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with Hatch & Parent

#6

October 8, 2009

VIA HAND DELIVERY AND EMAIL

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Susan F. Petrovich

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spetrovich@bhfs.com

RE: Crossroads Special Events Minor CUP and Consistency Rezone, 07RZN-00000-00004,
09CUP-00000-00021



Dear Honorable Supervisors:

Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP represents William Foley and Crossroads Winery LP, owners of the Crossroads property. Although the Planning Commission unanimously approved (with Commissioner C.J. Jackson recusing himself because he was appointed by Supervisor Firestone, whose family were the original applicants for Crossroads) a larger project, Mr. Foley seeks to scale back the project to better suit his lifestyle and plans for the property. Mr. Foley maintains a home on the Crossroads property – the historic Newlove House restored by the Firestone family after they relocated it from Santa Maria to this site. He also plans to expand the vineyard plantings on the property in the future. Mr. Foley purchased the Firestone winery and vineyards while this application was being processed.

We concur with the staff recommendation. We thank them for their detailed analysis of the original proposed project and of the new, smaller project. One small correction to the staff report – Mr. Foley does not propose to change the Planning Commission's condition limiting events to a maximum of 8 per month.

Historic Use of Crossroads Site

The Crossroads site has been used for special events for decades. In addition to weddings, company picnics, and Firestone winery promotional events, Crossroads provided a venue for the early Santa Barbara County Vintners' Festivals and has hosted events with as many as 3,000 attendees. Mr. Foley would like to be able to offer Crossroads again to the Vintners Association, although not for 3,000 guests.

Locals and fans of local wines have been married at Crossroads, sharing with their friends and families the beauty of the Santa Ynez Valley and the fellowship that wine and food provide. In that role, Crossroads for many years has been an effective marketing and public relations opportunity to promote Firestone wines. The events are an important part of the Firestone and Foley marketing plans and a legitimate part of these wine operations. At the same time, the land area used by the events is small and the use will remain subordinate to the agricultural use of the parcel. The events also provide supplemental and supportive income to the property owner's agricultural operation. The Firestone Winery is located on a nearby property and hundreds of acres of vineyard land, on adjacent parcels and throughout Santa Barbara County, are owned by entities in which Mr. Foley has an interest.

As special as Crossroads may be to those seeking to use it for business-related purposes, it holds a unique place in the community's heart as a venue for hundreds of non-profit events. Examples of non-



October 8, 2009

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: Firestone Consistency Rezone and Conditional User Permit for Special Events at
Crossroads, 07CUP-00000-00026

I have been a resident of Santa Barbara County for over forty years. I have been involved in its wine industry since 1972, and was a part of the creation of the Santa Barbara County Vintners' Association, sitting on its board of directors for nine of its first twenty years, as President for two, and vice-president for four years. I have been its Executive Director since August of 2004. I have observed this county from many vantage points in the past five decades.

Those vantage points allow perspectives that may be advantageous as others mention the right to hold a number of "for profit" events per year, and additional events with CUPs. And traffic. And neighbor impact. And surroundings. And hours.

If I may, I'd like to paraphrase an old saying, "Don't miss the vineyard for the vines." We are sustainable farmers, and we must maintain the entire vineyard sustainably, not just the vines at the top of the hill.

We must also maintain a sustainable community. *That* is a complex matrix of interaction which perhaps the "vines at the top of the hill don't completely portray" if you only look at *them* because they happen to catch more wind.

The Santa Barbara County Vintners' Association has held more than ten of its annual April Vintners' Festivals at *Crossroads*. And just revenues from that event and its auctions alone, provide sustainability in a number of ways. The association itself promotes the vineyards and wines of Santa Barbara County throughout the world, which in turn provides jobs for thousands in those Santa Barbara County vineyards, wineries and tasting rooms. Almost three quarters of the festival attendees are *not* from Santa Barbara County. They do, however, lodge and dine in Santa Barbara County, augmenting not only TOTs, but hospitality and restaurant employment. For over twenty years, the Vintners have been providing scholarships to our local high school seniors, which now includes all six public high schools in our valleys. The community must be sustained.

