

## James Feenan

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**From:** Teddy <goodlifemendo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 23, 2023 8:10 PM  
**To:** pbscommissions  
**Subject:** Letter for sept 11th meeting regarding tents

Mendocino County

AUG 24 2023

Planning & Building Services

Dear members of;  
Mendocino board of supervisors;  
Mendocino historical review board,  
And beyond,

I'm writing this letter with two intentions. First, to inform you of the current, distressing state of affairs regarding outdoor dining in the community in which I've lived the majority of my life and have run a restaurant for the previous 11 years. In fact on my wall, I display a letter of commendation from our governor, Mike McGuire, because my amazing and heroic staff saved the life of a local child who was run over by a car here in front of my cafe and they lifted the car off of the child) Secondly, to respectfully request your help and attention to what is becoming an increasingly dire situation.

My name is Teddy Winslow, owner and operator of the GoodLife cafe, one of the largest employers in the village of Mendocino, California. Sadly, many restaurants and businesses here didn't survive the pandemic and have closed. The result has been both a significant loss of employment and a potentially devastating effect on our primary industry here, tourism. Both of these greatly impact our local economy.

Myself, along with other local restaurants including The Mendocino Cafe, Cafe Beaujolais, Trillium Cafe, and Pattersons Pub, have narrowly escaped the same fate. This has been in large part due to the PPP funding that was provided to ensure our ability to survive. A portion of those monies were invested in our outdoor dining infrastructure. The result has been that we were able to continue to accommodate both our local and visiting guests and provide a space in which people have felt safe and have been able to carry on with some semblance of normalcy during these uncertain times.

Another significant impact of the outdoor dining spaces has been the ability to continue to provide, and actually increase, employment opportunities. In essence, the outdoor dining area has served to keep money flowing into our local economy, maintain employment rates, and consequently provide income for the over 30 local families my business supports, not to mention those of the other restaurants that have done the same.

Needless to say, it's been a challenging time for all of us. As business owners supporting our own families, including many of us managing online learning at home with our children, we were also mandated to make many alterations to our businesses requiring a significant investment of our time, energy, and money. While the cost of all of the supplies required to run our businesses dramatically increased, it was also necessary to increase wages to accommodate the needs of our staff and remain a viable option for their employment. All the while, as the stay-at-home order was lifted and fewer people felt safe with air travel, we experienced an influx of visitors to our area.

While we've been grateful for the opportunity to manage the effects of the pandemic on our businesses, the reality is that it's been a very real struggle to keep our doors open. Sadly, without the handful of surviving restaurants, Mendocino will simply become another chapter in history. What was once a thriving tourist destination and beautiful community will become a distant memory.

In an effort to support one another, I and other restaurant owners took on the challenge and became creative by employing the services of a local wedding tent rental business that had unfortunately closed its doors due to the pandemic. We had the owner/operator of this company professionally install beautiful, aesthetically pleasing while unobtrusive tents in order to accommodate the requirements of outdoor dining. The impact on, and feedback from, our

community and visitors was instantaneous. Not only did the tents create outdoor spaces in which to safely dine, but they also accommodated more guests and therefore more employment.

This brings me to the distressing focus of this letter. There are a very few folks who reside in this village who have expressed their disdain for our tents, causing the building and planning department and the Mendocino Historical Review Board to start to target our outdoor dining tents. Our local planning department is now being compelled to enforce their shockingly unreasonable request- to remove all of the outdoor dining tents from the village of Mendocino because a few people don't like how they look.

This will have a significant impact on several crucial aspects of our businesses, which I will outline shortly. My initial response to this very distressing news was to hear from those who support us and who will be greatly affected by this decision - our customers, both local and visiting. Of the nearly 500 comment cards that were submitted, the overwhelming response was that:

People feel safer having an option to dine outside, for a variety of reasons and not all of them directly related to COVID. For example, those who are immune-compromised and people battling cancer; elderly patrons who will only go out to eat if they can do so outside in a safe, covered setting; individuals with service animals that cannot remain in hot cars; sensory-sensitive individuals who find indoor dining stressful and agitating; families with small children who find it easier and safer to dine outside; people who are sun-sensitive and worry about exposure and skin cancer; and individuals with hearing loss who have a hard time navigating the noise of indoor dining.

