

“H”

Public Comment  
(May 1, 2024 at 7:30 a.m. to  
July 25, 2024 at 4 p.m.)

Public Comments for the December 6, 2023 and  
May 1, 2024, Planning Commission Hearings are  
available at:

[https://www.pbes.cloud/index.php/s/  
gKnYZKxYLz8c4jz](https://www.pbes.cloud/index.php/s/gKnYZKxYLz8c4jz)

**From:** [Bordona, Brian](#)  
**To:** [MeetingClerk](#); [Parker, Michael](#); [Anderson, Laura](#); [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Vida Valiente Use Permit #P20-00079-UP - Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 8:35:31 AM  
**Attachments:** [Crystal Springs Road - Shawn Moura.docx](#)

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**From:** Shawn Moura <shawnmoura@bellsouth.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 7:39 AM  
**To:** Bordona, Brian <Brian.Bordona@countyofnapa.org>  
**Subject:** Vida Valiente Use Permit #P20-00079-UP - Public Comment

[External Email - Use Caution]

Good morning Brian,

Here is my public comment for today. If the hearing runs late I won't be able to present it myself as I have to leave by 1:15pm to pick up my kids from school in St. Helena and attend a school board meeting.

Thank you for your help and time.

Shawn Moura  
236 Crystal Springs Rd  
St Helena CA

## Vida Valiente Winery Use Permit Application #P20-00079-UP

My name is Shawn Moura and I live at 236 Crystal Springs Rd, I am a full time resident and have 3 children living with me at this residence. My parents also live on the north fork and I am here to express my concerns with the ability of Crystal Springs road to accommodate the huge infrastructure heavy winery project that will further deteriorate the already poor condition of this road.

Did you know that Cystal Springs Road used to be the main north south road on the east side of our valley? Then the Trail was built in the mid 1940/50's leaving Crystal Springs Road to residential and agricultural traffic and the road hasn't changed much since then. And no, I didn't read this on the internet... I know this because my Grandpa was literally born on the road and lived his entire life here.

I walk Crystal Springs Road with my kids and/or dogs every other day and I encounter daily traffic jams with today's normal daily use. I don't allow my kids to walk it alone because the traffic is so heavy and I've since stopped walking at the south end because of the narrow road, blind turns and fast driving cars. My near misses while walking the road became too frequent so I abandoned the south end for my daily walks.

You have or will see photos today to show the common issues encountered when large trucks use the road for winery deliveries, utilities work and home construction. Two large trucks cannot pass in several sections of this road both at the north and the south ends. The North side at the fork where Crystal Springs splits from the North fork cannot fit two vehicles at the same time. One has to backup to allow the other to pass. I see this frequently when a large water hauling truck takes 5 daily runs along this fork on one of the 10 times a day I drive by doing kid drop off and pick ups.

We have crumbling pavement and retaining wall along a narrow section just installed in Fall of 2023 that is already failing with our "normal" traffic. This road will fail with daily heavy usage by heavy dump trucks. Remember when the Trail was closed in St. Helena when the river eroded away the soil under the Trail last year and it was closed for thru traffic? That's the scenario that's already setup on Crystal Springs as shown by photos today.

The physically heavy and frequency of loads imposed by large dump trucks hauling the cave spoils for YEARS from the proposed project will very likely destroy what's left of this road, rendering it unusable for those that live along it.

The main water supply line for the City of St. Helena runs within few feet of Crystal Springs road edge. Should the road fail, the water line will likely be ruptured. Who bears responsibility for the fix? Napa County or the City of St. Helena?

In addition to water, a major gas distribution line to Deer Park and Angwin is located near the cracked pavement. The road is also on the St Helena Unified School district bus route.

I am in support of wineries and new construction. But I am against a plan that doesn't fit safely into the infrastructure that is in place to support its residents. It's a bit of the chicken and egg scenario here. If you approve this project, the county plan and funding to expand and secure Crystal Springs Rd must also be approved. But the road infrastructure is NOT part of the scope of this project. I'm



not suggesting who should pay for the infrastructure needs, I'm just saying that the scope of THIS project requires it to be in the plan.

