

Craig and Jeanette Pedersen
3339 Ridgewood Road
Willits, CA 95490
June 05, 2021

County of Mendocino
Department of Planning and Building Services
860 North Bush Street
Ukiah, CA 95482
Attention: Zoning Administrator – Nash Gonzalez
RE: Private Road Name Petition RN 2020-0002

Dear Nash Gonzalez:

We are opposed to the proposed name change.

We have lived at our current residence located along a private road, locally known as Old Boy Scout Road, off of Ridgewood Road in Willits for 20 years. We are writing in response to the May 26, 2021, Notice of Public Hearing we received regarding the above referenced petition which would change all addresses along our private road. This letter addresses concerns we raised when we spoke with Mr. Russell Ford on June 4, 2021. Some of the concerns are procedural and others question the accuracy of the information provided in the notice. Also appended to the end of this response are letters we previously sent to Russell Ford and the Board of Supervisors when this project was first noticed in May of 2020. Those concerns are still valid.

- Since the process has shifted from the Board of Supervisors (BOS) to the “Zoning Administrator” within the planning department we believe that change of process should have been highlighted up front in the notice to make those affected aware. Otherwise, those who commented last year may mistakenly direct their response to the BOS. I didn’t catch that change until I read it a second time.
- The hearing is scheduled for June 10, 2021. We received the notice on June 3, 2021 allowing 6 days to respond. The revised ordinance 18.16.070 (D)(2) stipulates 30 days:

Notice to Property Owners and Referral to Public Safety Agencies. Following Address Coordinator review, road naming or renaming proposals shall be referred to public safety agencies for review and comment, and property owners whose properties are served by the road shall be notified of the proposal. Referrals and notices shall provide for a thirty (30) day period for written comments or objections to be submitted to the Address Coordinator. Notice to property owners shall be mailed by the Department to all property owners whose properties are served by the road.

Mr. Ford told us that since everyone had been previously noticed last year that the 10 days was sufficient. We pointed out that the entire process has changed and we believe the full 30 days should be afforded. He said he would consult with county counsel. This project began over a year ago, an additional 30 days is reasonable.

- Only email or telecomment are listed as option to provide input.

A hardcopy, snail mail, option needs to be provided for those who don't have access to email or can't phone in at the specific time. Another reason for 30 days notice.

- The scope of the project has changed. The length of the road affected increased after the project was pulled from the BOS agenda in September of 2020. Only the additional (10) landowners along the added road section were noticed. Given the change in scope of the project we believe all landowners should have been re-noticed.

Mr. Ford told us that landowners could have been commenting the entire time since the May notice. Commenting to whom? and on what? since the item was pulled from the BOS agenda and those noticed in May of 2020 didn't have the full scope? Where would those noticed in May of 2020 have found the project? We had to assume it was effectively "dead" once pulled. Another reason the full 30 days should be afforded for response.

- The notice indicates and Mr. Ford has told us that the issue first came to his attention when a CAL FIRE Battalion Chief working on the shaded fuel break project in 2019 made a comment regarding confusion between the 'main' stretch of Ridgewood Road and the portion known as Old Boy Scout Road.

We recall Tod Patten, the Battalion Chief directing the fuel break project, at a public meeting regarding the project, say that he was having difficulty finding contact information (mailing addresses and/or phone numbers) for some of the landowners to have them agree to the project since many did not reside on the properties in question. We believe this is the context of the comment, not that he couldn't locate a specific property. Given that Tod was very familiar with the Pine Mountain Subdivision prior to the fuel break project, it is unlikely he was confused. In fact, Tod suggested that specific area for a fuel break due to his knowledge of the area and work that had been done during the Redwood Complex. Additionally, only a relatively short segment of what is referred to as Old Boy Scout Road in the petition was included in the fuel break. This segment only crossed four parcels. The majority of the affected addresses are for parcels within the first $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the junction with the County road. Unfortunately, Tod has retired so we can't ask him.

