

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item 3A - Chapter 22.18

Re: Correct the Zoning Table to limit mixed-light (hoophouses) to a maximum of 10,000 square feet.

Chair Gjerde and Members of the Board,

The single largest unintended consequence of Chapter 10A.17 was the proliferation of hoophouses.

So why is the Board considering an ordinance that will allow an increase of hoophouses from 10,000 square feet to 22,000 square feet per parcel?

In 2020 when the Board directed development of a cultivation ordinance that allowed for expansion the Board was also very clear that hoophouses would be limited to a maximum of 10,000 square feet. That is, expansion of outdoor, yes, expansion of mixed-light (hoophouses) no. There was no ambiguity that this was a trade off to allow increased cultivation but only outdoors.

On April 19 the Board majority was in agreement to strictly limit hoophouses, perhaps to a maximum of 500 or 1,000 square feet. Toward the end of the discussion of Chapter 22.18 staff pointed out that the Zoning Table allowed for mixed-light of up to 22,000 square feet. After some discussion the Board directed staff to return with options.

On April 27 staff presented options which still included mixed-light of up to 22,000 square feet on the zoning table. And it remained on the Zoning Table when the ordinance was referred back to the Planning Commission. And it remains on the Zoning Table today.

Despite clear Board direction to limit hoophouses (which inevitably would limit mixed-light) the Board is poised to approve an increase in hoop houses to up to 22,000 square feet. How did this happen?

Discussions of cannabis policy have usually been long and sometimes lacking in focus at least partly because one of your colleagues has consistently attempted to sabotage the majority direction of the Board. It is also somewhat confusing that "mixed-light" sounds innocuous and does not create the instant visualization that "hoophouses" conveys. Finally, the Zoning Table has always been presented as a separate document from the rest of the ordinance and has usually been discussed as an afterthought. I believe this explains why the allowance for up to 22,000 square feet of mixed-light (hoophouses) remains in the draft ordinance. Please correct this oversight and remove the allowance for up to 22,000 square feet of mixed-light (hoophouses) from the Zoning Table.

Please affirm Board direction for a maximum of 10,000 square feet of hoophouses.

John McCowen