The plan I've seen today will jeopardize the safety and welfare of the residents of this neighborhood and the water supply of the City of St. Helena and the gas lines for Deer Park and Angwin. The plans can be changed to mitigate these risks. But as the project is scoped today it does not mitigate the risk and should be denied on those grounds.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shawn Moura  
236 Crystal Springs Road  
May 1, 2024

**From:** [Hoskins, Neha](#)  
**To:** [Alsop, Ryan](#); [CRAIG, REBECCA \(Becky\)](#); [Bratton, Sheryl](#); [Bordona, Brian](#); [Ryan, Patrick C.](#); [Parker, Michael](#); [Ringel, Matthew](#); [Lederer, Steven](#)  
**Cc:** [Cooper, Paulette](#); [Morgan, Greg](#); [Williams, Anthony](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Vida Valiente  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 4, 2024 1:39:50 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)

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**\*\*Board of Supervisors bcc'd\*\***

Please see public comment below that was sent to Supervisor Gallagher.

Thank you,



[Clerk of the Board](#)

*Neha Hoskins*

[\(pronounced "nay-ha"\)](#)

**Clerk of the Board**

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers [\(why this matters\)](#)

Napa County Executive Office

1195 Third Street, Suite 310 | Napa, CA 94559

Tel: (707) 253.4580

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**From:** Gallagher, Joelle <[joelle.gallagher@countyofnapa.org](mailto:joelle.gallagher@countyofnapa.org)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 3, 2024 8:27 PM  
**To:** Michael Wolf <[mike@mwvsinc.com](mailto:mike@mwvsinc.com)>  
**Cc:** Hoskins, Neha <[neha.hoskins@countyofnapa.org](mailto:neha.hoskins@countyofnapa.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: Vida Valiente

Thank you for your thoughtful comments Mike.

Joelle

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**From:** Michael Wolf <[mike@mwvsinc.com](mailto:mike@mwvsinc.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, June 3, 2024 4:11 PM

**To:** Gallagher, Joelle <[joelle.gallagher@countyofnapa.org](mailto:joelle.gallagher@countyofnapa.org)>

**Cc:** [sam@arkenstone.com](mailto:sam@arkenstone.com) <[sam@arkenstone.com](mailto:sam@arkenstone.com)>

**Subject:** Vida Valiente

[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Supervisor Gallagher, I am writing to voice my strong support for the Vida Valiente winery application on Crystal Springs Road. I know the area well, having farmed the nearby vineyard at 391 Crystal Springs road for many years. This is simply a good project that you have before you. The site is appropriate, the zoning is appropriate, and all of the professionals who have looked at it, from your own planning staff to Cal Fire, to the professionals retained by the applicants found the project essentially flawless. Unfortunately, the “comfort” of two appointed Planning Commissioners threatens the forward movement of the project and therefore the worthy cause to which a large share of the potential profits would be pledged.

All that said, my greater concern revolves around the approval process. The county has established a framework for project applicants to follow which allows for extensive review, public input, open and honest hearings with an avenue for appeals, the last of which is soon to occur. If an application clears all of the hurdles, is it reasonable for an appointed official’s comfort with imagined issues reason to reject the application? Neighbors worry. Neighbors don’t want to see increased activity. I get that, but then why bother with the exhaustive application process? People spend years and literally millions of dollars to demonstrate that their project meets or exceeds the standards that the county has established. To not allow projects that so obviously clear that bar simply isn’t fair (I know well that life isn’t fair, but this is controllable). If policy allows for the totally subjective denial of applications that meet all of the county’s standards, then the standards need to change so that people do not invest their time and hard earned resources attempting to gain approval in a process where the rules and standards don’t matter. Thank you for taking the time to consider this.

Respectfully, Michael Wolf

Michael Wolf  
4084 Silverado Trail  
Napa CA 94558  
(707) 480-7550

**From:** [ClerkoftheBoard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Vida Valiente - Appeal  
**Date:** Monday, July 15, 2024 11:09:41 AM  
**Attachments:** [Vida Valiente Ltr 7.15.24.pdf](#)  
[image001.png](#)

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**\*Board of Supervisors bcc'd\***

Please see the attached public comment regarding the Vida Valiente winery Appeal.