Regardless this does not constitute "initiation" of the road renaming as outlined in 18.16.070 (A) and (C). Mr. Ford told us the name change proposal was internal to the planning department.

We believe the true reason for the County initiating the name change is to correct the error in assigning two properties the same address.

- The notice indicates of the 30+ notices sent to property owners on May 27, 2020, only two responses were received.

We told Mr. Ford during our conversation on June 4, 2021, that we are aware of the following comments posted on the BOS agenda for September 1, 2020. Seventeen (17) total letters representing 13 parcels.

Public Comment RN_2002-0002 (Old Boy Scott Rd BOS 9-1-20 08-22-20 Pederson (2) Correspondence 08-22-20 Pederson Correspondence 08-24-20 Orantes Correspondence 08-26-20 Klugherz Correspondence 08-27-20 Klugherz-Zetwick Correspondence 08-27-20 Orantes (2) Correspondence 08-27-20 Rhoads Correspondence 08-27-20 Tonelli Correspondence 08-27-20 Greene Correspondence 08-27-20 Morawski Correspondence 08-25-20 Nord Correspondence 08-25-20 Wagner Correspondence 08-31-20 Phillips Correspondence 08-25-20 Korte Correspondence 08-25-20 Marshall Correspondence 08-31-20 Klugherz Correspondence (2)

Mr. Ford told us he was not aware of those comments sent to the BOS site and only had those sent directly to the planning department. We told Mr. Ford that those responses/comments had to remain part of the record and could not be ignored since the project name had not changed and they were submitted as directed under the old process. Again, another reason the full 30 days should be afforded for comments. It is discouraging that a complete record has apparently not been prepared before scheduling the hearing.

- The notice indicates subsequent outreach to the Little Lake Fire District resulted in revising the proposal to include the entire length of the road. This added another 10 parcels and a second notice was sent to those additional owners.

As noted previously, we believe that due to this "revision" in the project all landowners should have been re-noticed. Our letter dated August 22, 2020 noted the arbitrary termination of the renaming in the original proposal. That letter also pointed out there are two additional road spurs that join the Petition road. This current proposal doesn't address those roads, one of which serves seven (7) parcels and the other serves two (2), nearly 25% of all those affected. How does this serve to reduce the confusion? If not addressed at this time, those living on those roads could conceivably have their address changed again. If this is going to be forced by the County then due diligence needs to be taken to ensure it is done correctly.

Our letters sent during the 2020 process are appended below to ensure a complete record of our comments on this project.

Nash Gonzalez
June 05, 2021
Page 4

Willits, CA 95490
June 21, 2020

County of Mendocino
Department of Planning and Building Services
860 North Bush Street
Ukiah, CA 95482
Attention: Russell Ford Planner III/Cartographer/Address Coordinator
RE: Private Road Name Petition RN 2020-0002

Dear Russell Ford:

We have lived at our current residence located along a private road, locally known as Old Boy Scout Road, off of Ridgewood Road in Willits for 19 years. We are writing in response to a letter we received regarding the above referenced petition which would change all addresses along our private road. This letter addresses concerns we raised when we spoke with Mr. Ford in early June 2020.

While we understand the intent of the proposed change and agree that ideally the private road would have been incorporated into the standard addressing protocol when developed, we do not support the proposal as outlined in the letter. We have spoken with several of our neighbors who are also opposed to their address being changed. We provide our concerns and potential alternatives below.

The letter indicates the requested action is for the sole and exclusive purpose of identifying and distinguishing said road for emergency services agencies and the convenience of the general public.

Concerns:

- 1) One can currently enter our address into any navigation program (phone maps, GPS, etc) and be guided directly to our home. Upon receiving the letter noted above, we contacted Mr. Ford and, among other things, I asked if he knew how long it would take for the proposed address change to reflect in those navigation programs. He replied that he didn't know and that many older addresses within Mendocino County can't be found using such programs. He said he wasn't "proposing the change for Google". Jeanette and I both retired from CALFIRE and know that during large scale emergencies there are emergency response resources from outside the County and they typically rely on those programs to respond to calls (we certainly did). Mr. Ford's response and the prospect that emergency

services agencies and the general public will not be able to readily be directed to our home is contrary to the stated purpose of the action.

