

Jocelyn Gonzalez-Thies

From: pbscommissions
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 9:35 AM
To: Jocelyn Gonzalez-Thies; Russell Ford; Julia Krog
Subject: FW: Case #R 2021-0002, Eastside Residential, Redwood Valley

Mendocino County

MAR 22 2023

Planning & Building Services

From: Chris <wickboyd@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2023 4:56 PM
To: pbscommissions <pbscommissions@mendocinocounty.org>
Cc: Glenn McGourty <glennmcgourty@gmail.com>
Subject: Case #R 2021-0002, Eastside Residential, Redwood Valley

Re: Cannabis Exclusion Zone

March 17, 2023

Thank you for hearing our request for an Exclusion Zone in our neighborhood.

When I voted for the legalization of cannabis in California some years ago, I thought this would reduce illegal activities associated with pot. That view was naive. Over the years, we have noticed an appreciable increase in illegal and/or harmful actions and effects of the new law and regulations:

- 1) Road Dangers— Marked increase in loud, speeding, and out-of-area vehicle traffic on Road E, where we live. Aside from the noise nuisance, increased traffic has brought new dangers. I've witnessed several traffic accidents just outside our home, which has a curve on Road E. All resulted in overturned vehicles, some with injured passengers or drivers. The most recent occurred several months ago. When I went onto the roadside the next day to clean up the remaining debris, I found a hunting knife by the road. Children walk this street from school, so this was troublesome. We ride our bikes, walk, and cross Road E to get our mail, and the speeding vehicles are not just annoying; they are dangerous. Our grandchildren and neighbors' children also frequent the area. Better signage and reflectors for the curve, and increased enforcement would help, but the drivers unfamiliar with our curving and dark roads make matters unsafe.
- 2) Security Risks—Several of my neighbors have received verbal threats from pot growers or others related to the industry. Those of us who walk, walk dogs, or ride bikes find increased occasions of aggressive dogs charging at us. These dogs are usually behind fences, but that is no protection from the surprise of charges by animals and their loud barking, especially since the fencing can seem insufficiently robust. Our grandchildren are particularly vulnerable to fright, and worse. It's no secret that weapons often accompany pot-related activities. Anecdotal stories about home robberies and other crime also circulate, though we don't have first-hand experience of same.
- 3) Legal vs. Illegal—A recent "raid" by the Sheriff apparently targeted a large illegal "grow" a few houses away from ours. However, that same area seems to have continued to be frequented by people who aren't from our neighborhood—I noticed a car driving back and forth just yesterday. Sales of cannabis products from homes are certainly not legal, but we've noticed many occasions over recent years where visitors to certain addresses don't seem to fit into normal activities. We suspect illegal sales may be occurring. When legal growing and other cannabis activities are occurring in residential areas such as ours, illegal activities often occur alongside legal ones and are hard to differentiate. Even legal growing is an "attractive nuisance" that could be better managed if NO cannabis activities were happening. I am sorry to have to stem the activities of those operating legally, but this is OUR HOME. This is OUR

INVESTMENT from decades of working and saving. The “bad actors” make it bad for everyone, but this is not our responsibility.

4) Environmental, Water, and Fire Safety Issues—This year’s rainfall doesn’t mean droughts are over. We use well water. Pot growers can tap into the aquifer and/or natural flows, endangering not just the sources of our drinking water but also resulting in pollution. There is NO NEW WATER SOURCE if our wells run dry or become polluted, or if Redwood Valley County Water District continues to run out of water (which is more likely due to PGE’s abandonment of the Potter Valley Project). Drinking water should come first in water priorities, if Redwood Valley is to remain habitable. Regarding pollution, it’s well known that illegal growers have no regard for the environment. Again, where legal growing is allowed, it can be a mask for the illegal and out-of-area growers with no investment in the beauty and cleanliness of our community. Regarding fire safety, heat intensity is increasing due to global warming (we recorded 118 degrees at our property last summer). I’m aware of at least one fire that appeared to be associated with pot growing. We can’t afford ANY increased risk. We remember the 9 souls who perished in the 2017 fire here in Redwood Valley.

Offensive odor, normless visitors, and potential crime are just some of the difficulties associated with pot grows. Our Sheriff and other law enforcement are busy enough without having to respond to pot-related complaints in our area. Further, our real investment in Redwood Valley is damaged by the problems associated with cannabis. Property values are affected. For these and other reasons, we ask you to approve the Cannabis Prohibition Combining District for Eastside Residential Redwood Valley. Other neighbors with whom I’ve spoken would like the zone extended to their areas, as well. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Christine Boyd and Tom Schoeneman
Redwood Valley