



May 2, 2019

County of Mendocino  
Department of Planning and Building Services  
Attn: Susan Summerford, Planner III  
860 N Bush St  
Ukiah, CA 95482  
VIA EMAIL: [pbs@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:pbs@mendocinocounty.org)

Re: Rezoning and General Plan Amendment, Case # GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003

The City of Ukiah Community Development Department respectfully submits the following comments for consideration regarding the aforementioned project, Case # GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003:

- 1. The goals and policies of the Ukiah Valley Area Plan do not appear to be addressed in this Rezoning and General Plan Amendment. Although the City of Ukiah generally does not comment on Ukiah Valley Area Plan (UVAP) goals and policies, as the UVAP is a component of the Mendocino County General Plan, the UVAP was envisioned as one that would “meet the needs of the County, as well as shared needs of the City” [of Ukiah], “by addressing the important issues that affect how the area will grow...” and “The Ukiah Valley is understood to be one community with collaborative decision-making between County and City agencies.” As additional projects are proposed within the City of Ukiah Sphere of Influence, it is important the City and County work together to ensure the vision of this Area Plan is realized.**

As stated in Section 1.2 of the UVAP:

*The policies in other County General Plan elements may supplement those in the UVAP, but citizens and decision makers will rely most heavily on the UVAP for guidance on issues of importance in the Ukiah Valley.*

–And–

*If policy or implementing action is in conflict with the adopted General Plan, the policy or implementing action from the UVAP shall take precedence over the General Plan.*

Specifically, we ask that you please address how the proposed rezoning and general plan amendment (the “project”) conforms to the following:

A. UVAP vision statements:

*We desire our community to remain as compact as possible and prefer that our communities grow inward and upward before expanding.*

–And–

*The agricultural lands needed to enhance economic vitality and sustained identity of Ukiah as a rural agricultural community are protected from incompatible land uses and development.*

–And–

*Communities have a compact urban form surrounded by open space and agricultural land.*

From the application, the purpose of the project is “to allow for the future subdivision and home building on approximately 10 acres.” The project appears incompatible with all three of the vision statements listed above, in that 1) there would be outward expansion into productive agricultural lands, lands that have not previously been utilized for suburban residential purposes; 2) the project would rezone prime farmland that is intended to be protected under the UVAP; and 3) the project would remove existing open space and agricultural land that currently acts as a buffer to existing residential development in the vicinity.

B. UVAP, Section 4, Community Design: CD1.1g, CD2.1a

CD1.1g: the project appears to expand into agricultural lands not around the existing Talmage village center. Please describe how the project focuses development around the existing small town center of Talmage.

CD2.1a: as stated above, the project would remove open space and agricultural land. CD2.1a calls for limiting building intensity between Valley communities. The project appears to intensify development between the Valley communities of the City of Ukiah and the unincorporated community of Talmage. Please address how this project would achieve consistency with UVAP Policy CD2.1a.

C. UVAP, Section 9, Open Space and Conservation: OC3.1b, OC3.4a

OC3.1b: Agricultural Land Conversion Criteria- this Policy states the requirements for projects proposing to convert Agricultural Lands to the non-agricultural classification. One of the four requirements is as follows:

- *The project site is substantially unusable for agricultural purposes due to encroaching adjacent nonagricultural uses.*

Carrying designations of both unique and prime farmland, with a part of the property that appears to still be in agricultural production, please address how this project would achieve consistency with UVAP Policy OC3.1b.

**2. The environmental analysis conducted on the proposed project does not appear sufficient for determining that the project will have a less than significant environmental impact.**

Page A-2 notes “Plans, Policies, and Goals of the Mendocino County General Plan and UVAP were reviewed and analyzed to determine potential significant environmental impacts.” Statutes and Guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) should be analyzed to determine environmental impacts.

Of particular concern is the property’s designation as both prime and unique farmland. Also of concern is the property’s location within a “high-risk” flood zone, Zone A, and in close proximity to the Mayacama earthquake fault zone. These considerations should be carefully analyzed to determine the appropriate level of environmental review. Even though details of the future project have not been given in the application, a rezoning from AG to SR will likely be a growth inducing action and environmental impacts under CEQA should be analyzed.

**3. The application does not provide density details for the future housing development, so it is unclear if septic capacity would be adequate for such a development.**

The project proposes rezoning to a General Plan designation of SR- suburban residential- but the application does not make clear what density limitations would exist for the future housing project. We have concerns about the adequacy of septic for a housing development at this location, and more specifically, if septic capacity is not adequate, we have concerns that the City may be required to extend sewer services due to the potential resulting septic failures.

Please describe future residential density limitations for the proposed housing development with a description of the adequacy of a septic system to serve this development.