- 2) This proposal will likely result in more confusion as there are two additional private roads that join "Old Boy Scout Road" and access multiple parcels. These roads would also need to be named and addressed separately to meet a standard protocol and meet the stated goal. The first road joins "Old Boy Scout Road" immediately south of the junction with Ridgewood Road and leads west accessing at least six parcels. The second road heads east from "Old Boy Scout Road" between parcels 105-070-08 and 105-080-08. If these are not addressed the proposal simply moves the problem to the next road junction for those parcels (one quarter of all those mapped).
- 3) It is always difficult to deal with making necessary notifications and ensuring all appropriate entities are made aware when one moves to a new address. However, in this instance that is compounded by changing the address "name" of a known location. This will likely cause confusion for those who know the current address location and result in delays in service (emergency response, UPS, FEDEX, contractors etc.). This is contrary to the stated purpose of the action.
- 4) The letter states "the action of the County in naming this private road does not accept or imply any County responsibility... Additionally, "It will be the collective responsibility of the property owners to install a sign identifying the road for emergency services". This assignment of signing responsibility appears to be a requirement when landowners petition for the road naming. If the County proceeds in changing the road name and addresses against the will of the residents, the least the County can do is provide a sign. As noted, this is a private road and it is difficult to get assistance from many of the resident users to conduct routine maintenance. The Fire Safe group installed a road sign years ago and it was promptly destroyed.
- 5) We will need to purchase new address numbers to comply with CALFIRE addressing requirements, new driver's licenses and other documents as much travel requires multiple forms of identification and they must match, etc.
- 6) The Private Road Naming Petition code requires 75% of affected property owners sign the petition in order for it to be reviewed. It seems reasonable that the County should need to obtain the same level of acceptance from landowners before proceeding.

Nash Gonzalez

June 05, 2021

Page 6

- 7) If this process proceeds, the BOS meeting should not be scheduled until it can be attended in person so the affected residents can provide input in real time and address any other information that may change in the interim.

Potential Alternatives:

- 1) In speaking with Mr. Ford, he said one of the problems was that the same address had been assigned to two separate parcels (this seemed to be the primary driver for the proposal). It seems unreasonable to change all addresses to resolve a single problem. Simply assign one of the parcels a new address and do nothing else.
- 2) Change the name of the private road to Ridgewood Lane or something similar and keep as many current address numbers as possible. May require changing some of the addresses assigned more recently as they break the sequential numbering system. These "retained" numbers shouldn't later be used on Ridgewood Road to avoid confusion.

This alternative would be less confusing to all who are currently familiar with the road and addresses providing an easier transition.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely, Craig and Jeanette Pedersen

Nash Gonzalez

June 05, 2021

Page 7

Craig and Jeanette Pedersen
3339 Ridgewood Road
Willits, CA 95490
August 22, 2020

County of Mendocino
Board of Supervisors
501 Low Gap Road, Room 1010
Ukiah CA 95482
Board of Supervisors' Email: bos@mendocinocounty.org

RE: Private Road Name Petition RN 2020-0002

August 22, 2020

Esteemed Board Members,

First and foremost, we request that if this proposal is not rejected outright prior to the Board's consideration that the hearing be postponed until the public can again attend board meetings in person. The disruption of a wholesale road and address change is the last thing we need in these trying times. To quote the Notice of Pubic Hearing "we thank you for your understanding during this difficult time..." There are landowners who don't have internet and some who need to drive to a different location to gain cell coverage making participation in the virtual meeting difficult.

We are submitting this letter in addition to the attached letter sent to the County of Mendocino Department of Planning and Building Services dated June 21, 2020, to ensure you receive our comments and concerns regarding this proposal. Sorry for some duplication.

