

To the Napa County Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission,

We write in support of Paloma Vineyard and Winery.

As a small, family-owned mountain winery on Spring Mountain that has been farming and producing wine since 1971, we understand the realities of operating on steep terrain and the challenges small wineries face navigating increasingly complex regulations.

Wineries like Paloma are an essential part of Napa Valley's agricultural fabric. These are not large hospitality operations. They are small farming enterprises where the vineyard, the winery, and the people who live and work on the land are closely connected.

For many hillside wineries, existing homes have historically served practical purposes—including welcoming visitors for tastings. This approach reflects the modest scale of these operations and avoids the need for additional construction in sensitive mountain environments.

Requiring Paloma to abandon use of a long-standing residence as a tasting location and instead construct a new commercial building appears unnecessary and contrary to Napa County's goal of preserving its rural agricultural character.

Equally concerning is the requirement that the winery undertake costly road upgrades under road and street standards that were developed primarily for larger or new development projects. Applying such requirements to small, long-established mountain wineries can create burdens that are disproportionate to their scale of operation.

The result is often not improved safety or environmental protection, but rather the gradual disappearance of the small family wineries that helped build Napa Valley's reputation.

We respectfully encourage the County to work collaboratively with Paloma to reach a practical solution that recognizes the winery's modest scale, long history, and agricultural contribution. Protecting Napa Valley's future should include protecting the small, independent wineries that helped create it.

Sincerely,
Stuart Smith
Smith-Madrone Vineyards & Winery
Spring Mountain District, Napa Valley