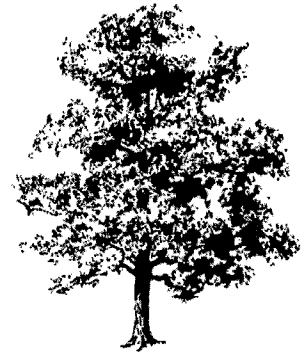


*WE Watch, P.O Box 830, Solvang CA93464*

February 3, 2021

TO: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
FROM: WE Watch, Nancy Emerson, President  
RE: Appeal of Decker Greenhouse Denial



WE Watch has followed proposals for commercial agriculture projects on the 988 Fredensborg Canyon Road property. We have studied our Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan and documents on your website to understand this property and neighborhood. We support continued denial of this project.

**Neighborhood Compatibility:** Property is in our Inner Rural Area and inside the Urban Boundary (Fig. 8 SYV Community Plan). The parcel abuts City of Solvang residential areas. This dead end road as it enters the Inner Rural Area has AG-1 zoning with one acre, then 5 acre, then larger parcels. Near its end, to the right, is a gated residential neighborhood. The area of larger parcels has one farm selling produce and one horse farm. Two other properties board horses or serve as a rescue site for farm animals. The other parcels are being used for residences, some with small personal agricultural activities such as a vegetable garden or a horse.

The land use Inner-Rural area in 2009 was described in the Community Plan as having changed over time in the Valley: “The subdivision of Inner-Rural AG-1 parcels is resulting in more estate ranchettes and associated hobby farms and less commercial agriculture.” This describes Fredensborg Canyon perfectly. It is primarily a Solvang suburb with hobby farming.

So the mass of a 15,648 square foot greenhouse building, though about the height of single family homes, looks like an ag industrial building, not a barn or horse shelter and will loom large in a neighborhood with no other buildings approximating its size. It is much closer to two neighbor homes than to Mr. Decker’s own residence. Also, retaining all 11 parking spaces of the earlier proposed project seems odd as supposedly fewer employees will be needed. The project may not be illegal, but is not appropriate on this size parcel in this location.

**Greenhouse Light Deprivation Curtains:** No information on greenhouse manufacturer/interior light control tools or exterior lighting on buildings was available (latter need to be fully shielded, Kelvin of 3000 or less). Our major Outdoor Lighting Ordinance issue is the impact on the night sky and neighbors of a greenhouse this size that can potentially be lit all night. The only protection offered the night sky and neighbors, without any supporting documentation, is “light deprivation curtains in the

greenhouse to minimize the impact of the lighting necessary for the agricultural processes.”

It is of great concern that these curtains will only minimize night lighting impact, not fully contain it within the greenhouse. Neighboring Solvang has an Outdoor Lighting Ordinance and fully shielded streetlights, protecting the night sky. Unincorporated Fredensborg Canyon has no streetlights and is described as a dark sky neighborhood. Agriculture is not exempt from the SYV Outdoor Lighting Ordinance.

A greenhouse without blackout curtains will cause considerable sky glow and disturb the neighbors. (Even one small skylight in a home causes sky glow.). Simply having blackout curtains is not enough. They must be used whenever lights are on between dusk and dawn. The neighbors already had light trespass problems with his much smaller existing greenhouse. Also, curtains have a short lifetime and need to be replaced as often as every 2-2.5 years to be effective.

Please consider our concerns about neighborhood compatibility and greenhouse interior lighting sky glow and light trespass as you make your decision.

From website GGSStructures, Inc.

Product Specifications for Blackout Light Deprivation: Total control over day length for the most sensitive plants, effective cooling and **light emission control that satisfies neighbors and legislation.**

Product Specification for Light Diffusion: Plants in shade spots receive up to 32% more light, Scatters sunlight onto and into your crops more evenly resulting in healthier and more uniform crops that grow faster and available in open and closed weaves.

From article on Ceres' website: 5 Things Growers Should Look for in a Light Deprivation System

## **2. Complete Blackout**

If a light deprivation system is installed correctly, a cannabis greenhouse should achieve more than 99% light reduction, meaning almost complete darkness. While horticulturists continue to study cannabis' required darkness levels, it's important to consider what you can do to ensure your system reduces light as much as possible. Light leakage comes from two sources: pinhole size gaps in the fabric, and cracks at the edges (where the system should seal to the greenhouse frame). The 'pinhole effect' can be easily countered by using a fabric with multiple layers.

Far more challenging is light leakage that occurs around the edges of the greenhouse frame. This occurs when a light deprivation system is poorly installed or designed and does not fit tightly to the frame. To avoid this, ensure that your greenhouse designer / builder knows what light deprivation system you are using. It's helpful if the greenhouse company designs and sources the system, or works directly with the light deprivation

manufacturer.

### **3. Correct Install**

The design and installation of the system determines its effectiveness at blocking light. If growing in a year round cannabis greenhouse, light deprivation systems are not an area to skimp. Choose a manufacturer with many years in the business, and one that also offers environmental controls. It is also helpful to use a greenhouse designer that specializes in commercial cannabis greenhouses, and knows how to tailor a greenhouse design to easily integrate with a light deprivation system.

### **4. Sidewalls**

Most light deprivation systems easily close over the greenhouse roof. Things get trickier when you consider the sidewalls of the greenhouse, which are often irregularly shaped due to the slope of the structure.

Customizing a blackout system to fit perfectly over the sidewalls is challenging, and thus these areas are the most prone to light leakage. Whether growing in a hoop house or year-round greenhouse, sidewalls can be the weak link in an otherwise effective light deprivation system. Consider them early on in your custom greenhouse design and when selecting your system. Ask your greenhouse designer how they plan to accommodate the sidewalls of the greenhouse.