**Conclusion**

It is our opinion that consideration of rezoning and a general plan amendment should be undertaken at such time that full project details are known, and accordingly, the application appears premature at this time. Additionally, many of the goals and policies of the Ukiah Valley Area Plan, the prevailing land use document for this project, should be addressed to confirm project consistency. We suggest the environmental analysis for the proposed project should be re-analyzed to determine future



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

foreseen environmental impacts and any proposed septic service be carefully evaluated to ensure adequate capacity for a future housing project.

Please include the City of Ukiah Community Development Department in future correspondence related to this item.

Sincerely,

Craig Schlatter  
Director

September 25, 2019

To: County of Mendocino, Dept. of Planning & Building Services  
860 N. Bush St.,  
Ukiah, CA 95482

Mendocino County

SEP 30 2019

Planning & Building Services

cc: Carre Brown, BOS Chair/Supervisor Dist. 1  
John McCowan, BOS Supervisor Dist. 2

Re: Case#: GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003, Rezoning & General Plan Amendment Request

Ukiah Valley needs more housing, well-planned housing. As residents of Sanford Ranch Road since 2000, we've experienced the negative impact of living across the street from a pear orchard and the drift from agricultural spraying. Now that the pear trees are gone, we are glad to be able to leave our doors and windows open according to the weather instead of worrying if it's a spray day.

At the same time, other aspects of life on Sanford Ranch Road make worrisome the thought of changing land from ag to residential without significant County mitigation.

The road is often a speedway between Knob Hill and Talmage Rd., unfavorable to children and pets. Most residents have to back out of their driveways to exit their property, and they also have to dodge cars to cross the street to retrieve their mail from mailboxes. If more homes and traffic are introduced to the neighborhood, will the County install traffic-calming speed bumps, and will it relocate mailboxes to the same side of the street as the homes they accompany? Will it enforce posted speed limits?

Mendocino Transit Authority does not offer fixed bus route service to the area. When it did, the bus stop on Talmage was too far away from Sanford Ranch Road to be practical. So new housing would assume that new residents use cars.

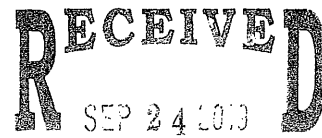
Every rainy season brings with it the threat of being cut off from town, either because of water buildup where Sanford Ranch Road meets Talmage, or because of the low-lying area to the west on Talmage that flooded so dramatically last year. Will these flood-prone roadways be corrected before introducing more at-risk homes/residents? Will, the additional cement that accompanies housing create more runoff/water displacement once the sponge effect of agricultural land is lost?

A creek runs through the property and the property is next to a fault line. Will steps be taken to protect the creek from building/sceptic issues, and also building specs be in place to protect new home residents from higher-than-standard earthquake worries?

We appreciate the Commission Staff's inclusion of these concerns as it prepares to make its recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

 David J. Nieskoski

Kathy Johnson & David Nieskoski  
1100 Sanford Ranch Rd., Ukiah



September 24, 2019

Planning & Building Services

Susan Summerford  
Planner III  
County of Mendocino  
Planning and Building Services  
860 N Bush Street  
Ukiah, Ca 95482

Re: Case GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003  
Date filed: January 28, 2019  
Owner/Applicant: Donald J Lucchesi

I would like to speak to this proposal for a General Plan amendment and have my observations and mitigations considered before the hearing date of October 17, 2019.

I am a resident of Talmage and live adjacent to the agricultural property that is the subject of this GP amendment request. I have lived here since 1976 and know the applicant and the Talmage area well. I mean no harm with my objection to this request, but wish to find a solution that is satisfactory to the applicant and the Talmage community.

A similar request for a GP designation change was brought before the Planning Commission in the early eighties and was denied. It was appealed to the Board of Supervisors and was denied there also. The reasons for these denials have not changed but the amount of land involved has.

At the time of the original application, the entire agricultural holding was included and the impact that SR zoning would have had on the traffic flow, septic involvement, lack of community infrastructure and, most importantly, adverse impact on neighboring agricultural usage resulted in the double denials. Of course, the tax base changes would have been negative for the county when compared to the increased services that are necessary in SR vs. AG designations.

While the amount of property is reduced in this request, the density of the SR zoning is still a problem for all the reasons that existed before. Therefore, I would like to suggest that the Planning Department and Commission consider altering the density from SR to RR zoning, which would mitigate many of the concerns and problems that occur with mixed use and reduce the impact on the Talmage community infrastructure.

I appreciate your consideration of this suggestion and will follow up with a phone call before the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. I am available to you, if you would like to discuss this further, at 707-272-1634.

Valerie Johnson  
2049 Glenrob Ave, Ukiah, Ca 95482

October 15, 2019

RECEIVED  
OCT 15 2019

Planning & Building Services

Susan Summerford  
Planner III  
County of Mendocino  
Planning and Building Services  
860 N Bush Street  
Ukiah, Ca 95482

Re: Case GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003  
Rebuttal to Proposed Decision

First, I would like to thank you for encouraging my interest and advocacy in this General Plan Amendment decision. It is heartening to know that land use issues are being handled by professionals such as yourself.

