September 14, 2021

RE: Streamlining the Permit Application Process

Good Morning,

My name is Jude Thilman and I'm speaking on behalf of the Mendocino Cannabis Alliance, MCA, to the issue of Portal efficacy, as referenced in Agenda Item 5h.

Our cultivators applying for permits are bringing problems to our attention. We want to share a few of them to hopefully help expedite the permit process. First, a general Recommendation:

MCA strongly urges the County to provide an Appendix G #15168 checklist that can be accessed through the County website. That would help a lot.

Here are some specific examples of issues that have stalled, or sidelined, applications.

1. Discrepancies between the current "acceptable" language suggested on the County website vs language previously approved in County Appendix G templates. Please settle on, and provide, standard language as required in the application.

2. An applicant explained language on the application form as "It is indicated in the Cultivation and Operations Plan" Staff responded "Cultivation and Operations Plan for which agency?" That stalled the application.

3. An applicant wrote "The site features an on-site domestic water well and on-site septic system." County staff replied that "The use of 'domestic' here gives the impression that there may be a separate commercial water source." That delayed the application processing.

4. An applicant planted over 20 cedar trees to block the view of a large illegal grow on land next to them. Staff acknowledged seeing the trees on a satellite picture, but mistakenly listed them as "additional canopy space." The application was put on hold until Staff performs a site visit, which has proven to be very difficult to schedule. And staff is unwilling to accept photos as proof that this is not canopy.

5. One applicant's primary power source is listed in County records as a generator. However, all permit renewals since 2018 include proof of their PG&E installation and its use as the primary power source. Staff needs to simply update and correct the old inaccurate information.

This all may seem somewhat trivial. But first of all, they are common problems. And more importantly, each time an application is rejected for format, grammar, punctuation, wording issues, outdated information -- that application is delayed. Once corrections have been submitted the application is placed at the bottom of the stack and must wait in line alongside new portal submissions and other applications in the queue.

We ask you to please help "fix" this flawed process.

Thank you for your kind attention.

MCA