

MARLIN K. BROWN
2356 Glacier Lane
Santa Maria, CA 93455

November 6, 2015

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Attn: Peter Adam, Steve Lavagnino, Janet Wolf, Doreen Farr, Salud Carbajal

RE: PROPOSED HOOP HOUSE FARMING

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Although I am pro-farmer, I am writing to protest a threatened loss of value for my home. The tenant (farm lease holder) on ground usually planted to row crops now proposes to erect hoop houses immediately behind my subdivision. My subdivision is located at the northeast corner of Clark Avenue and Telephone Road, about one mile east of the 101 Freeway, in unincorporated Santa Barbara County. If built, those hoop houses will destroy my view of the Sierra Madre Mountains and significantly lower the value of my home. To the best of my knowledge, neither the owner of this ground nor his tenant proposes to compensate me for that loss of value.

In general, hoop house farming creates a threat of visual blight and loss of viewscape for our County. If placed close to homes or commercial buildings, these unsightly structures create a serious eyesore. If the Board does not act, these hoop houses may spread throughout Santa Barbara County and have a significant negative impact on the appeal of this area for tourists.

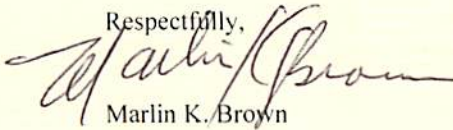
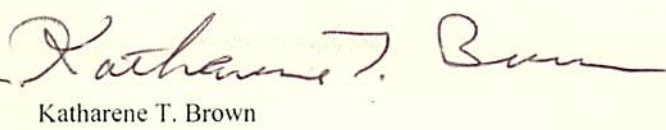
This is to request that the current county ordinance which limits hoop house height to twelve feet (12') be amended in the following ways:

- Hoop houses should be limited to a setback not less than two thousand six hundred forty feet (2,640') or ½ mile from the closest residence, commercial building or traffic artery. This leaves thousands of acres in the Santa Maria Valley for hoop houses. If the farmer obtains the written consent of owners of isolated houses to locate hoop houses closer, they may do so, as long as the setback is observed for traffic arteries.
- Applications for new building permits for homes or commercial buildings to be located closer than the setback distance should be granted with the explicit condition that any and all hoop houses closer than such setback distance are 'grandfathered' and that the new building permit is conditioned on the applicant surrendering any claim to enforce the setback in the future.
- Hoop house height should be limited to eight feet (8'). This limitation allows the cultivation of several types of berries but will have less impact on sightlines.
- Hoop houses should be exempted from CEQA requirements. The limitations set out above will provide protection from human-related environmental factors, which are the only significant impacts made by these structures.
- Land Use Permits for hoop houses should be ministerial and should cost no more than one dollar (\$1) per acre for each 5 year period, PROVIDED that the conditions set out above are met.
- The provisions set out here may be altered only by unanimous vote of the Board of Supervisors.

These provisions offer farmers and owners of farm ground the opportunity to grow high-value berry crops, while still preserving the value of homes and commercial enterprises. These provisions also offer protection going forward against the loss of such opportunities by the farmers and landowners.

I urge you to save me and my neighbors from severe financial loss; and save the tourist appeal of our County, by approving the provisions set out above.

Respectfully,

Marlin K. Brown

Katharene T. Brown

Cc: Santa Barbara County Planning & Development, Attn: Department Head
624 West Foster Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455

Santa Barbara County Building Department, Attn: Department Head
624 West Foster Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455

Santa Barbara County Agriculture Commissioner
624 West Foster Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455

Santa Maria Chamber of Commerce, Attn: Director
614 South Broadway
Santa Maria, CA 93454