Having read the Planning Department's review and recommendations, I am disappointed that the SR designation was carried forward, rather than an recommendation to down-grade the density to the RR level. However, I also understand that there will be another time to discuss density when the actual proposal for housing is brought to the Commission. I will be advocating at that time.

Generally speaking, any conversion of AG land to residential is a loss in many ways but the reality of farming is that it is not what it used to be. Farmers, like Mr Luchessi, are faced with difficult decisions in their later years and this is one of those situations. I believe, with



professional planning, concern for the community and the environment and realistic expectations for the impact of AG conversion, the housing project that will follow this GP amendment can be a win-win for all concerned.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Johnson  
PO 94  
Talmage, Ca 95481  
707-272-1634  
[IAS@Pacific.net](mailto:IAS@Pacific.net)

Mendocino County

OCT 16 2019

Planning & Building Services

To: Mendocino County, Department of Planning and Building Services

Cc: Board of Supervisors

Case GP-2019-0002/R 2019-0003

We are writing this letter in opposition of the proposed General Plan Amendment of the Sanford Ranch Rd property in Talmage.

We moved to this rural part of our community to live with out the busy life of living in town. We have quiet nights to sleep peacefully, you can see the stars without streetlights and look out our windows and see the beautiful vineyards and until recently the pear orchards. We have the pleasure of seeing and enjoying all the wonderful wildlife we have on and around our properties. All the animals and birds will be displaced. The Sanford Ranch Road carries heavy traffic, and most do not obey the speed limit which can be dangerous when crossing the road to retrieve mail. We have many people in our community who run or walk with their children and pets and we do not have sidewalks on most of Sanford Ranch Rd. Is there a traffic study on the effects of more vehicles traveling on this road? More vehicles cause more pollution and poorer air quality.

We have lived here for 18 years and for most of those winter months the area being proposed for development has accumulated standing water. This development would create significant storm water runoff from that property. Has there been a study on the effects of polluted water runoff into our streams and creeks? What about the possibility of a higher crime rate?

We hope you take into consideration all our concerns when you make this decision for our neighborhood.

Thank you,

Mark & Sharon Wedegaertner  
1460 Sanford Ranch Rd. Talmage

*Mark Wedegaertner*  
*Sharon Wedegaertner*

Mary Ann Villwock  
1580 James Street  
Ukiah, CA 95482

October 14, 2019

County of Mendocino  
Department of Planning and Building Services  
860 N. Bush Street  
Ukiah, CA 95482  
via email: [pbs@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:pbs@mendocinocounty.org)

Re: Application for rezoning and general plan amendment, #GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003

Dear Department of PBS and Planning Commission:

I live on James Street overlooking the location of this proposed development. The agricultural acreage surrounded by Talmage and Sanford Ranch roads is what anchors the feeling of open space and country ambiance for the entire surrounding area.

The decision to amend the general plan and re-zone property – especially to transform prime and unique ag land that has been in production for 75 years --into a suburban residential area will have a dramatic and lasting impact and should not be done without a thorough and exhaustive analysis and exploration of all possible consequences. The staff report/draft negative declaration does not provide that.

The Mendocino County General Plan and the Ukiah Valley Area Plan place a high priority on preserving agriculture. This staff report basically admits that this application would be step one in rezoning the entire acreage surrounded by Talmage and Sanford Ranch roads into residential developments which is absolutely not in accordance with the general plan or UVAP. To conclude that “this project will not adversely affect the long-term integrity of ... agricultural uses in the area” is ludicrous and disingenuous. In fact, the report goes on to state that “[t]he subject site is a good example of a historic agricultural use that now appears to be out of place in the increasingly residential enclave”. This opinion of staff clearly indicates that additional similar applications would be given increasingly favorable weight.

The staff report states that “the project will not result in a need for unintended

expansion of infrastructure in conflict with other policies”. Then the report goes immediately on to say that “... improvements to existing facilities to accommodate a higher density and residential standards would need to be pursued...”. Presumably, this reference is to increasing facilities/services in the vicinity of Talmage (which has minimal services) which would, in turn, create a whole new set of problems and likely exacerbate the strip-mall effect along Talmage Road, all of which is contrary to the general plan/UVAP goal of avoiding this kind of thing. I believe the UVAP requires that the Ukiah Valley be considered as a whole and thus input from the City of Ukiah would be necessary in this decision.

The staff report contains no mention of the frequent flooding in Talmage and the fact that Talmage and Sanford Ranch roads are frequently closed because of flooding. Also, I see no mention in the report of sewer treatment. There is no sewer system in this area.

I, and others in my neighborhood, think this proposal is a very bad idea. At the very least, it should be analyzed much more thoroughly with regard to the goals of the

from the surrounding residents.