Thank you,

**Anthony Williams**  
**Senior Deputy Clerk of the Board**

Napa County Executive Office  
1195 Third Street, Suite 310 | Napa, CA 94559  
Tel: (707) 253.4580 | Email: [anthony.williams@countyofnapa.org](mailto:anthony.williams@countyofnapa.org)



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**From:** Karen Fontanella <karen@fontanellawines.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 15, 2024 10:01 AM  
**To:** Gregory, Ryan <Ryan.Gregory@countyofnapa.org>  
**Cc:** Ringel, Matthew <matthew.ringel@countyofnapa.org>; ClerkoftheBoard <clerkoftheboard@countyofnapa.org>  
**Subject:** Vida Valiente - Appeal

[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Ryan,

Please see attached letter in support of Vida Valiente's appeal of their denial of their use permit application.

Thanks!  
Karen

Karen Fontanella  
(707) 738-8677  
Fontanella Family Winery  
Elusa Winery  
NV Winery Management  
[karen@fontanellawines.com](mailto:karen@fontanellawines.com)  
[kfontanella@elusawinery.com](mailto:kfontanella@elusawinery.com)



*Fontanella*  
FAMILY WINERY

July 15, 2024

Via U.S. Mail and Electronic Mail

Supervisor Ryan Gregory  
Napa County, District 2  
1195 Third Street, Suite 310  
Napa, CA 94559

RE: Vida Valiente – Winery Use Permit Appeal

Dear Ryan,

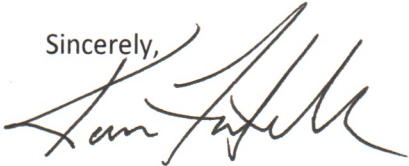
I am writing to you in support of the appeal by Vida Valiente of their winery use permit application that was initially denied by the Planning Commission. I believe that the Vida Valiente winery is exactly the type of winery that our county should be supporting. These property owners followed all the county rules and invested significant amounts of money to meet all of the requirements set forth by the county with the expectation that those rules would be consistently enforced. Changing the rules by placing unreasonable burdens on the applicant to improve public roads to meet a standard that has never been required of any winery applicant ever before is not only unfair but it is unconscionable. My husband and I started our winery by purchasing our property and following a similar path by meeting all the requirements set forth by the county to obtain our winery use permit. It would have been financially devastating to us had these rules been arbitrarily changed after our application had been filed.

Wineries do not create fire danger. Denying a winery does nothing to prevent a fire or lessen fire danger. In fact, our winery is proof that wineries can serve as fire breaks, places of safety and locations where first responders can take stands against fires. In the 2017 fires, because of the defensible space on our property and the access at our winery, firefighters were able to take a stand against the Partrick fire. Firefighters used our fire hydrant and tanks to fight the fire saving not only our home but our neighbors homes and our vineyards served as a firebreak to progression of the fires. Our on-property access road and turn around gave the engines a place to stage. Our property was also used recently by first responders when access to Partrick Road was temporarily cut off for replacement of the bridge on the road over several days.

When you have a road such as Crystal Springs Road that may not have the width or access as other county roads, wineries can serve as a significant benefit in times of emergency as we are living proof of. Any claims to the contrary are disingenuous and founded in fear and not fact.

I would ask the County to follow proper legal precedent and take the right course of action here by overturning the Planning Commissions denial of this application. Napa County should be supporting small ultra-premium producers who are following the rules and truly have a passion for our industry and our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen Fontanella". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Karen" being more prominent than the last name "Fontanella".

Karen Fontanella

Owner

Fontanella Family Winery

cc (via electronic mail):

Matthew Ringel – [matthew.ringel@countyofnapa.org](mailto:matthew.ringel@countyofnapa.org)

Clerk of the Board – [clerkoftheboard@countyofnapa.org](mailto:clerkoftheboard@countyofnapa.org)

**From:** [Gary Carman](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Vida Valiente  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 16, 2024 12:55:56 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[Vida Valiente.pdf](#)

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[External Email - Use Caution]

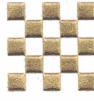
Matthew,

Please see the attached letter for my support of Vida Valiente. Thank you!

Best,



Gary Carman  
Checkerboard Vineyards  
4331 Azalea Springs Way  
Calistoga, CA 94515  
707.942.4112



[7/16/2024]

To the esteemed members of the Napa Valley Board of Supervisors

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Vida Valiente Winery's proposed project in Napa Valley. As a dedicated team member of Checkerboard Vineyards and a fellow Napa Valley wine producer, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the passion, dedication, and commitment to quality that Vida Valentine brings to the table.

