

CORINNE POWELL
Ukiah, CA

June 9, 2020

Mendocino County Supervisors
501 Low Gap Road
Ukiah, CA 95482

Re: June 10, 2020 Board of Supervisors Agenda
Items 6a) and 6b)

Honorable Chair Haschak and Supervisors,

In addition to my comments submitted on June 5, 2020, asking that the Board postpone discussion on agenda items 6a) and 6b), more information has come forward thanks to the memos provided by the Mendocino Cannabis Alliance (MCA) and other comments from the public.

All of you have expressed at multiple times during the evolution of cannabis regulations in our County that “we” must protect the small farmers, historically and today, the backbone of the County’s economy. Now all backs are against the wall!

To avoid tangential and/or non-productive use of staff and stakeholders time I strongly request that the Board direct staff to:

- 1) Collaborate more transparently with stakeholders and make public the referenced “Appendix G” or “checklist” reportedly under negotiation between the Director of Planning and Building and state officials. Stakeholders are the most informed regarding the multiplicity of regulations, from all regulatory agencies, and are best suited to shed light on this process.
- 2) Acknowledge consensus from all public comments (as of 3:00 p.m. 6/9/20) is for County efforts to focus on resolution of CEQA’s “site-specific environmental review” requirement and the County’s MND. From all rationales presented by the public, CEQA approval of Phase 1, permittee is the primary necessity. Staff must move beyond patience until our CEQA compliance is achieved. Cultivators labored for years under false assurances from CEO staff that our MND was a secure and compliant document. Now we have six months for a remedy! Direct staff to report back on resolution in late July.
- 3) Direct Planning and Building staff and the County Counsels’ staff to also report back to the Board in late July with their progress to secure a determination with CDFW and CDFA that the Sensitive Species Review (SSR), currently required in the existing cultivation ordinance text to be performed by CDFW, be amended to allow County staff or Third Party Inspectors (as were used during the 9.31 Program) to conduct the SSR.

As the MCA Memo of June 7, 2020 reinforced, any County efforts to resolve CEQA requirements and County ordinance amendments must be coordinated with and approved by state agencies. Any staff time available must be devoted to these negotiations and the protection of our small farmers; “...we cannot, in our enthusiasm to fix what is broken, take the chance that all of those who have persevered and suffered each transition and iteration, will run out of time to transition to a State Annual License, or worse, lose their Provisionals.” (MCA Memo 6/7/20)

It is imperative to keep legal, licensed cultivators in Mendocino County. We need some “teeth” in the “game” now. County staff must be directed as suggested above, no more, no less. Focus on CEQA and SSR resolution. Postpone all other considerations, as important as you think they are.

Thank you for your endless attention to cannabis issues.

Sincerely,

Corinne Powell
Laughing Farm, a MBC