Very truly yours,



Mary Ann Villwock

cc: Carre Brown, Supervisor, Dist. 1  
cc: John McCowen, Supervisor Dist. 2

October 16, 2019

County of Mendocino  
Department of Planning & Building Services  
860 N. Bush St.  
Ukiah, CA. 95482

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OCT 16 2019  
Planning & Building Services

Cc: Carre Brown, Vice Chair Mendocino County BOS  
John McCowen, Chair, Mendocino County BOS

RE: Rezoning and General Plan Amendment, Case GP 2019\_0002/R\_2019-0003

I am opposed to this proposal and would ask that my comments be considered prior to the hearing scheduled for October 17, 2019. I am a business owner in Ukiah and have owned a home on Sanford Ranch Rd. for the past 14 years.

In your notice you write ...“while the proposed project does seek to convert agricultural land designated as ‘prime’ or ‘unique’ farmland to residential, it can be supported by documented goals, policies and actions that under certain circumstances, and provided specific characteristics are present, the reclassification of such lands potentially provide a boon to the community.” I am wondering, what exactly are these potential “boons to the community?” I refer to the surrounding communities living on and in close proximity to Sanford Ranch Rd. which surrounds the vineyard, as well as the town of Talmage, all of whom will be drastically impacted.

In addition to serious concerns noted by the City of Ukiah Community Development Department, please let me know what you intend to do about the following:

1) **Traffic:** In the last 6 months, there has been a significant increase in traffic along Sanford Ranch Rd. possibly due to all the new housing being built off Redimeir Rd., now coming over Knob Hill Rd. and onto Sanford Ranch Rd. to go into town or the Airport Blvd. shopping area. This started long before the new construction at Orchard and Perkins so presumably it will continue. In addition, are there plans to widen Sanford Ranch Rd. in order to handle more traffic that

the proposed 20 new residences will add, conceivably adding 2-4 times (or more) the numbers of vehicles on the road than there are now?

2) **Noise:** Ambient noise levels will absolutely be amplified with the rezoning of the land and building of infrastructure required. Not to mention additional noise levels that would come with such high-density housing. The vineyard acts as a noise buffer without which will significantly alter the peace and quiet that living in this rural community provides.

3) **Recreational use:** Currently on any given morning or late afternoon, you will see community residents of all ages along Sanford Ranch Rd., walking, jogging, pushing baby strollers, bicycling, walking with their children, enjoying the natural beauty and quiet that, for the most part, still exists in this part of the Ukiah environs. With the high-density housing development proposed, all this will disappear.

4) **Wildlife and biodiversity:** There are many species of birds, beneficial insects and animals that will be impacted by this proposal.

The health and well-being of a community depends on careful planning, decisions and input based on the actual needs of the community including the natural environment. To paraphrase Joni Mitchell, "you pave paradise" and put up a high-density suburban residential mixed-use housing project. Let's hope not.

Respectfully,



Teresa Wells  
1450 Sanford Ranch Rd.  
Ukiah 95482  
(707) 462-6801

OCT 16 2019

Planning & Building Services

October 16, 2019

County of Mendocino Dept. of Planning and Building Services  
860 N. Bush St.  
Ukiah CA 95482

Case#:GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003

We feel that everyone on Sanford Ranch Rd should have received a letter, informing us that a request had been submitted to change the parcel of land from Ag to Residential and this was not the case. The change, if approved would impact all of Sanford Ranch Rd.

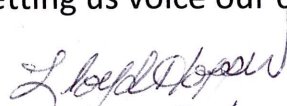
#### Flooding and Traffic

We have lived on Sanford Ranch Rd since 1968. In the fall and winter, when the rain begins, we are always very concerned about flooding, this is a major problem in the area. The creek, at the bridge on Sanford Ranch Rd and Talmage Rd, becomes jammed with branches, small trees, limbs and very large stumps and the creek overflows. In addition to the creek overflowing, in the last few years water has been coming through the pear orchard, or now what was the pear orchard, flooding Sanford Ranch Rd. and continues onto Hops Estate Rd, which becomes a small creek. At times, because of flooding, you cannot get to town and if you are in town, you can't get home. Can and will this problem be solved if homes are built?

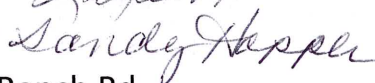
We have often referred to Sanford Ranch Rd as "The Race Track". Will something be done about this, before more people and cars are using Sanford Ranch Rd?

Thank you for letting us voice our concerns.