Vida Valiente's dedication to sustainable practices, its focus on producing world-class wines, and its commitment to community engagement align perfectly with the values that have made Napa Valley a globally recognized wine region. Their proposed winery promises to be a valuable addition to our local economy and a model for sustainable winemaking.

I firmly believe that Vida Valentine Winery's project's approval will be a win-win for both the winery and the Napa community. Their presence will enhance our region's reputation for excellence, create jobs, and contribute to the vibrancy of our wine industry.

I urge the Napa Valley Board of Supervisors to consider this project's merits carefully and grant Vida Valentine Winery the opportunity to realize its vision in Napa Valley.

Sincerely,

Gary Carman  
Checkerboard Vineyards



**From:** [Jordan Bentley](#)  
**To:** [Cottrell, Anne](#)  
**Cc:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Vida Valiente Use Permit  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 16, 2024 3:57:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Letter from Jordan Bentley 07 16 24.pdf](#)

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Good afternoon Anne,

Please see the attached letter stating my support for the Vida Valiente wine use permit application due to be reviewed again by the Board of Supervisors on August 6th. I will also send a hard copy for your files.

I appreciate your time and consideration of the thoughts expressed in my letter. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions and/or need anything.

Thank you very much and wishing you a wonderful evening.

All my best,

Jordan

**Jordan Bentley**  
REALTOR®

[707.474.7594](tel:707.474.7594)  
winecc.net  
DRE 01988781

**Wine Country Consultants**  
1316 Main Street  
St. Helena, CA 94574





July 15, 2024

Anne Cottrell  
c/o Napa County Board of Supervisors

Re: Vida Valiente Winery Project – August 6<sup>th</sup> Hearing

Dear Anne,

I am sharing my support for the Vida Valiente project on Crystal Springs Road as a member of your district, a home and business owner and as a mother raising two children in St. Helena.

I am aware of the project, its owners' positive intentions within our community and the wine industry as well as the strong opposition it has received to date from community members and neighbors.

I hear the concerns of those neighbors and community members who oppose this project and I do not disregard their environmental worries or their emotional stress from past fire evacuations. However, their concerns are focused in the wrong direction and should be channeled into requesting infrastructure and road improvements from the county to create a safe and secure evacuation route from their homes rather than work to stop thoughtful fellow neighbors who are deeply invested in the community and local economy grow their own legacy in the area.

The Drumwright and Kaplan families went above and beyond the requirements placed before them when completing the needed environmental and safety reports necessary to successfully complete a winery use permit application. They did these tasks with care and worked with the highest level of professionals within our county and state. They did this not only to show their high-level of commitment to the community but to also outwardly reflect their own want for a sustainable future within the wine industry, their community and for their children.

I too want a safe, sustainable and successful community not only within St. Helena and the Napa Valley but within our greater state and global communities as well. To achieve all three in our future, we need neighbors like the Drumwrights and Kaplans to lead the way and to set the bar higher for the others that will follow. If we do not support their efforts and others who have also gone above and beyond the requirements placed by the county, our community will not be sustainable, it will not be successful for generations to come and therefore there will be less investment to ensure the infrastructure improvements and safety of our communities.

My husband and I choose to raise our family in St. Helena for many beautiful reasons and feel privileged to be business owners who support the local wine industry. However, the recent opposition to sustainable and thoughtful growth from our county is very alarming. Both of our businesses rely on families like the Drumwrights and Kaplans who want to grow their own dreams here in wine country. If the county continues to make decisions based primarily on the emotions of their constituents rather than the recommendations



and reports made by the professionals entrusted to help guide their policies then not only are our own businesses in jeopardy but so are others who rely on the wine industry.

We need to grow our community in many different directions to survive. Under your leadership, I hope we evolve on a sustainable path that sets the bar to a high standard of success and supports all our community members of this generation and beyond.

