

Wednesday, August 12, 2020

Regarding Roc Squatch Farms

- APN 516-211-025,
- Permit PLN-12176-CUP
- APPS 12176

To the Humboldt Planning Department and the Board of Supervisors,

I, Rodney Costa, am the owner of the land on which my brother, Rocci Costa, would like to farm. My brother was denied a permit on March 5th, 2020 based on 'fuzziness' about responsibility for the land, and concerns of public safety which I will address here.

At the hearing [approx timestamp 1:58:35] Committee Member Noah Levy said, that "the current applicant was not really in charge of the property for most of that time but some of that time it's a little bit fuzzy where that responsibility took over."

I'd like to clarify what was referred to as 'fuzzy' by Mr. Levy. My brother and I signed a lease agreement in December of 2016 expecting that he would be approved to begin his farm within a few of months. We never imagined that this process would last almost 4 years. No money exchanged hands as our verbal and handshake agreement was that he would begin payments once he was permitted.

Rocci then pursued the eviction of the squatters who were on the property. Now whether he did that as an exceptional tenant or if the lease is disregarded he did it without any responsibility for the property, either way he pursued resolution and improvements to the public safety through evicting the squatters.

Mr Levy continued, "I am not confident that approving this project wouldn't be detrimental to public health, safety and welfare. I sympathize with the owner who I would like to take it as word is earnestly and genuinely trying to do the right thing. I take the point Mr Edrington that this ordinance is intended to retroactively improve properties that have been neglected, and this one surely is, but I also feel that the history associated with this property makes me not inclined to trust that all the commitments that we're requiring could be met."

How Mr Levy would arrive at that conclusion, when my brother does not own the property, has not been responsible for any of the documented issues on the parcel, and has taken earnest and genuine action to make improvements, is a mystery to me. My

brother is not responsible for the history of the property, I am. I have no financial stake in Rocci's farm except to collect rent once that's possible. Rocci has been and wishes to continue being part of the solution for the Warren Creek agricultural area. I would expect the Commission and the Board to distinguish between substantiated issues with the neighbors, which ended with the eviction of the squatters, and those that are unsubstantiated claims and disregard the latter.

The County has repeatedly taken the position and has the evidence to support that permitted grows increase public safety, as well as property values. The Warren Creek Road agricultural area would be well served to have a legal cannabis farm in it's community.

I therefore ask the Board of Supervisors to consider the facts and to rule in favor of permitting RocSquatch Farm.

Rodney Costa
Address