Lloyd Hopper



Sandy Hopper



1020 Sanford Ranch Rd.

October 15, 2019

Mendocino County

Loren McGarvey  
1480 Sanford Ranch Road  
Ukiah CA, 95482  
(707) 367-3626

OCT 16 2019

Planning & Building Services

To: County of Mendocino Department of Planning & Building Services  
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors  
860 North Bush Street  
Ukiah CA 95482

Re: Public Hearing Notice, Case # GP\_2019-0002R\_2019-0003

Property of Donald J Lucchesi, Proposal to change zoning from Agricultural AG 40 (Zoning) & AG 40 (GP) to Suburban Residential (SR) to allow for future subdivision & residential housing.

I am writing to communicate my opposition to this proposal. I have been a resident on Sanford Ranch Road for 37 years. I purchased my home in this area so that I could live in a rural atmosphere with all of the benefits that come with that: health, safety, separation from the busy city life, presence of wildlife and quality of life. I am adamantly opposed to any housing developments being built in the area relevant to this Public Hearing for many reasons.

It is my understanding that part of the mission of MCP& B is to "Enhance the quality of life in Mendocino County". The proposed change in zoning will in fact decrease the quality of life for my family and all of residents who live on Sanford Ranch Road, as well as other neighborhoods in this east side of the City of Ukiah.

In this area many residents utilize Sanford Ranch Road for walking & bicycling to get the exercise we need to maintain our health. Children also walk and wait in the street to catch busses to school. In the many years I have lived here the road has remained the same width, with no sidewalks and with little improvements. Traffic has increased to the point that it makes continuing to walk, jog or bike a hazard for children and adults with the existing population numbers. If the proposal goes through, heavy traffic will increase thus limiting further local access to walking, jogging and biking options - that are currently available throughout the City of Ukiah.

In addition, there is much wildlife in the vineyards that we will lose. For 37 years we have enjoyed watching deer, rabbits, fox, birds of many varieties, many of them migrating through this area, that live and frequent here. There is no information on the website as to the results



of any environmental impact studies that have been performed that will address this issue, as well as impacts on air and water quality.

I would like to also mention that every year this area experiences flooding and road closures on Talmage Road which, unless addressed with major road and water management modifications will only increase traffic problems/hazards with this proposal.

Does the County have plans to make all necessary modifications and improvements to the roads in this area (adding sidewalks & bike lanes) for the safety of children and families?

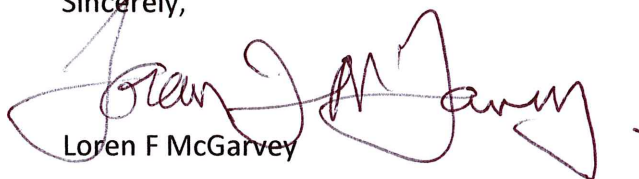
It seems that increasing housing in an area, that is already at high risk of fires is a mistake and will increase the fire risks.

I understand that for any development that is approved there is a certain percentage of low income and high density housing required within that development. After working in human services in this County for over 26 years I am well aware of the resources needed for many low income individuals and families. I assume there are plans in place between the County and MTA to reinstate bus access to Ukiah from this area to address the needs of the families and low income residents who will move here. In addition, to provide access of low income families to social services that is only available in central Ukiah.

I hereby urge the County Planning and Building and Mendocino County Board of Supervisors to oppose this proposal. It is clear to me and my family that if this development does move forward we will begin to take steps to leave this area as it will no longer meet our physical residence needs!

Before any final decisions are made I would like to have access to more information that addresses how the County will address the concerns I have listed above.

Sincerely,



Loren F McGarvey

CC: Carre Brown, Vice Chair Mendocino County Board of Supervisors  
John McCowen, Chair Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

**RECEIVED**  
OCT 16 2019

*Planning & Building Services*

**From:** Claudia Pedersen <claudia@mcn.org>  
**To:** <summerfords@mendocinocounty.org>  
**Date:** 10/16/2019 10:39 AM  
**Subject:** Case # GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003

Dear Susan,

I am a resident of 1680 Sanford Ranch Rd., Ukiah. I am writing to let you know that I am against the request for Rezoning and General Plan Amendment in my neighborhood.

I am unable to attend the meeting tomorrow morning, but want to make my wishes known.

Thank you,

Claudia Pedersen

1680 Sanford Ranch Rd.

Ukiah, Ca. 95482

Peter and Jennifer Bushby  
1370 Sanford Ranch Rd.  
Ukiah, CA 95482

RECEIVED  
OCT 16 2019

Planning & Building Services

To whom it may concern,

October 16, 2019

We are writing to strongly oppose the rezoning and development of the property owned by Don Lucchesi on Sanford Ranch Road (Case #GP-2019-0002/R2019-0003). We have many concerns, starting with the addition of an unknown number of houses or high-density apartments in that area. It would lead to an increased amount of traffic and noise. We choose to live where we do because of the fact that it is in a rural area. We are blessed with a beautiful view of the vineyards and the valley and cannot imagine having to look out on a bunch of roofs. With a large number of houses and subsequent people in those houses, (especially if any of them are low-income), the rate of crime is bound to go up. Cars already drive on Sanford Ranch Road as if it is a freeway, blatantly ignoring the 25-mph speed limit. Countless animals have lost their lives to this and if this goes through, will only get worse. There are a lot of wildlife in that valley that make it their habitat such as coyote's, fox, rabbits, skunks, opossum and racoon. What will the impact be on them? It is very peaceful for the most part and when there is some party on Eunice Court, it sounds like it is right next to us, because it comes up the hill to our house. That has the potential to get much worse by adding all those houses.

