



# Mendocino County Farm Bureau

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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.

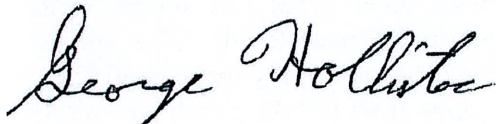
MCFB understands the need for local housing and we encourage local planning which accommodates orderly, logical patterns of urban development that minimizes sprawl and protects agricultural resources. Due to the previous allowance of agricultural conversion of the properties to the North, South and West, 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". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a large initial "G" and a stylized "H".

George Hollister  
President

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