

McClenagan, Laura

From: The Turney Clan <jgturney@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 18, 2021 8:40 AM
To: Planning Clerk; abongio@humboldtcsd.org
Subject: Request moratorium on permitting cannabis grows -- tonight's meeting

To the Humboldt County Planning Commission,

My schedule does not permit my attendance at tonight's Planning Commission meeting, but I do have a statement that I would like shared at the meeting if possible. It is imperative that the planning commission institute a moratorium to better regulate the rapidly growing cannabis cultivation permitting.

The rate of cannabis cultivation site permits has been growing at an alarming rate, especially in rural neighborhoods and communities throughout Humboldt County. The public has been extremely vocal in their disapproval of the planning commission's "rubber stamping" new permits without, at the very least, investigating and permitting the 1500 sites that are operating on interim permits.

I am the superintendent of a rural school district and the planning commission has approved four cannabis cultivation sites within two miles of our school and is about to approve another cultivation site on a parcel that is within 600 feet of a bus stop, but the applicant has pinpointed a spot 400 feet from the edge of their parcel making the proposal pass the set back limits. However, the planning department has admitted that there is not enough staffing to enforce restrictions and regulations. I have a four year old child who walks down that dirt, one-lane road from where his parents park to the bus and that path will now be alongside a cannabis cultivation site with traffic, heavy equipment, heavy security, and people who do not live in the area and do not understand the dynamics and social expectations of living in a close-knit mountain neighborhood. The planning commission's approval of this cultivation site is an abhorrent disregard for the safety of our citizens. There is a permit expansion on an existing cultivation site 2 miles from the school on Tim Mullen road, also on a one-lane road on which our bus travels. There is currently another land-owner applying for another cultivation site across the road from our bus stop on Barry road, also on a one-lane road on which our bus travels. Our elementary school is surrounded by cannabis cultivation sites. Our bus is forced to share a narrow, winding road that has no shoulder on either side with large trucks hauling oversized trailers full of product. The traffic has exploded on our mountain road in the last six years (I have lived on Kneeland Mountain for 18 years and have seen it directly) and it is largely due to the transport of cannabis, fertilizers, tankards of water, and soil on flatbed trucks and semis. This is putting our young citizens in unnecessary harm.

Furthermore, the school relies on enrollment. As more and more cannabis cultivation sites are developed, less land is available for homesteads and, therefore, fewer potential students from families moving into the area. In fact, families are leaving the area because every open space is quickly being converted into a commercial cannabis cultivation site. Our night sky is no longer dark. Our wildlife has been pushed off the mountain and is now being reported in town (mountain lions and bears). And parents of students at our school are consistently commenting on the smell of the school room when the wind blows in a specific direction.

Kneeland School was established in 1880 and is now under genuine risk because little is being done to truly measure the effects the abundant number of cannabis cultivation sites is having on our rural environments, communities, and neighborhoods. As hard as I struggle to keep our students safe, healthy, and well-educated in order to keep our school alive, my hands are completely tied when it comes to the cannabis invasion. All that I can do is plead for someone to listen.

Thank you for your consideration.

Greta