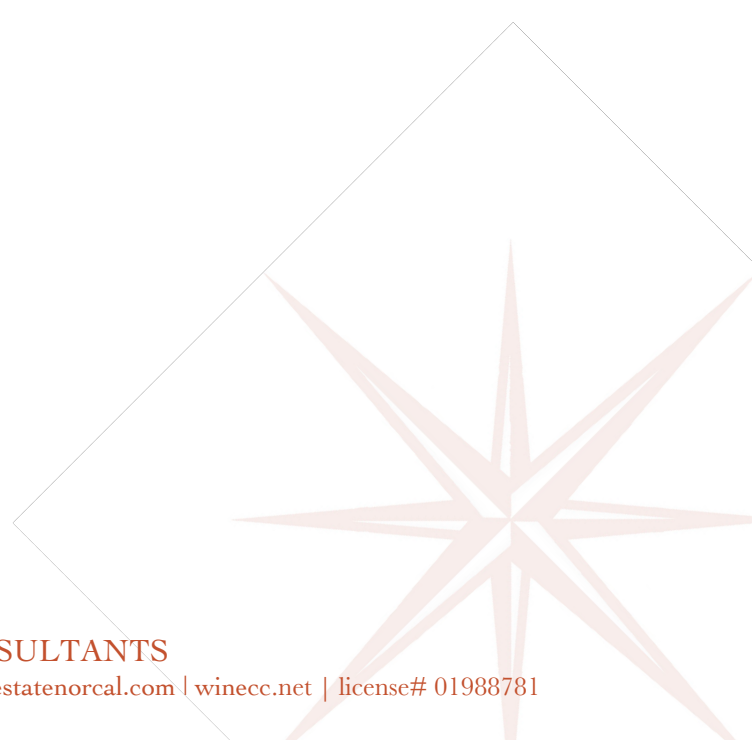
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jordan Bentley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "y".

Jordan Bentley  
Realtor

Christie's International Real Estate | Wine Country Consultants



**From:** [Robyn Bentley](#)  
**To:** [Cottrell, Anne](#)  
**Cc:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Letter of Support of Vida Valiente Use Permit  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 17, 2024 12:48:41 PM  
**Attachments:** [Vida Valiente Anne Cottrell.pdf](#)

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Anne,

Attached please find my letter of support for the Vida Valiente project located at 407 Crystal Springs Road in St. Helena.

I appreciate your time, consideration and thoughtful voting on August 6th.

Cheers,

**Robyn Bentley**

[707.477.8420](tel:707.477.8420)

[winecc.net](http://winecc.net)

DRE 01175362

**Wine Country Consultants**

1316 Main Street

St. Helena, CA 94574





July 15, 2024

Napa County Board of Supervisors  
c/o Anne Cottrell

Re: Vida Valiente Winery Project

Dear Anne,

I am writing to you today as a neighbor, as a business owner and as a member of District 3 who is concerned about the current crisis of uncertainty within Napa County.

As we are all aware, Napa Valley is the top viticultural area in the world. The climate, the soils, the wines and the culture of hospitality drew my family to St. Helena in 1993.

The valley's commitment to preserving its agriculture heritage began fifty years ago with the implementation of two zoning designates; the Agriculture Preserve (AP) and the Agriculture Watershed (AW) with clearly stated uses and regulations.

Napa Valley citizens furthered their commitment to agriculture by the enactment of the Wine Definition Ordinance (WDO) in 1990, leaving no doubt that vintners and growers are the economic engines that fund Napa Valley.

For the past thirty years it has been my privilege to assist vintners and growers make substantial financial investments within the Napa Valley real estate arena. A large part of the process of transacting real estate in Napa Valley is assisting clients understand the AP, AW and/or WDO regulations as it pertains to their intention for the use of the land they are purchasing.

The Drumwright and Kaplan families of the Vida Valiente project, located at 407 Crystal Springs Road, are clients, friends and committed citizens of Napa Valley. They are not outsiders. They are serious insiders who have invested substantial time, money and talent in the effort of elevating the art of winemaking as well as solidly employing numerous constituents in an effort to build a home for their Vida Valiente brand.

As a past Napa Valley land use consultant, I believe you clearly see the current disconnect between the existing board of supervisors and the planning commission with the county's planning staff. The rejection of the Le Colline vineyard project and now the Vida Valiente winery project has left even seasoned vintners, vineyard managers, growers, land use consultants, land use attorneys, engineers, architects and builders at a loss for advising future development or redevelopment.



