

Public Comment - REHall-Carpinteria

Rezone

April 22, 2024

Das Williams, Carpinteria Supervisor  
and the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

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It is our understanding that the March 27 and April 1 planning department public hearings resulted in approval of the rezoning and subsequent development of the Van Wingerden 1 site, which is adjacent to our farming property, parcel 004-013-005.

We also own APN # 004-002-026, 004-002-027, 004-002-028, 004-013-008, and 004-013-010.

Our great grandparents settled in the Carpinteria Valley in 1868 and our family has been farming continuously here since then. We are organic avocado farmers.

We understand the challenges before the county and do not begrudge our neighbor seeking to remedy his own farming challenges along the rural/urban divide. Yet we have grave concerns about the high density Van Wingerden 1 development adversely affecting our farm in a way that may ultimately put us out of business.

Our concerns stem from our accumulated experience farming along the rural/urban divide.

An atmospheric stream of cold air naturally flows from the mountains to the ocean through the Carpinteria Valley. Extremely cold temperatures in winter and early spring can cause frost damage, crop loss, and loss of the actual trees in our orchard. When obstacles interrupt the stream of cold air, this atmospheric phenomenon exacerbates freezing.

In the 1990s on APN number 004-013-010 we had a freeze which caused the loss of two years of crop, five years of production, and heavy damage to trees. This devastating loss can be traced to the development of Santa Monica Gardens compounded by an extremely cold season. Structures impeded the natural flow, backing up and pooling the cold air and causing long term damage to our trees.

We additionally see perpetual stunting of our trees at the southwestern portion of our property (APN # 004-013-005) adjacent to greenhouses which also interrupt the air flow.

By erecting multi story buildings along the Van Wingerden 1 property line, our concern is the frost damage to our business will be amplified by their height and the subsequent pooling of cold air.

Since our farm extends from that property line all the way up to Foothill Road, the impact of freeze may possibly lead to the loss of our entire farm. It will depend on the design, height and placement of the buildings.

We were heartened to hear Commissioner Parke commenting on how alterations to the plan at Montessori could help mitigate the drawbacks on the neighboring community there. Although our voices are not as numerous, we would appreciate similar consideration in the communal planning process in an effort to avoid hardship where it can be mitigated.

Robin Leason, President  
REHall-Carpinteria, Inc.  
CarpMDM Properties, LLC

CC:

County of Santa Barbara Planning Commission:

C. Michael Cooney, Laura M. Bridley, John Parke, Roy Reed and Vincent Martinez

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