Crossroads is on a cherished eleven acre vineyard parcel planted years ago. It is part of many parcels the current owner owns, collectively hundreds and hundreds acres throughout the acre agricultural investment in this community. In this sustainable community.

I hope you have the perspective, and wisdom, to see the entire vineyard. Not just the top row of vines.

Please vote in favor of the Crossroads Conditional Use Permit.

Sincerely,

O Box 1558 Santa Ynez, CA 93460
P. 805.688.0881/805.686.5881 FAX



Jim Fiolek, *EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*



October 9th, 2009

Santa Barbara County Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA. 93101

Re: Firestone Consistency Rezone and Conditional User Permit for Special Events at Crossroads,
07CUP-00000-00026

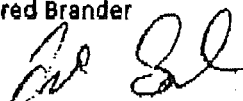
Dear Honorable Supervisors:

I have been a resident of Santa Barbara County for 50 years. I am an owner of a winery and vineyard. I am writing to express my support for your approval of the Conditional Use Permit to allow 25 events per year at Crossroads.

I am very familiar with Crossroads and have attended many community events there. Without this venue, community organizations and non-profits would be at a serious loss for an affordable place to conduct fundraisers, public outreach, meetings, and similar gatherings that make our Valley so special. I support the owner being allowed to conduct events that yield some revenue because that not only provides an opportunity for Firestone and Foley wines to be showcased, but it ensures that maintaining the facility can be done at no net loss to the owner. No one expects a landowner to make a venue available year after year to the community for non-profit events without being able to cover the cost of upkeep. On the other hand, if the owner is forced to charge non-profits for the venue, it reduces the community benefit significantly. Many non-profits depend on the generosity of local landowners who lend their facilities at no charge for fundraising and community outreach.

Crossroads is a beautiful historic venue for events. Please ensure that Crossroads remains available for both commercial and non-profit events for years into the future.

Fred Brander



The Brander Vineyard

Oreana

Winemaking Company

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Crossroads

Dear Supervisors:

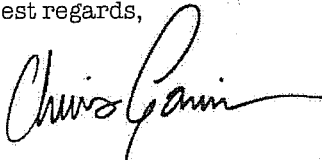
Thirteen years ago, when I graduated the University of California at Santa Barbara, there were 38 wineries in the Santa Barbara County Vintner's Association. On a whim not fully understood at the time, I took a job with a great man named Eli Parker, son of Fess, who taught me the wine business. Following that, I started my own winery, which now employs a dozen or so full-time employees and even more seasonal employees. I am writing to express my support for your approval of the Conditional Use Permit to allow 25 events per year at Crossroads.

I could give you a form-letter response but I choose to spend the time letting you know what this industry and, more importantly, the Vintner's Festival events mean to this vital business that benefits the county immensely. As a region, we compete with every other county in California save for the Salton Sea. Some may view this as a proliferation of alcohol, but the reality is we are blessed to live and work in a state that is beautifully suited for this agricultural product, from the Mexican border to the forests of Oregon. When was the last time someone complained about a walnut or avocado festival (which typically serve beer and wine as well)?

As a coalition we, under the careful guidance of Jim Fiolek, have made efforts (unheard of by many other California winegrowing regions) to prevent drunk driving, over-consumption, and the cheapening of our regions rich history by making it just a party.

For small vintners like myself who are the lifeblood of this dynamic business, the annual festivals our the only opportunity we can afford to participate in to gain customer support and to meet the many restaurateurs, retailers, and wholesalers who visit us only on these occasions. Crossroads is a beautiful historic venue for events. Please ensure that Crossroads remains available for non-profit events for years into the future.

Best regards,



Christian Garvin, Owner/Winemaker/Resident