If the message Napa County is sending does not change quickly, property tax and transfer tax dollars will suffer significantly over the coming years. The economic engine that runs Napa Valley needs your expertise, your support and your voice to continue to be a global leader in the world of viticulture and hospitality.

On August 6th, I ask that you support the Vida Valiente project and show the thousands of constituents who are employed by the wine industry, as well as our vintners and growers, that you will be a clear and consistent voice for enforcing the regulations that made this Valley a global powerhouse. Bringing certainty to the very foundation of our community and the wine industry (already faced with enough uncertainty via Mother Nature) will be your legacy.

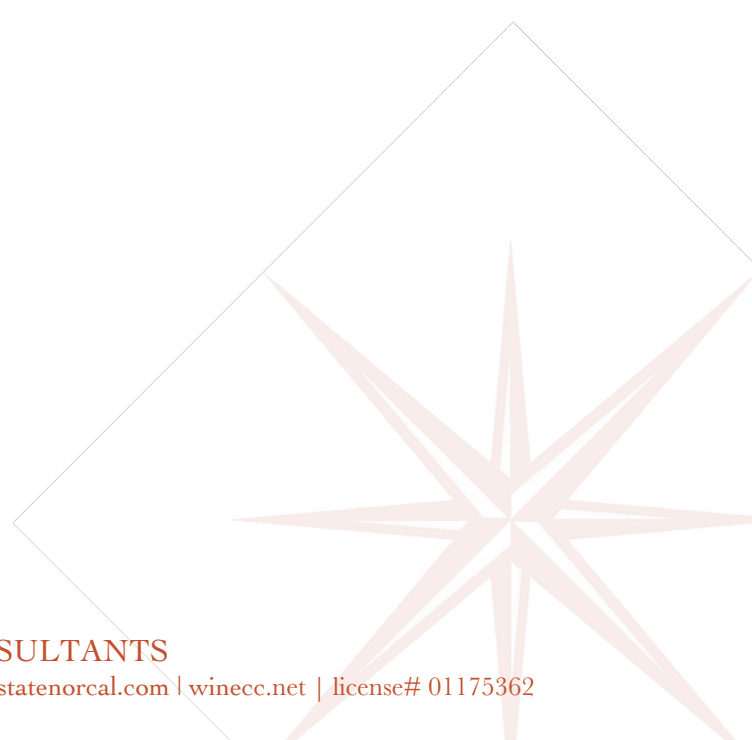
Thank you for all you do for District 3 and for your years of service in many non-profit arenas. We are very lucky to have you and your family call St. Helena home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robyn Bentley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Robyn Bentley  
Broker

Christie's International Real Estate | Wine Country Consultants



**From:** [Ross Bentley](#)  
**To:** [Cottrell, Anne](#)  
**Cc:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Vida Valiente Use Permit - Letter of Support  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 17, 2024 1:51:55 PM  
**Attachments:** [Letter to AC - Ross Bentley 71524.pdf](#)

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Hi Anne,

Hope this email finds you well. I'm reaching out as member of our community to show my support for Vida Valiente's use permit review on August 6th.

Attached you'll find my letter of support and a hard copy will be sent by mail as well.

Please let me know if you have questions and I appreciate you taking the time and consideration of my opinions.

Thank you very much for all that you do in our community and wishing you a wonderful rest of the week.

Cheers,

**Ross Bentley**  
REALTOR®

[707.227.8618](tel:707.227.8618)  
[winecc.net](http://winecc.net)  
DRE 02164086

**Wine Country Consultants**  
1316 Main Street  
St. Helena, CA 94574





July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Anne Cottrell  
c/o Napa County Board of Supervisors

RE: Vida Valiente

Dear Anne,

The Vida Valiente winery project has recently become a popular topic of conversation amongst the local community. Unfortunately, this conversation revolves around the fear of the unknown and what the future holds for the wine industry in Napa Valley. Due to the uncertain narrative surrounding the Napa County Board of Supervisors, I feel it is time to express my opinion by showing support for Vida Valiente's proposed winery at 407 Crystal Springs Road in St. Helena.

Vida Valiente presented an in-depth complete winery use permit package with all required Napa County departments approving and signing-off on the project. This alone is no easy task and a process I am familiar with as having worked through several projects with Napa County. When the Napa County Board of Supervisors voted against their own experts' advice and sided with an emotional plea from a few, it was unprecedented and set forth a new precedent.

