

Re: Item 4.C

NCRPOSD
RECEIVED
13.Sep.21

To: NOSD Board of Directors

Re: Agenda Item 4c, September 13, 2021

First of all I want to know that you have my most sincere appreciation. I think all of you, and the district staff, are Rock Stars. What you did to keep Napa County's parks and trails open during the worst months of the pandemic (especially when every surrounding county had shut theirs down) was nothing short of miraculous. I think the voters in Napa took notice. And had Measure K been voted upon AFTER the pandemic instead of before it, I have no doubt it would have passed.

So, right now you are floating along on a sea of local approval. But I am afraid you will lose all that local good will and support when the voters find out you are even *considering* partnering with a luxury resort developer who appears to have found a way to chip away at the protections offered by the Ag Watershed by dangling a few little carrots in front of your noses.

With the information I have so far, I am disappointed that John Woodbury has even been conducting these conversations. Are there any record of these conversations. . . .anywhere? And by even engaging this conversation, has the district opened itself up to future litigation?

In any case, of critical consideration should be the impact that partnering with a resort developer will have on the District's current staffing level. Any time taken away from the excellent and important work being done by district staff, with the help of an army of volunteers, in order to deal with what will certainly become huge complications resulting from any kind of partnership with a luxury resort developer on this project is not acceptable.

And if you open *this* door to *this* developer, make no mistake, more will come.

Please don't fall into the ruse that "employee" housing is the same thing as "affordable" or "workforce" housing. One supplies an actual, on-going need. The other merely attempts to mitigate a need that the project itself creates. I say "attempts" because we have no indication that the 120 employees they mention will actually chose to live there. And if they don't, does the applicant then come back with a request to turn that housing into additional resort units?

And where are the environmental and cultural surveys they say have been done during past 15 years showing "no sensitive findings" that are mentioned in the proposal? Who paid to have those surveys

done? Have they been reviewed by the public or district staff? Has the Suscol Intertribal Council been made aware of this?

Water? They claim to “enjoy” secure water rights from wells onsite. Nothing about groundwater is secure these days. And what will nearby property owners say once their wells go dry because this resort is “enjoying” all the water in the aquifer? Will the resort pay for the deeper wells these neighbors may have to drill as a result? And trucking water in, even if there is some water available somewhere, with its huge carbon footprint, should not even be considered.

A discount to Napa County residents? That’s only applicable if you can afford to pay \$800 a night to stay in one of their tent cabins! (The cost to stay at a Six Senses Resort in Portugal) Most residents (and voters) in Napa County don’t fall in that category.

As a resident of St. Helena, I have to look no further than the ill-fated Los Alcobas resort development to know that the promised income from these projects is often little more than pie in the sky and may be a very long time coming....not to mention the severe financial impacts to resorts by factors out of our control, such as an ongoing global pandemic, wildfires, extreme heat, and dangerous particulate matter in the air.

I’m also disappointed that more was not done to let the public know about this. Staff suggests considering any “public comment.” And yet what was done to ensure the public was aware that the district would be considering taking this huge step that would essentially alter its basic mission? At the very least the public deserves to know much more *before* any conversations, considerations, negotiations, or direction to staff goes any further.

So I am requesting that you please cease any further conversations with this and *any* luxury resort developers and spend your time and energy doing what you do best--maintaining the parks we have and creating legitimate recreational opportunities for the people who actually live here. Let the Land Trust deal with the conservation easements or the properties this property owner wants to get rid of.

If funding is the issue, let’s re-examine regional park passes, free or deeply discounted to Napa County residents. But please don’t tarnish your reputation by partnering with a luxury resort developer.

Elaine de Man

Napa County Resident, U.C. Certified California Naturalist and Climate Steward, Supporter of the District

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **WordPress** <Do_not_reply@napaoutdoors.org>

Date: Mon, Sep 13, 2021, 11:41 AM

Subject: Website contact: Agenda Item 4.c for September 13, 2021

To: <info@ncrposd.org>

Name: Cio Perez

Email: cio@venika.com

Subject: Agenda Item 4.c for September 13, 2021

Message: September 13, 2021

Napa County Regional Park & Open Space District
1195 Third Street, Second Floor
Napa, CA 94559

RE: September 13, 2021

Agenda Item 4.c

Presentation by David Wickline of Aetna Springs Resorts LLC on his request to partner with the District on a luxury campground resort on Turkey Hill in Pope Valley with up to 80 tent-cabin units and housing for up to 120 employees, discussion, and Board direction to staff.

Dear Mr. Cahill:

I want to thank the Board for the opportunity to have input in regards to item 4.c on today's agenda.

I want to express my opposition to the Napa County Regional Park & Open Space District forming a partnership with Mr. David Wickline of Aetna Springs Resorts LLC. I feel that such a partnership is "outside" of your mission to provide recreational opportunities and open space serving the local community and visitors to Napa County. In fact, this proposal will only serve "high-end" guests visiting the County. Don't put yourselves in the position of competing with other commercial enterprises in the cities and town, which have the infrastructure to deal with high volumes of visitors.