Concerns regarding statements in the Memorandum regarding the Adoption of Road Name Petition: RN_2020-0002 Old Boy Scout Road (hereafter referred to as petition road):

"Old Boy Scout Road is officially unnamed but is widely known in the area by that name. A small sign currently stands at the intersection of "Old Boy Scout Road" and Ridgewood Road, further aiding its identification."

We argue that the Petition road is only locally known as Old Boy Scout Road not "widely" known. No basis is provided for this statement. The referenced road sign is a very small sign posted high up on a large oak tree and is hardly noticeable save by those of us who know it is there. A number of years ago the Pine Mountain Fire Safe Council (PMFSC) purchased and installed road signs throughout the community. The sign for the petition road was promptly destroyed and removed by vandals.

“During work creating shaded fuel breaks in the area in 2019, comments were made by a CALFIRE Battalion Chief (BC) regarding the confusion between the ‘main’ stretch of Ridgewood Road and the portion known as Old Boy Scout Road, which initially brought the issue to the attention of the Department. There also exists at least one duplicate address between the two that requires correction. When contacted regarding an address change, the property owner stated that they were waiting for the road to be named so they wouldn’t have to change their address twice.”

We believe the primary reason for the proposed name change is due to a Planning and Building Services error in issuing duplicate address numbers. The statement regarding the property owner “waiting” for the road to be named supports our theory. The fix for this error should not be cause to inconvenience the entirety of those living on this road. Why is it they seem to be the only property owner directly contacted?

To our knowledge, CAL FIRE, Little Lake Fire, the Sheriff’s office nor any other emergency response agency has had any trouble finding our house. The first three have all responded for various reasons.

“Given its existing signage and awareness in the community, staff believes this road is an excellent candidate for formal adoption. On May 27, 2020 a notice was sent to all affected owners stating the Department’s intent to begin the road name process. Of the 30+ notices sent to property owners, only two responses were received; both stated opposition to road naming. Stated concerns include no perceived issue with current addressing, the estimated cost of implementing such a change and the time required for agencies and companies, including Google Maps, to be made aware of the updated addressing. Referrals to CAL FIRE and the Mendocino County Sheriff’s office were returned in favor of adoption, and no response was received from the Little Lake Fire District.”

We argue that “Given its existing signage and awareness in the community” is the reason it shouldn’t be changed. Again, we have never had any problems with agencies, UPS, contractors, friends, etc. finding our property. Anyone can google our address and be directed right to our house. That won’t be true if this project is approved.

Mr. Ford notes that of the 30+ notices sent to property owners, only two responses were received; both stating opposition. We would like to point out that a non-response must not be taken to indicate support of the proposal. If Mr. Ford would like to tally support/opposition then a positive contact and response from each landowner is necessary. Otherwise the meaning of the responses can be misconstrued.

He also notes that CAL FIRE and the Sheriff's Office returned referrals in favor of the change. CAL FIRE and the Sheriff's Office are essentially compelled to support the proposal.

There are 31 parcels identified on the map accompanying Mr. Ford's initial letter. There are 5 landowners who own multiple parcels three of which appear to only have one address. Therefore, there are 28 individuals who will be affected. We directly contacted 13 of the property owners. Ten of those we spoke with are opposed to changing the road name and addressing. We are also opposed to the proposal. Of the two who were not clearly opposed, one has a Bear Canyon address and the other a Mariposa Creek address. One said she would support leaving the addresses as is if a sign was posted at the junction of Ridgewood Road designating the addresses accessed by the petition road.

Concerns regarding the May 27, 2020, letter from PBS Planner Ford to property owners:

That letter indicates the requested action is for the sole and exclusive purpose of identifying and distinguishing said road for emergency services agencies and the convenience of the general public.