What is this new precedent? Very hard to tell or even guide someone on how Napa County will respond to projects based off the latest decisions regarding Le Colline vineyard and Vida Valiente. It seems this new standard is not based on the extensive rules and regulations that already exist. Napa Valley is one of the most heavily regulated viticulture regions in the world, a milestone that comes with pride which is embraced and followed by the wine industry.

So when one follows all the rules, receives endorsements from the various Napa County departments, dedicates extensive time and money to secure their investment, to then be denied because it simply does not feel right. What message does this send out the community and anyone else looking to make Napa Valley their home? It says that Napa Valley is not open for business, does not support the wine industry and brings uncertainty towards future growth.

This message is being heard loud and clear from within the wine industry and it is frustrating. Frustrating to see people look elsewhere for their needs because Napa County is too hard to deal with. Currently, none of my clients want to work with Napa County on any entitlements because they feel it is a waste of energy and money with no guaranteed outcome even if you follow all the rules.

The Drumwright and Kaplan families are wonderful vintners, a great support to our communities and they also care dearly about the safety of their neighbors. When I hear people living on Rose Lane complain about the state of Crystal Springs Road and the scary situation they endured during the fires, I feel for their struggle. It is unfair though to paint the Drumwright and Kaplan families as aggressors to their problems and that the proposed winery would be the sole reason a safety issue may occur during a fire. What is glaring, is hearing all the voices complain about the condition of Crystal Springs Road and not hearing how the county plans to help





them. Instead, the residents of Rose Lane should be directing their anger and frustration towards Napa County in order to support their safety and rectify a situation that has caused them pain.

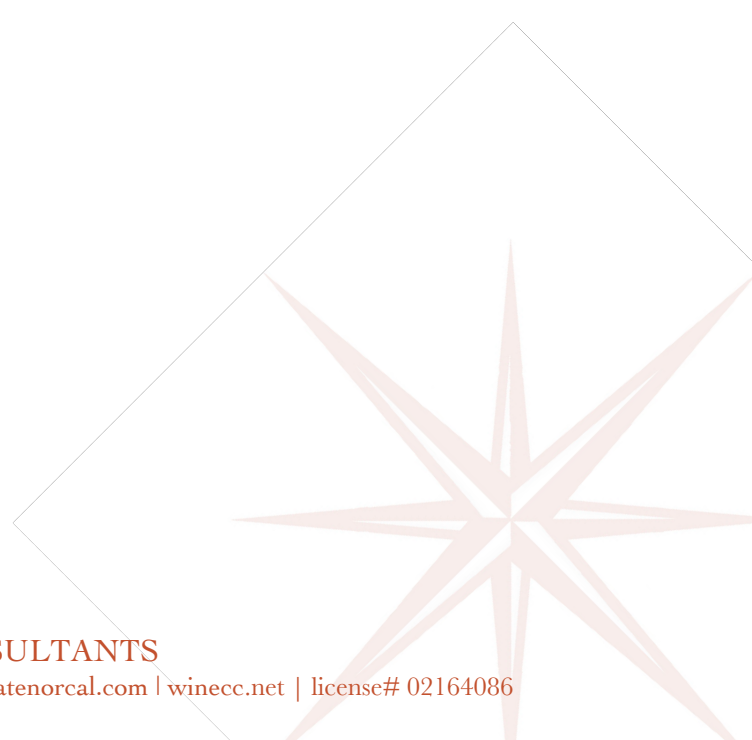
I grew up in St. Helena and have been working in the wine industry since 2009. I am very proud to be raising my own family in St. Helena and I hope my children get to enjoy the beauties of Napa Valley that I fell in love with and not be left with an unrecognizable landscape due to what an uncertain future in the Napa Valley may hold. Thus, it is important to not go down a slippery slope. To evaluate the facts and follow the science in the Vida Valiente winery project. The Board of Supervisors has the ability to reassure and restore its constituents' confidence in Napa County by simply following the guidance of the county's own entrusted personnel.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ross Bentley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Ross Bentley



**From:** [Kimberly Jones](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Cc:** [Kimberly Jones](#)  
**Subject:** Vida Valiente  
**Date:** Thursday, July 18, 2024 1:48:53 AM  
**Attachments:** [Vida Valiente Appeal.docx](#)

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Matthew,

Please find my attached letter in support of Vida Valiente.