I don't agree with the staff report in the environmental determination that for CEQA purposes this is not a "project". If you read the code referenced in the report it says the following;

14 CCR § 15378

§ 15378. Project.

(a) "Project" means the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the

environment, and that is any of the following:

- (1) An activity directly undertaken by any public agency including but not limited to public works construction and related activities clearing or grading of land, improvements to existing public structures, enactment and amendment of zoning ordinances, and the adoption and amendment of local General Plans or elements thereof pursuant to Government Code Sections 65100-65700.
- (2) An activity undertaken by a person which is supported in whole or in part through public agency contracts, grants, subsidies, loans, or other forms of assistance from one or more public agencies.
- (3) An activity involving the issuance to a person of a lease, permit, license, certificate, or other entitlement for use by one or more public agencies.

This section alone makes this project subject to CEQA, in that this project causes direct physical changes to the environment, as well as increases the density of people into an area that is considered a high fire risk zone. This proposal also involves a lease agreement between the two parties. This area of the County does not have adequate ingress and egress in the case of a wildfire. So this "proposed action" is subject to CEQA.

The Board should understand, as stated by the staff report, that this project will not happen without the participation of the Napa County Regional Park & Open Space District. As a private venture it is not allowed by the County's policies on ag lands. You're only being asked to partner because they "need" you.

There are recreational policies that the County has that don't allow the recreational use to displace or remove agriculture. Grazing still falls under the definition of agriculture here in the County, and since there has been grazing for the last 10 to 15 years, this proposal is removing agriculture from the parcel(s). This is not allowed within the County's ag lands.

This proposal includes the construction of housing for at least 60 employees. This should also raise a red flag for the Board. This type of housing on ag lands is only allowed for farmworker housing. I don't think the employees for the glampground fall into this category. I also question the intelligence of placing these many employees in an area with such a high fire risk.

These are only a few of the reasons that your Board should consider in your deliberations today to partner with anyone with a proposal in our ag lands and open space. I'm sure there are many more that can be considered to support a decision to refuse/deny a formation of such a partnership that will have no benefit to our local communities, nor our governmental agencies.

Thank you again for the opportunity to express my opposition to the formation of the proposed partnership.

Sincerely,

Cio Perez
St. Helena, CA
Candidate for Napa County District 3 Supervisor

Sept 13, 2021
Chris Cahill, General Manager
Napa County Regional Park & Open Space District
1195 Third Street
Napa, CA 94559

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RE: Item 4C

My name is Eve Kahn, a City of Napa resident, a 20-year real estate agent, chair of Get a Grip on Growth, Co-President of Napa Vision 2050, and a public member of Napa LAFCO. I have been on numerous city and county committees and commissions and continue to be very involved in land use in Napa County.

I wish to thank Mr. Wickline for providing the details of his proposed resort in Pope Valley. I am impressed and intrigued with the concept of a luxury campground. Unfortunately, your proposal is incompatible and inconsistent with land uses in Ag Watershed & Open Space [AWOS] zones. And there are many, likely unsurmountable hurdles to overcome. Here are just a few:

- The luxury campground will be placed in a high (or very high) fire risk area requiring compatibility with new local and state regulations.
- AWOS zoning allows, by right, a single-family home, a second home of 1200 sq ft or less, and a guest house with no kitchen and in most cases cannot be subdivided.
- Twenty-two parcels are listed in tax records as Vacant Land – Rural, three are listed as Vineyard >5 acres. I have to question the statement: *"The site has residential zoning with existing residence and grazed for decades."* So, how does this translate to the development of a luxury campground/resort and high-density employee housing?
- Placement of the camping structures may be subject to the County's Viewshed Ordinance.
- You state that "numerous environmental studies" have been completed but this has no bearing unless those studies were based on the density and intensity of uses you propose.
- **The proposed commercialization and intensity of uses would require a Measure P vote.**
- In 2006, the Napa voters passed Measure I establishing the Regional Park & Open Space District with explicit responsibilities related to **public lands**. **Your proposal may require another vote to modify the NRPOSD charter.**
- So now I am counting two ballot initiatives in addition to other development and infrastructure hurdles. I fail to understand why you didn't opt to use Aetna Springs Resort property for this luxury campground? In 2012 the County considered and I believe affirmed the historic uses and approved major modifications to structures and infrastructure.
- The Napa County Board of Supervisors have prioritized restoring the resorts at Lake Berryessa. And honestly, with access from Solano and Napa counties, housing (urban bubbles) nearby, and other resort amenities and infrastructure, you might have more success shifting your focus from Pope Valley to Lake Berryessa.

My last comment is directed at the District Board of Directors. Please refrain from any further discussion on a development partnership that would put the District in financial jeopardy and, more importantly, in jeopardy of violating the public trust.

Regards, Eve Kahn