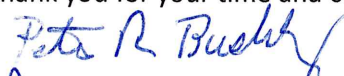
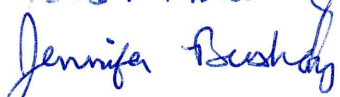
We have worked hard at remodeling and updating our home and property and have spent a lot of money to do so. Putting in all those homes could, potentially de-value our property.

That property is in a flood zone. There have been times over the years that we have lived here when we have been unable to get out due to flooding on Talmage and on Redemyer roads. What if there is an emergency and law enforcement, the fire department and/or paramedics can't get here on time?

Has anyone looked into the possibility that those houses will not be insured? Two of our next-door neighbors have had their insurance companies drop them because of fire concerns and many residents of Rogina Heights have had the same thing happen to them. Insurance companies today are finding any reason not to insure a home in California or if they do, it is very expensive and some cannot afford it.

Our hope is that you will not rezone this property, or any of the agriculture property on Sanford Ranch Road. It would deeply impact the residents and animals that already live in the area.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Peter and Jennifer Bushby

Cc Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

Susan C Era

1480 Sanford Ranch Road

Ukiah CA, 95482

Mendocino County

OCT 16 2019

Planning & Building Services

October 15, 2019

To: County of Mendocino Department of Planning & Building Services

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

860 North Bush Street Ukiah CA 95482

Re: Public Hearing Notice , Case # GP\_2019-0002R\_2019-0003

Property of Donald J Lucchesi, Proposal to change zoning from Agricultural AG 40 (Zoning) & AG 40 (GP) to Suburban Residential (SR) to allow for future subdivision & residential housing.

I am writing to communicate my opposition to this proposal. I have been a resident on Sanford Ranch Road for 37 years. I purchased my home in this area so that I could live in a rural atmosphere with all of the benefits that come with that: health, safety, separation from the busy city life, presence of wildlife and quality of life. I am adamantly opposed to any housing developments being built in the area relevant to this Public Hearing for many reasons.

To quote a section of the Mission of Mendocino County Building and Planning: a focus of Planning & Building is to "Enhance the quality of life in Mendocino County". The proposed rezoning will in fact decrease the quality of life for my family and all of residents who live on Sanford Ranch Road, as well as other neighborhoods in this east side of the City of Ukiah.

In this area many residents utilize Sanford Ranch Road for walking & bicycling to get the exercise we need to maintain our health. Children also walk, ride bikes and wait in the street to catch busses to school. In the many years I have lived here the road has remained the same width, with no sidewalks and with little improvements. Traffic has increased to the point that it makes continuing to walk, jog or bike a hazard for children and adults with the existing population numbers. If the proposal goes through, heavy traffic will increase thus limiting further local access to walking, jogging and biking options which will hinder our quality of life

In addition, there is much wildlife in the vineyards that we will lose. For 37 years we have enjoyed watching deer, rabbits, fox, birds of many varieties, many of them migrating through this area, that live and frequent here. There is no information on the website as to the results of any environmental impact studies that have been performed that will address this issue, as well as impacts on air and water quality.

I would like to also mention that every year this area experiences flooding and road closures on Talmage Road which, unless addressed with major road and water management modifications will only increase traffic problems/hazards with this proposal.

Does the County have plans to make all necessary modifications and improvements to the roads in this area (i.e., adding sidewalks & bike lanes) for the safety of children and families?

It seems that increasing housing in an area, that is already at high risk of fires is a mistake and will increase the fire risks for Ukiah Valley.

I understand that for any development that is approved there is a certain percentage of low income and high density housing required within that development. After working in human services in this County for over 26 years I am well aware of the resources needed for many low income individuals and families. I assume there are plans in place between the County and MTA to reinstate bus access to Ukiah from this area to address the needs of the families and low income residents who will move here to provide access of low income families to social services that are only available in central Ukiah.

I hereby urge the County Planning and Building and Mendocino County Board of Supervisors to oppose this proposal. It is clear to me and my family that if this development does move forward we will begin to take steps to leave this area as it will no longer meet our physical residence needs.

