

Sheila de la Guerra

Public Comment- Group 5

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 8, 2024 3:54 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: Letter for tomorrow's meeting Re; Chapter 7, Re: Regulating roosters



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Good Afternoon, per my husband's phone conversation with [REDACTED] this afternoon, below is our letter for tomorrow's meeting.
Thank You [REDACTED]

To whom this may concern, I am writing this letter will help the board to make a change in the current ordinance regarding Chapter 7, Article I, and to add Article IX, Roosters, to regulate and to limit the number of roosters by parcel size that may be kept on a single premise in Santa Barbara County.

My family & I purchased our home in Santa Ynez in January of 2020, I have lived in the valley since 1989 & my husband since 1996. We are both long term residents of this incredible community. We both participated in 4H & FFA growing up and now our children are doing the same. In our 4 years at our home, we have raised goats, pigs & turkeys through those programs. We also have hens year-round who love to roam free during the day & eat bugs and hang out on our back porch. We were well aware of the area in which we chose to buy our home and purposely chose Santa Ynez vs some of the surrounding towns. Our lot is 2 acres, and all nine of our surrounding neighbors' lots are an acre or less. We live half a mile from the local high school & YMCA, while we are fortunate to have a nice size yard, it's hardly wide-open country. Our homes are considered an R-1/E-1 Zone area. Per the county's website it states as follows "R-1/E-1 (Single Family Residential). The R-1 and E-1 zones are applied to areas appropriately located for one-family living at a reasonable range of population densities, consistent with sound standards of public health, safety, and welfare. The intent of the R-1 and E-1 zones is to protect the residential characteristics of an area and to promote a suitable environment for family life." Many areas in our town are Zoned as agricultural land, but our neighborhood is not.

You can't imagine our surprise after only a few short nights at our new home when we began to be woken up by countless roosters starting around 4am, they are like a domino effect, one after another until about 10am. After several hours of competing, they quiet down a little, but you will never be able to go more than 5 minutes and not hear one of them go off. You hear them off & on all day long until dark, then they are finally down for the night. Our backyard is approx. 300 feet from the fence we share with our neighbor where his birds are caged & our front yard about 400 feet away.

We are unable to sleep with our windows open when the evenings are warm. During covid when both our children were home doing distance learning they couldn't open their windows or do their schooling outside because both would have the teachers on Zoom ask them about all the noise in the background. It's embarrassing when we entertain outside. Our visitors will often comment "is this for reals" or "is it like this every day?"

There was no disclaimer in the real estate contract when we bought this home that our neighbor had been arrested in the past for illegal rooster fighting activity, that the SWAT had been in our back yard to enter into his yard. We quickly requested case files & notes from the county, and they are so lengthy, he has had so many complaints and issues from so many neighbors.

After speaking to several of those neighbors they told us they have all tried to speak to him over the years and have filed complaints of their own but somehow nothing becomes of it because so many of the rules and or ordinances have such a grey area. When house calls are finally made he has to legally be notified prior to the visit and the birds have been moved or there are only 1-2 of them there. This is a huge stream of income for him & he isn't going to give it up easily. Other neighbors who have owned roosters & had complaints have rehomed them with no hesitation. We have had to do the same when some of our baby chicks turned out to be roosters.

Over the years we contacted animal control to see if they could speak to him just like you would a barking dog and they honestly laughed at me over the phone. They told me there is no such thing as a noise ordinance for roosters. We called environmental health to see if they could do anything regarding all the critters and how gross it is back there with all those cages stacked everywhere and they said NO. We contacted planning & development at the time, and they said due to him having an acre lot he could have birds, but I could never get an answer as to how many birds and if roosters were ok or just hens, and if so, how many. We contacted local law enforcement & they put us in contact with the area's rural deputy, he knew exactly who our nasty neighbor was & was very familiar with his illegal bird fighting hustle and assured us if he could take him down again, he would! But unfortunately, there was nothing from a legal standpoint he could do at this time. The number of hours, emails & phone calls we have spent on this issue is outrageous. We tried to speak to him, and he told us to move if we didn't like it, he was here first, so we knew that wasn't going to work out. We have even spoken to a lawyer but at \$300 an hour we can't afford that and even if she filed an injunction to the court, it's not guaranteed to work in our favor. Both my husband & I have exhausted every avenue possible to try and find a way to fix this on our own and after years of trying we are always at another dead end.

One of the best selling points of purchasing our home was the guest house, we are able to rent that out to help with our mortgage. We moved here in 2020 and have had 4 tenants since then, every single tenant we have ever had has made a complaint to us about the roosters, we assure them that we don't have any & we are always doing everything we can to try & get it under control. How can I in good conscience continue to rent this place out over & over knowing what this new renter will be getting themselves into, but the guest home rental income is something we can't live without.

When this article was published in Noozhawk last month, several family members & friends forwarded it to us because they were so excited that maybe we would finally be able to do something about this issue. I have shed countless tears over this issue. Feeling so happy to have found this amazing home for our family but feeling trapped in this nightmare & feeling like we have no way out. There are noise laws for a reason, for dogs, loud music, work hours and running equipment. How can dozens of excruciatingly loud roosters in a residential neighborhood not be one of them? I hope the new guidelines are voted in & our neighborhood can finally be peaceful & we may even be able to save some innocent roosters' lives as well.

We greatly appreciate your time & are happy to answer any questions you may have.



Sheila de la Guerra

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 6:04 AM
To: sbcob
Cc: Villalobos, David
Subject: FW: Rooster Ordinance

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[REDACTED] letter sent 1/5/2024

[REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 5, 2024 2:57 PM
To: dvillalo@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
Subject: Rooster Ordinance

Dear Mr. Villalobos,

I am writing to you in hopes of amending the upcoming Rooster ordinance to include:

A maximum of 5 roosters for "reasonable family use"

A change in the shelter conditions to ensure hygienic and cruelty free enclosures. Roosters are territorial and therefore need extra room to roost in order to avoid aggression between roosters. Often, one rooster per hen house is enough to fertilize eggs for breeding a reasonable family use.

Roosters crow 24/7 and affect adjacent properties. The noise from one rooster coming from a neighbor can be enough to cause some people to sell their home because of the auditory pollution and detrimental health effects from the persistent noise.

A minimum distance from property lines - 500 feet - a rooster can be housed.

Cebada Canyon and Tepusquet Canyons are EDRNs. Breeding roosters is a business and should require a CUP in an EDRN "Existing, Developed, Residential, Neighborhood". An EDNR project should not be "detrimental to the comfort, convenience, general welfare, health, and safety of the neighborhood and is compatible with the surrounding area."

NOTE: Two parcels were recently sold because of roosters. Realtors asked them to disclose about the roosters and their property values have declined as a direct result.

I wish to remain anonymous while seeking representation because I fear further retribution from neighbors who violate this and other ordinances.

Respectfully,
[REDACTED]