Not one single person had a complaint about the tents or their appearance but rather several offered comments about them adding to the aesthetic of the village. In fact I'm a recent poll on social media on a county page, the poll to keep or eliminate tents was exceptionally powerful with 97% voting to keep the tents.

Several individuals commented that they specifically travel here because of the outdoor seating options for dining and would actually be deterred were they not available.

And lastly, many are concerned that COVID is not over but rather is mutating. They are not ready or willing to expose themselves to confined spaces for dining.

The purpose behind the direction to remove the tents is seemingly not clear to anyone. It appears to many that those who are dictating these orders are not reliant on local economy, and therefore don't understand and won't experience the devastating impact this would have. What is the socioeconomic issue requiring the dismantling of the tents? How can this possibly benefit our small, local economy and population? The answer to those questions is not clear to any of us. In fact, our county is suffering a great deal financially and is in desperate need of the tax revenue that these tents have significantly contributed to.

In truth, tents have been a part of our community since the 1800s, as evidenced by our local Kelly House Museum. An argument for mere aesthetics simply does not hold water when the larger, profoundly damaging impact is considered.

The essential, bottom line is that:

Being forced to remove the tents will result in a loss of local and tourist revenue. Our coastal environment is cold and rainy for several months of the year, while hot and sunny at other times. Removing the ability for diners to enjoy their meals outdoors means the loss of significant income to local businesses and thus their likely closure.

The removal of the tents will also result in a loss of employment for many, many families. Our local workers desperately need the opportunity to work, and their children need not only schools to attend but food on their tables.

Not only will local restaurants be impacted by this decision, the entire local economy will as well as tourists will not be as compelled to visit this area without this option for safe dining.

As business owners who are highly invested in our local community and feed not only our own but many local families, we're imploring you to help us stop this irrational order. In my own business, I support our local teachers and schools, emergency and first responders, fire evacuees, and nearly every local nonprofit organization with donations and discounts. And, I know that my fellow local restaurant owners do the same.

We have done our best to carry on in these challenging times, including complying with what's been asked of us. And now, we can't help but feel that we're not only being penalized for the time, money, and energy we've invested to comply and support our community but we're quite possibly being driven into extinction.

There are so many layers of complexity and potential devastation with this nonsensical mandate. It appears that we are not being acknowledged or heard as those who care about and support our community, and we are asking for your help and attention to this very distressing matter.

Thank you, so very much, for your time and consideration in reading this letter. We're holding out hope and faith that you will be able to look into and have an impact on the local planning department and the Mendocino Historical Review Board's (who's members do not represent the desire of the local majority at all, proven by the hundreds of locals and visitors comments regarding the outdoor dining in Mendocino ) ability to do this to our community.

What we are asking for is simple, our local district supervisor, Ted Williams is planning to ask the other board of supervisors to approve a one year moratorium on the removal of our tents and a loosening of the extremely strict regulations that exist here regarding tents in the village. We've tried to get permits for our tents and are being told they will not be allowed because there are so many hoops we have to jump through here, it's virtually impossible. They want engineering plans and building permits for tents that have been professionally erected and have been in use now since 2020 when COVID started.

They are safe, and sound, and necessary. Please help us keep them until we know what we're allowed to replace them with which will be able to protect folks in summer as well as winter. We all know umbrellas won't really do it. Please help us continue to support our county by supporting us.

Sincerely,

Teddy Winslow  
GoodLife Cafe and Bakery

JUL 19 2023

**James Feenan**

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Planning & Building Services

**From:** Cynthia Gair <Cgair@mcn.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 19, 2023 12:12 PM  
**To:** pbscommissions  
**Subject:** Patterson's & other tented eateries in Mendocino - let them stay!

COUNTY OF MENDOCINO DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES :

I have been a full-time resident of Mendocino for over 10 years and want to weigh in, in favor of allowing Patterson's and other tented eatery additions to remain in place permanently.

The tented eateries were, of course, a big help during the height of the pandemic. Using them during that time, we realized we prefer their open(ish)-air, more roomy and quiet charm to indoor dining. Patterson's and the other tented eateries are our top choices for our own dining out as well as the best places for taking visitors. Virus and noise are continuing concerns for many of our visitors – the tented eateries make everyone more comfortable. They've been a big plus in our lives, in every season.

