

George Caloyannidis
2202 Diamond Mountain Road
Calistoga, CA 94515
calti@comcast.net

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To: Napa County Board of Supervisors
cc: Minh Tran, David Morrison

RE: REMOTE WINERY WORKSHOP

I sympathize with Mr. Morrison's requesting definition clarity (Board Agenda letter 9/25/18) on how a "remote" winery is defined.

In Napa County, we do not consider remote wineries and vineyards which are located on the valley floor but ones which are *exclusively located in the hillsides*. We therefore need to define the hillside location factors which would merit special considerations for new vineyards and wineries or expansion of existing ones.

They include:

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1) Loss of woodlands.

A partial list includes:

- a) Aesthetic degradation of a scarred landscape (an important asset to the Napa valley experience).
- b) Negative impacts on water quality and stream siltation, municipal watersheds etc.
- c) Negative impacts on animal habitat.

COMMERCIAL / AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY CONSIDERATIONS

1) Increased traffic.

- a) Oversized vehicles for agricultural and wine making operations.
- b) Large limousine and personal vehicles for visitors and events.

2) Increased fire danger by the increase of workers and visitors in fire prone areas.

3) Difficulty in navigating the generally narrow roads on opposing traffic situations.

4) Inadequate escape and emergency vehicle access routes.

DISCUSSION:

It is my contention that at its core, the term "remote" implies "hillside development" considerations. As such, the term "remote" does not reflect the fundamental issues which have initiated this inquiry.

Conceivably, one could define "remoteness" in quantifying acceptable negative impacts on the hillsides' environmental factors, in which case, "remoteness" would not necessarily be linked to the distance from some *defined* point.

While important, this paper will not attempt to evaluate "remoteness" within the environmental relevance / impacts framework.

Rather, it will concentrate in examining it in relation to the introduction of commercial / agricultural vineyard and winery operations in the hillsides. Specifically, it will examine compliance with existing minimum established County road standards and provide related recommendations.

NAPA COUNTY ROAD & STREET STANDARDS (Revised September 26, 2017)

SECTION 14 / Street and Road Classifications

Major Roads

The pertinent road classifications serving vineyards and wineries are either (a) *Arterial* (Collectors to Highways) or (b) *Collector* (1,000 to 5,000 vehicles per day). These roads are through-roads, not Dead-End-Roads.

Minor Roads

These are defined as serving "up to 1,000 vehicles per day". They may have a Cul-de-Sac (e) but then they may have a "maximum traffic volume of up to 250 vehicles per day".

"Cul-de-Sac situations with lengths greater than 1,000 feet shall be provided with turnaround areas at 1,000 foot intervals and emergency access unless it is not considered feasible by the County Engineer".

It is important to note that the requirement is for *turnarounds*, not *turnouts*.

Furthermore, the criterion of *feasibility* is not defined beyond the generally accepted topographic and economic considerations and ignores public safety, health and welfare.

Other Roads

(i) Agricultural Special Purpose Roads

"Serves agricultural related single use facilities and light traffic facilities which generate up to 100 vehicle trips per day. This road is not applicable to any winery access. Applies to lightly travelled, low speed roads connecting two activity areas with no significant side traffic. Turnouts must be inter-visible".

Unless agricultural activities using such roads do not comply with this specification, they must be accessed by Major or Minor roads.

SECTION 15 / Design Criteria

Roadway Width:

- "All streets and roads with the exception of Agricultural Special Purpose Roads shall be constructed to provide a minimum of two 10-foot traffic lanes and a minimum of one foot of shoulder on each side".

Since wineries are excluded from this category, unless vineyard and activities comply with the use limitations of Agricultural Special Purpose Roads, they too must comply with the above roadway width specifications *unless they also* come under the specifications below.

- Both Arterial and Collector Roads with no Parallel Parking Lanes (Details C-2 and C-3) require a Right of Way of 40 feet with two 14-foot traffic lanes and shoulders (totaling 39 improved feet).
- General Minor Roads with no Parallel Parking Lanes require two 12-foot traffic lanes, a total of 12 feet of shoulders (36 improved feet within a 40-foot Right of Way).
- In addition, to the 1,000 feet *turnaround* maximum spacing requirement for dead-end roads, roads with *turnouts* (Detail C-11) "shall be spaced a maximum of 400 feet apart and must be *Inter-Visible* unless allowed by County Engineer and Fire Marshal".

Dead-End-Roads Specifications:

The Napa valley hillsides have a plethora of dead-end roads, many exceeding 3 miles. Soda Canyon Road and Diamond Mountain Road are just a few examples, well above the maximum allowable 5,260 feet.

- "Maximum length for parcels zoned 5 acres to 19.99 acres - 2,640 feet
for parcels zoned 20 acres or larger - 5,260 feet"
- "(b) Turnarounds where parcels are zoned 5 acres or larger shall be provided at a maximum of 1,320 foot intervals".
- Agricultural Special Purpose Roads must comply with the inter-visible mandate of the required turnouts spaced a maximum of 400 feet apart (Detail C-11).

I am not aware of any of the county's hillside roads being in compliance with ANY and ALL of the above requirements or exceptions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Unless there are exceptions I am not aware of, all of the county's hillside roads are out of compliance with the County's Road Standards.

The County Engineer and Fire Marshal have in the past exercised their discretionary power in approving them in the interests of development while increasing the risk of residents', workers' and visitors' inadequate escape routes and the concurrent access to emergency vehicles.

Given the increased danger of fires as we have experienced and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future and in order for the County to avoid being knowingly complicit in case of catastrophic loss of life of property as well as in the interest of public health and safety I recommend that:

- The County Supervisors revoke the Engineer's and Fire Marshal's discretion to deviate from the accepted road standards on all future commercial / agricultural hillside development, new or the expansion of existing ones.
- All future commercial / agricultural hillside development on roads which do not comply with the County's Road Standards shall be prohibited until such roads are improved to meet such standards.
- All commercial / agricultural hillside development be prohibited on hillside roads lacking a secondary accesses beyond a maximum distance of 2,640 feet.
- All new secondary road accesses for all commercial / agricultural uses, shall meet the same standards as the primary access roads at any given location.
- Revise the standards for Special Purpose Roads and Agricultural Special Purpose Roads (single lane) for all new commercial / agricultural hillside development to comply with General Minor Road standards.

Finally, since the issue of remoteness does not reflect actual considerations of remoteness but rather environmental and access safety ones, I recommend that a designation reflecting its actual purposes be adopted.