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By James Feenan at 8:22 am, Aug 14, 2024

From: [Andrew Kawczak](#)
To: [pbscommissions](#)
Cc: [Ted Williams](#)
Subject: Transient Habitation proposed changes
Date: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 2:53:50 PM

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To: Mendocino County Planning Commission, Department of Building & Planning and Board of Supervisors

Re: transient Habitation/Low Intensity Camping

This letter is to voice my concerns over the proposed changes to County codes which would allow what is referred to as Low Intensity Camping throughout the County. The term 'Low Intensity' incorrectly infers low impact; it does not appear as if the full potential impacts of these changes have been reviewed nor discussed with the public.

My initial concern is the timing and presentation of the proposed changes. It appears as if no public input has been sought regarding the changes, no public information outreach has occurred and the pace to approve the changes is accelerated, coming as a surprise to most County residents. I ask that this proposed change be pulled from the August 15th agenda and discussed at length, incorporating public input.

I am concerned that the proposed changes will disproportionately affect Coastal communities. An online review of the current unpermitted campsites in our County finds a high percentage occurring in the areas extending from Point Arena to Elk, Albion, Comptche, Mendocino, and Fort Bragg. I believe that the continued discussion of this topic/proposed changes shall allow these communities to be the primary voices involved in shaping new guidelines.

I am concerned regarding the proposed change to allow for the permitting of commercial endeavors to occur in residential areas, only with an Administrative Permit.

I am also concerned about the apparent lack of discussion of the impacts to both County and private roads as a result of the expansion of commercial uses throughout the County (yet occurring primarily in Coastal communities). County road quality will further degrade with increased vehicular and recreational traffic. What recourse do private road owners/associations have for the increased wear and tear of the road infrastructure?

The lack of discussion addressing fire safety is also a concern. Have the proposed changes been discussed with all of the Volunteer and Public fire agencies to incorporate their input and concerns?

There are also concerns relating to potential property insurance changes that may result from living next to a commercial camp as well as issues that may arise relating to the property re-sale, which would need to include the disclosure that a neighboring property(s) is operating a commercial campground.

Within the information I was able to review, it is unclear as to what mechanism will be in place to collect TOT? Will fees be paid based on the 'good faith' of the applicant?

I assert that a Use Permit needs to be applied for each proposed camping application. It also appears that the Environmental Health Department and the Department of Transportation need to be the lead agencies as this policy is being discussed.

With the brief time allotted to review and comment on these proposed changes, I wanted to initially present the above-noted concerns. With the creation of a public forum or working group to discuss these proposed changes in further detail, I would also suggest that the following issues be considered;

property line setback minimums with no setback reduction

mandatory fire plans in place demonstrating that adequate water supplies and appropriate infrastructure exist to respond to fire

adequate road/driveway access for emergency vehicles

grading plan requirements for the creation of RV pads as well as parcels proposing multiple campsites

traffic study to review impacts on the County roads

permitting protections/safeguards for the impacts on County roads

realistically punitive fine system or timetable for revocation of permit which is incorporated for continued infractions for; noise complaints, health and safety violations, lack of private road maintenance, etc.

health and safety concerns relating in part (but not limited to); environmental impacts (to creeks, watercourses, wells), septic systems, unleashed animals, noise

Thank you for your time.

Andrew Kawczak