Before any final decisions are made I would like to have access to more information that addresses how the County will address the concerns I have listed above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan C Era", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Susan C Era

CC: Carre Brown, Vice Chair Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

John McCowen, Chair Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

**Caitlin Schafer - Fwd: GP\_2019-2019-0002/R\_2019-0003**

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**From:** PBS PBS  
**To:** Caitlin Schafer; James Feenan; Susan Summerford  
**Date:** 10/16/2019 4:33 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: GP\_2019-2019-0002/R\_2019-0003

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Planning & Building Services Staff

County of Mendocino

*Main Office:*

860 N. Bush St, Ukiah CA 95482

*Phone:* [\(707\) 234-6650](tel:(707)234-6650)

*Coast Office:*

120 W. Fir St, Fort Bragg CA 95437

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*Web:* [www.co.mendocino.ca.us/planning/](http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/planning/)

>>> Sarah Kennedy Owen <sarahkennedyowen@gmail.com> 10/16/2019 12:18 PM >>>

 **Case#: GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003**

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October 15, 2019

Michael Owen and Sarah Kennedy Owen  
1600 Sanford Ranch Rd.  
Ukiah, CA 95482

To: County of Mendocino, Department of Planning & Building Services  
860 N. Bush St.  
Ukiah, Ca 95482

CC: Carre Brown, Chair, Supervisor Mendocino County  
John McCOWen, Supervisor, Mendocino County

**Regarding Case # GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003, Rezoning and General Plan Amendment Request:**

The Planning Department is considering a rezoning request by Mr. Lucchesi, who we admire for his management of this beautiful vineyard which has been there for close to 80 years. The vines are also that old, still productive, and may produce grapes that are even more valuable than those grown on younger vines, as the flavor of the resulting wine from older vines is considered better. Researching on the internet, it is said that wines from grapes grown on 80 year old vines sell for between \$15.00 to \$50,00 a bottle. The vines may also be immune to diseases other younger vines are subject to.

Because of the value of this vintage vineyard, it seems unreasonable to rezone it when the General Plan has been in place all along and **no deviation from the General Plan has ever occurred. In other words, the Board of Supervisors ruled once in 1982 that there was no encroachment and nothing has changed since then. According to your September 12 notice, that 1982 decision was final.**

We have lived at the same address on Sanford Ranch Rd. since 1979, and were part of the neighborhood group that united to stop development in 1982. Since we have been here there has been no effort by the county to build parks, playgrounds, or any other recreational areas. That leaves us with almost nowhere to safely walk or for children to play due to unregulated speeding on our streets. The same is true for Rogina Heights which is an even more dangerous place to walk (or play) than Sanford Ranch Rd. The General Plan at least gave the illusion of protected open space, and now that, too, is considered being denied.

The Planning Department is responsible for these oversights, which indicate a careless attitude toward the residents of Sanford Ranch Rd. and of Rogina Heights. So far there has not been a word about a park to accompany this new plan to destroy ag land. There is no discussion of walking areas or any other improvements for the current residents who will have to deal with the pollution, noise and danger from over approximately 100 new residents.

It may be that Mr. Lucchesi is already permitted to build a limited number of houses on the now cleared pear orchard land. Why not include, with these few houses, a "green zone" instead of dozens of new houses? Why not include walking areas and bike lanes for the community? Mr. Lucchesi should not pay for this, the county should! It is long overdue. It seems like a much better investment for the community than the large amounts of blacktop the county may have to pay for to accommodate this plan.

Speaking of blacktop, environmental problems are also glaringly evident. More rooftops, pavement, and exhaust fumes will add to environmental concerns such as pollution and global warming, as well as possible flooding. It will also further heat the local environment, which is already prone to fire. Add to this concern for the wildlife that coexists in the vineyard and along the creek. We don't see anyone looking into the health of the creek or the welfare of the wildlife and have not seen concern from the Planning Department or the county staff for the 40 years we have been here and have been paying taxes to help cover the salaries of these employees.

The Planning Department/County has been neglecting our area and now considers overturning a 40-year-old General Plan for no reason except that Ukiah needs new houses. We wish to see more action on the part of the county to serve the Sanford Ranch area by improving walking trails, creating nature areas or parks, looking after wildlife and the natural surroundings, and helping lift the area out of the abysmal traffic problem we have had here for over 40 years. Instead of helping, you are now talking about adding to the problem without resolving anything.

The Planning Commission Staff Report says: "There is a mix of small scale residential interspersed with agricultural uses in the vicinity of the parcel that has been slowly expanding to encroach on the remaining agricultural uses." **This is incorrect.** There is only one residential area that has been called "encroachment" and that was in 1982 in the Eunice Court area. This "encroachment" was used as the reason for the applicant's first request in 1982 to rezone, and was **denied by the Board of Supervisors**. Therefore the precedent has been set that Eunice Court is not encroachment. Any other houses (2) that have been built are on legal lots and permitted by the Planning Department. They are also very close to the street, not in the vineyard.

**The notice you sent September 12, 2019 said the "Board of Supervisor's decision is final". We trust this also applies to the 1982 decision which said no unpermitted development would be allowed per the General Plan.** Nothing has changed since then. We are surprised that this issue has come up again considering this rule, which declares the decision in 1982 was final.

