

8/4/2020

From: Marilyn Magoffin  
Covelo Ca

To: Mendocino County Board of Supervisors  
501 Low Gap Road  
Ukiah, CA 95482

Re Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance, Agenda item 5b

Dear Chair Haschak and Members of the Board

I am writing to express my concern re the current Cannabis cultivation ordinance and the state of cannabis cultivation in Mendocino County. Until there is a clear plan for how Cannabis is to be grown in Mendocino County, including protection of land and water resources, safety of all citizens, protection of the visual beauty and surroundings of the environment, there should be no changes made to the current ordinance. We, the general public, are counting on the Board of Supervisors, to consider the long-range impact of cannabis cultivation on our County. We need a clear and non-legalese presentation to us so we may understand clearly and what is being done to protect us, while developing a cultivation ordinance that will allow responsible growers to sustain themselves. There should be no expansion of cultivation into sensitive rangelands. There should be no expansion of cultivation period until we have evaluated all the current grows and eliminated the illegal ones

As an 8 year resident of Covelo and a 30 year resident of Albion I have seen the exponential grow of cannabis in our County, especially in Covelo. When I voted for the legalization of cannabis I was hopeful that the illegal grows would be eliminated and that serious farmers would be able to apply for and get permits to grow marijuana safely and responsibly. I supported the legalization of marijuana, both as a recreational drug and also as a medicinal plant.

Instead people who had been growing illegally were given amnesty and allowed to become legal. People who had never grown were not allowed to get a permit because they had not ever grown before. As a law-abiding citizen, this seemed unfair and unjust to me. As a property owner, it bode the question "will my property have less value now since I have never grown?".

In good faith I voted for the legalization of cannabis with the understanding that it would not be allowed to be grown (except a small number of plants for personal use) near schools. Then came the Overlays, approved by the County Board of Supervisors. A staff member of Planning and Building listened to my concerns about the Covelo Overlay, which does allow legacy growers to grow in downtown Covelo near the library, coffee shop, elementary and high schools. He assured me those grows would be found to be illegal since the regulations and restrictions on them would not be possible for the person obtaining the permit to achieve.

While relieved that my town could resume some degree of normalcy for a town it also seemed disingenuous to allow someone the hope that they could become legal.

The complicating issue is that cannabis is not like any other agricultural crop. It can bring crime, loose and vicious dogs, hoop houses and black plastic fences, 24/7 lights. It can ruin a neighbor's sense of peace and safety and drive down their property value. Who wants to buy a home next to a grow?

Meanwhile, the growth of illegal grows have increased exponentially along with crime, loose, vicious dogs, 24/7 lights and gun shots at night. Neighbors and friends have left the valley due to concerns about cannabis.

This is our current situation, as I see it. I am hopeful that you will move forward judiciously, thinking well about all County residents.

Marilyn Magoffin