the ordinance is approved, he said the process should be streamlined for approving vineyard projects. There's too much red tape for growers who try to comply with every single aspect and cost procedure," he said.

**Sharpshooter threat**  
Dodd said he believes the threat of the gray-winged sharpshooter hasn't been overstated.

"If the sharpshooter hit Napa Valley ... there's not anybody who lives here who would not be affected," he said.

He insect carries the bacterium "Pierce's disease, which is deadly to grape vines."

He said the county's time, money and effort should continue to be spent keeping the pest out. He supports an inspection program on incoming plant shipments.

But if the insect did infest the county and residential pesticide spraying was needed to control it, he would support the effort.

"I don't see the pest report ... I would do it in a heart beat," he said.

**Homework done**  
Although a supporter to politics, Dodd said he's done his homework in preparing for the board. He has spent the last 20 months at nearly every supervisory meeting and one with every county department head.

He will maintain his job managing U.S. Films, formerly Columbia TriStar, for the next 20 years, he said, setting the groundwork in the company as part of industry consolidation.

His support of limiting environmental regulations should not be viewed as pro-development, he said. Dodd said he supports the moratorium in 1990 with the county's anti-inflation ordinance, Measure A, and the 30-year-old land-use restricting agricultural measures.

"Nothing will do while I'm in office will change that direction," he said.

Nathan Crabbe can be reached at 256-2280 or [nscrabbe@snapnews.com](mailto:nscrabbe@snapnews.com).

**Dodd's backers have fought county on hillside issues**

By NATHAN CRABBE  
Register Staff Writer

NAPA ... Some of supervisor-elect Bill Dodd's biggest campaign contributors have battled the county, until the courts, over hillside vineyard development.

Dodd's top contributors include Charles Roy, who has struggled to get a hillside vineyard development approved by the county, and Jaymin Palmbrey, who has been sued by the county and local Sierra Club over hillside development.

Dodd's biggest contributor was New Jersey-based developer Charles Roy. Roy personally contributed \$2,000 and gave another \$2,000 through the vineyard development. He owns, Chicoas Rd.

Chicoas Rd is a 12-acre vineyard project located on 62-acre of gently to steeply sloping hillsides of Soda Canyon Road, according to county planning records. Malin and the Sierra Club have argued the county has not properly environmentally reviewed the project and filed protests to that effect.

Roy gave money because he was unhappy with the process of getting vineyard plans passed by the county, Dodd said.

"He was frustrated by the time, expense and extensive red tape," Dodd said.

Palmbrey was named as a party in a lawsuit filed by the county in April. The suit accused the county of not properly environmentally reviewing hillside vineyard development. Like Malin's lawsuit, the suit was largely financed by Malin.

Winery owner Jaymin Palmbrey also has been sued by the district attorney and taken out of court over alleged illegal hillside development.

In both cases, Dodd said the contributors viewed him as a moderate alternative to Malin's extremism. He said he agreed with the bank of the Sierra Club lawsuit, but disagreed with its timing and using the courts to settle the issue.

"It was an act of bad faith on the part of the Napa Sierra Club," he said.

While half of Roy's contributions went to the county election, the other half came one month later. Palmbrey's contribution was received May 17, more than two months after the election.

Dodd said he doesn't think his contributors expect special treatment or favors.

"I don't think my contributors expect me to betray the confidence of the people that voted for me," he said.

Other major contributors include The Hess Collection Winery in Mt. Veeder, \$2,000; Silver Oaks Vineyard in Geyserville of Sonoma County, \$2,000; and Bob and Evelyn Home Winery in St. Helena, \$2,000. Triathlon-based wine producer Keith Bravley of Stenoche, \$250; and the Los Angeles-based California Real Estate PAC, \$500.

Dodd said most contributors who aren't local are associated with the water business he owns, or former fraternity brothers or know his family.

"I've got a lot of friends," he said.

Reporter Nathan Crabbe can be reached at 256-2280 or [nscrabbe@snapnews.com](mailto:nscrabbe@snapnews.com).

**Political contributions**

Bill Dodd received \$86,036.79 in contributions for 2000.

Donors: Denis O'Neil, Oakesville, voter, \$1,000; Andre Pichon, St. Helena, voter, \$1,000; Justice Board, Napa, member, \$1,000; William Dodd, Napa, member, \$1,000; Charles Roy/Charles Roy, New Jersey, voter/owner/winery, \$2,000; Bob and Evelyn Trishorn, St. Helena, voter, \$2,000; Jaymin Palmbrey, \$2,000 (also \$1,744 in food and beverages for a hillside vineyard); Publix, \$2,000; Hess Collection, Napa, voter, \$2,000; Silver Oaks, Geyserville, \$2,000; Robert Kozans, Napa, architect, \$1,178; William Jagger Jr., Napa, voter, \$1,000; Jeff Jagger, Napa, voter, \$1,000; Bob and Son, St. Helena, farm contractor, \$1,000; Syar Industries, Napa, building construction, \$1,000; Nathan Topel, Reno, Nev., real estate broker, \$1,000; Francis and Rita Linsman, Brockton, Mass., attorney, \$1,000; Robert Mondavi Corp., Oakesville, voter, \$1,000; C. Manolivi di Sosa, St. Helena, voter, \$1,000; Larry and Nancy, Napa, voter, \$1,000; State Senator Wesley Chertok, Assemblywoman Pat Wiggins, Supervisor Mel Mike Thompson, Supervisor Steve Newton and Robert Mondavi Corp., \$2,000.

Elected officials contributing to her unsuccessful campaign were State Senator Wesley Chertok, Assemblywoman Pat Wiggins, Supervisor Mel Mike Thompson, Supervisor Steve Newton and Robert Mondavi Corp., \$2,000.

Chris Malin who received only about ten percent of the vote spent more than the other candidates. He received nearly \$70,000 in contributions and spent virtually all of it on mailings and media. Most of her funding came from personal loans and from Carlene and Peter Meenan who together provided about \$60,000.

Existing housing and transport problems, and those that will be added by the many, many projects already approved but not yet built, do need creative solutions. But the impacts of those solutions must be more carefully considered. Napa's rural woodlands, agriculture and natural beauty are often called a "national treasure." Left in the hands of the current board majority, new development projects, the workforce, and the visitors needed to make them profitable, will continue to come. Housing and traffic problems will only worsen, and the rural qualities that attract visitors and residents to this place will be gone.

We need a new majority on the BOS -- one with Supervisors who recognize and will protect our environment and quality of life. To prepare for an uncertain future, we need leaders who understand climate change, and how to responsibly manage development pressure and the importance of sustainable land use not tied to the "fairy tales of eternal economic growth" in the words of one prominent environmentalist. We need leaders that will support those residents, vintners and growers who understand the unique and fragile value of their rural, small-town enclave in the urbanized bay area. It is imperative to challenge the pro-growth agenda that Mr. Dodd and Mr. Pedroza have been pursuing for the last 20 years and support Amber Manfree to achieve that new majority. In addition to the refreshing, personable authenticity lauded by the Register's Editorial Board, Dr. Manfree brings a scientist's analytic understanding to the environment and a longtime rural resident's passion to protect the qualities that make Napa a desirable place to be. Please vote for Amber Manfree for District 4 Supervisor. The survival of Napa County's rural character depends on it.