Here are a few reasons why this is not feasible:

1. It defies the General Plan.
2. It encourages similar requests for development.
3. The traffic from so many homes will cause problems on Sanford Ranch Rd., a rural, 25 mph road .



4. Will this development require a sewer system since it is in a flood plain? In that case current residents would be saddled with that cost.
5. It detracts from recreational use, which has been woefully neglected by the county for at least 40 years.

When the request for rezoning was first made in the 80's, one grower stood up during the hearing and asked, "Are we going to grow grapes or build houses? That's all I want to know." That sums up the **General Plan** aspect of the question. Also, to call this a "county" area and do nothing to improve it besides create an even bigger problem is intolerable. The area is protected under the General Plan and nothing has happened to change that. We trust this will be considered seriously and with respect for neighbors, citizens and community.

Yours Truly,  
Michael Owen and Sarah Kennedy Owen



# Mendocino County Farm Bureau

303-C Talmage Road • Ukiah, CA. 95482 • (707) 462-6664 • Fax (707) 462-6681 • Email: [admin@mendofb.org](mailto:admin@mendofb.org)  
Affiliated with the California Farm Bureau Federation and the American Farm Bureau Federation

Mendocino County  
OCT 16 2019  
Planning & Building Services

October 16, 2019

Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services  
c/o Planning Commission Staff  
860 North Bush Street  
Ukiah, CA 95482

Via Email : [pbs@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:pbs@mendocinocounty.org)

RE: CASE#: GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003 For October 17, 2019 Planning Commission Meeting

Dear Commissioners,

The Mendocino County Farm Bureau (MCFB) is a non-governmental, non-profit, voluntary membership, advocacy group whose purpose is to protect and promote agricultural interests throughout the county and to find solutions to the problems facing agricultural businesses and the rural community. MCFB would like to submit comments on the proposed project CASE#: GP\_2019-0002/R\_2019-0003 that is being considered at the October 17, 2019 Planning Commission meeting.

The project proposes to convert 10.7 +/- acres of property zoned AG 40 to SR-12K on the North side of Talmage Road and to the South and East of Sanford Ranch Road. The zoning designation change will facilitate the construction of 20 housing units plus the potential for accessory dwelling units. The project area is surrounded on three sides (North, South and West) by residential development and on the East side by active agricultural operations. The project property is not under a contract related to Williamson Act and the subject site does not contain more than 50% of soil composition that could be deemed prime or unique farmland.

As stated on page 6 of the project application, *"The former use of the site as well as lands immediately contiguous was agricultural. Over the past 30 years, the area has been converted from primarily pear orchards and vineyards to small residential lots."* It is also stated on page 10 that, *"There is a mix of small scale residential interspersed with agricultural uses in the vicinity of the parcel that has slowly been expanding to encroach on the remaining agricultural uses."* MCFB would like to remind the commissioners that the prior approval of leap frog style development on agricultural properties over the last 30 years, as seen in the residential areas to the North, South and West of the subject site, has created challenges with maintaining viable adjoining agricultural operations and also intensified pressure for conversion of other lands from agriculture.

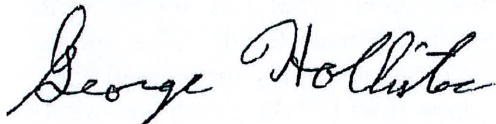
MCFB understands the need for local housing and we encourage local planning which accommodates orderly, logical patterns of urban development that minimizes sprawl and protects agricultural resources. Due to the previous allowance of agricultural conversion of the properties to the North, South and West, the subject property conversion is being looked at as infill. The proposed agricultural conversion of the subject site did not initiate the trend of agricultural conversion in the vicinity, however close to 11 acres of agricultural lands will be converted.

There will be adjoining parcels to the East of the subject site that are retained in active agricultural production. Page 12 of the project application describes Chapter 10A.13 of the Mendocino County Code, the Right to Farm Ordinance. MCFB fully supports the county Right to Farm Ordinance and requests that any approved development of the subject property have transparent disclosures provided to homeowners regarding adjoining agricultural operations and the Right to Farm ordinance in the county.

In addition, there was no discussion in the project application that described the establishment of setback areas from the proposed area to be rezoned in relation to the adjoining agricultural lands, especially those on the East side of the subject area. MCFB encourages the commission to consider a setback requirement as part of the proposed project area to avoid adverse impacts to adjoining agricultural operations.

MCFB is not submitting an official position on this project. However, the commissioners are encouraged to consider the statements and points made in the above comment letter when this item is discussed at the October 17, 2019 meeting. If there are any questions regarding this letter, please contact the MCFB office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Hollister".

George Hollister  
President

CC: Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, [bos@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:bos@mendocinocounty.org)