I'm sure there are other good reasons for keeping the tented eateries up – certainly we aren't the only ones who will eat out a lot less if they are removed. I would think jobs and the health of our wonderful businesses are at stake.

Please think of the bigger picture for our community and allow the tented eateries to continue charming residents and visitors.

Sincerely,  
Cynthia Gair  
Mendocino

**Jocelyn Gonzalez-Thies**

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**From:** NormaLee Andres <normalee@mcn.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 19, 2023 2:17 PM  
**To:** pbs  
**Subject:** Fwd: In support of Mendocino outdoor dining under tents

Mendocino County

JUL 19 2023

Planning & Building Services

>Date: Wed, 19 Jul 2023 12:30:34 -0700  
>To: bos@mendocinocounty.org  
>From: NormaLee Andres <normalee@mcn.org>  
>Subject: In support of Mendocino outdoor dining under tents  
>Cc: Supervisor Glenn McGourty <mcgourtyg@mendocinocounty.org>;  
>Supervisor Maureen Mulheren <mulherenm@mendocinocounty.org>; Supervisor  
>John Haschak <haschakj@mendocinocounty.org>; Supervisor Ted Williams  
><williamst@mendocinocounty.org>  
>  
>To each of you on the Board  
>I wish to throw my support toward necessary changes needed to allow  
>year-round outdoor dining under tents in Mendocino. I feel so much  
>more safe dining outside these days as a senior.  
>Please do what is necessary to make this happen Thank you Norma Leah  
>Andres  
>16401 Pine Dr  
>Fort Bragg, CA

## James Feenan

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**From:** Julia Krog  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 30, 2023 7:43 AM  
**To:** pbscommissions; James Feenan  
**Subject:** FW: Public Comment - MHRB Meeting - 9/11/23

Mendocino County

AUG 30 2023

Planning & Building Services

Please post for MHRB 9/11

*Julia Krog*

Director  
County of Mendocino  
Department of Planning & Building Services  
860 N Bush Street, Ukiah, CA 95482  
Main Line: 707-234-6650  
Fax: 707-463-5709  
[krogj@mendocinocounty.gov](mailto:krogj@mendocinocounty.gov)  
[www.mendocinocounty.gov/pbs](http://www.mendocinocounty.gov/pbs)



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**From:** RANDAL MENDOSA <randy.hodyssey@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 29, 2023 11:24 AM  
**To:** Julia Krog <krogj@mendocinocounty.gov>  
**Subject:** Public Comment - MHRB Meeting - 9/11/23

Mendocino Historical Review Board Members  
c/o Julia Krog, Mendocino County Dept Planning & Building Services

Dear MHRB Board members:

It seems logical to me that some Mendocino businesses and food service workers will experience substantial financial hardships if food establishments are summarily forced to remove existing commercial tent structures that have enabled customers to choose outdoor covered dining.

This is a time when our community needs calm minds to come together to develop a workable plan that will continue protecting the historic character of Mendocino without harming our local economy. I hope your board will consider allowing commercial tents for outdoor dining under very specific conditions. I do not believe that a limited number of well-maintained commercial tents detract from the historic character of our town. Frankly, I don't even notice the current tents anymore!

MENDOCINO HISTORY: In 1973 when the Board of Supervisors enacted the Mendocino Historic Preservation District, I was a student at Mendocino High School. I remember there was a lot of

public discussion both for and against the creation of the MHRB. It was certainly a frequent discussion item at our family dinner table, as merchants were worried the MHRB might harm local businesses.

As part of a research project, I made an appointment to meet with Harold "Hal" Irish, a local attorney who was providing legal services for the MHRB. Hal explained to me how the new Historic Preservation District was all about preventing outlandish building projects and public nuisances that would give Mendocino a poor appearance. I remember Hal telling me that painting a building purple was an example of something excessive the MHRB would not allow. He assured me the legislative intent of the ordinance was not intended to hurt businesses or to turn Mendocino into a museum.

I want to acknowledge the MHRB has been very good for Mendocino. I greatly appreciate you who are serving on the board, along with past citizens who have volunteered their time and efforts to serve. I know it can be a thankless job at times!

For the issue relating to outdoor tent structures, I highly recommend your board keep working to establish a plan that can maintain Mendocino's historic charm without adversely harming our business community.

Sincerely,

Randy Mendosa

[randy.mendosa@gmail.com](mailto:randy.mendosa@gmail.com)