Concerns:

- 8) In short, we believe the proposal is counter to the stated goals and will have the opposite effect.
- 9) One can currently enter our address into any navigation program (phone maps, GPS, etc) and be guided directly to our home. Upon receiving the letter noted above, we contacted Mr. Ford and, among other things, I asked if he knew how long it would take for the proposed address change to reflect in those navigation programs. He replied that he didn't know and that many older addresses within Mendocino County can't be found using such programs. He added that he wasn't "proposing the change for Google." Jeanette and I both retired from CALFIRE and know that during large scale emergencies there are emergency response resources from outside the County and they typically rely on those programs to respond to calls (we certainly did). Mr. Ford's response and the prospect that emergency services agencies and the general public will not be able to readily be directed to our home via such mapping programs is contrary to the stated purpose of the action of improving emergency response and clarity for the general public.
- 10) This proposal will likely result in more confusion as there are two additional private spur roads that join the Petition road and access multiple parcels. These roads would also need to be named different from the petition road and addressed separately to meet a standard protocol and meet the stated goal. The first road joins the petition road immediately south of the junction with Ridgewood Road and leads west accessing at least six parcels. The

second road heads east from the petition road between parcels 105-070-08 and 105-080-08. If these are not similarly addressed the proposal simply moves the problem to the next road junction for those parcels (one quarter of all those mapped). If Planning and Building Services truly believes there is a problem then they need to put the time in to properly correct it not just move it. Additionally, it seems arbitrary as to where the proposed petition road is terminated. Any proposed fix should explore the entirety of the road system to ensure this “fix” doesn’t create additional confusion. We don’t believe this project was adequately studied and that any proposal should seek input from the affected landowners during development not after a decision has already been made to provide to the Board.

- 11) It is always difficult to deal with making necessary notifications and ensuring all appropriate entities are made aware when one moves to a new address. However, in this instance that is compounded by changing the address “name” of a known location. This will likely cause confusion for those who know the current address location and result in delays in service (emergency response, UPS, FEDEX, contractors etc.). This is contrary to the stated purpose of the action. What would you think if you received a “new” address for a friend? You would think they moved. How does this provide clarity and convenience?
- 12) The letter states “the action of the County in naming this private road does not accept or imply any County responsibility... Additionally, “It will be the collective responsibility of the property owners to install a sign identifying the road for emergency services”. This assignment of signing responsibility appears to be a requirement when landowners petition for the road naming. If the County proceeds in changing the road name and addresses against the will of the residents, the least the County can do is provide a sign. As noted, this is a private road and it is difficult to get assistance from many of the resident users to conduct routine maintenance. The PMFSC group installed a road sign years ago and it was promptly destroyed.
- 13) We will need to obtain new address numbers to comply with CALFIRE addressing requirements, new driver’s licenses and other documents. Travel requires multiple forms of identification and they must match.
- 14) The Private Road Naming Petition code requires 75% of affected property owners sign the petition in order for it to be reviewed. It seems reasonable that the County should need to obtain the same level of acceptance from landowners before proceeding. The eleven landowners in opposition to a road and address change noted previously comprise greater than 33% of the total. And we expect more opposed by the time of the hearing. Pursuant to Mendocino County Code Section 18.16.979(b) Private Road Names, if this petition had

Nash Gonzalez

June 05, 2021

Page 11

been brought by one or more of the landowners it would be rejected outright due to not meeting the 75% threshold. For this reason alone, the Board should reject the petition.

BOTTOM LINE: We are opposed to the name and address petition and ask the Board to reject it.

Potential Alternatives if not outright rejected:

- 3) Preferred - Simply assign one of the parcels a new address and do nothing else. Regardless of the decision regarding the petition, at least one of these landowners is getting a new address.
- 4) Landowners create and post a sign of all addresses at the intersection with Ridgewood Road. This is consistent with many private roads throughout the County.

Again, it is troubling that the first we hear about this potential change is after Planning and Building Services made their decision. Please reject this petition.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Craig and Jeanette Pedersen