Warmly,  
Kimberly

Kimberly Jones  
Owner  
Kimberly Jones Selections  
323.806.1119 cell  
[kimberly@kjswines.com](mailto:kimberly@kjswines.com)  
[www.kimberlyjonesselections.com](http://www.kimberlyjonesselections.com)



Kimberly Jones  
Owner  
Kimberly Jones Selections  
323.806.1119 cell  
[kimberly@kjswines.com](mailto:kimberly@kjswines.com)  
[www.kimberlyjonesselections.com](http://www.kimberlyjonesselections.com)



Dear Napa County Board of Supervisors,

RE: Vida Valiente - Winery Use Permit Appeal

I am writing to you in support of the appeal by Vida Valiente of their winery use permit application that was initially denied by the Planning Commission. I have worked with everyone involved for over fourteen years. They are conscientious and have followed all rules and guidelines.

Vida Valiente is exactly the type of winery Napa Valley should be supporting.

As I said earlier, they followed all the county rules and invested significant amounts of money to meet all the requirements set forth by the county with the expectation that those rules would be consistently enforced. I am concerned that the public road is being used to deny this project. Does this mean that property owners county-wide will have to upgrade public roads to build or rebuild on their property, or is this requirement just being placed on this project? This seems incredibly unfair, changing the rules to improve public roads to meet a standard that has not been required of any winery applicant ever before. As for the neighbor's opposition, everyone opposing this project built their homes without improving Crystal Springs Road. The burden to improve the public road shouldn't fall on this one project just because it's a winery.

I would ask the County to follow proper legal precedent and take the right course of action here by overturning the Planning Commissions denial of this application. Napa County should be supporting small, ultra-premium producers who are following the rules and truly have a passion for our industry and our community.

Sincerely,  
Kimberly Jones

**From:** [Carlo Mondavi](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Vida Valiente Winery | Appeal  
**Date:** Sunday, July 21, 2024 9:55:51 AM

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Matthew,

I am writing to you as a local Napa Valley resident, as well as a climate and biodiversity activist to share my support of the Vida Valiente winery use permit application appeal.

I believe that the Vida Valiente winery is exactly the type of winery that our county should be supporting. These small family owned and operated wineries are how Napa became Napa and these wineries are under a growing threat with the new consolidation movement of family wineries and the unfair barrier to entry for new dreamers. To keep the culture alive we need more of these artists to bring the charm and culture back to Napa Valley.

Climate, biodiversity, and charm. I am also personally disappointed by the new road and street standards which, if followed, will turn the small charming roads of Napa Valley into asphalt freeways cutting into the hills. This comes at the cost of our valley's charm, but more importantly the amount of trees, greenspace, and pollinator habitat that would need to be cut to create these roads for all the new proposed construction would be devastating to climate, and biodiversity. When looking at the roads of the world's best wine regions from Burgundy, Champagne, Bordeaux, Piemonte and beyond what we consider small roads today is already at freeway scale comparatively. It is a shame to continue to push for bigger, more, better, which makes those that say Napa Valley is becoming Disneyland more and more true.

These rules don't just affect the climate, biodiversity, and charm. Changing these rules by placing an unreasonable burden on VV to build a larger road to meet a dangerous new standard is not only unfair, but it sends a message to small family farms that Napa Valley is only for corporate America. This is an awful message for the heartbeat of Napa Valley.

As a person who lives in Napa Valley, is a climate and biodiversity activist, I would like to ask the County to do what is right by overturning the Planning-Commissions denial of this application. Napa County should be supporting these world class dreamers, farmers, wine producers who are truly the heartbeat of what makes this place so special in the world of wines.

Respectfully,

 Carlo

Carlo R. Mondavi  
co-founder | chief farming officer

**Monarch Tractor**

[Monarch in CNET](#)  
[Monarch in Bloomberg](#)

## RESERVE A MONARCH

send from my phone so please... cut me some slack on typos

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**From:** [john reinert](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Vida Valiente - Winery Use Permit Appeal  
**Date:** Sunday, July 21, 2024 5:46:54 PM  
**Attachments:** [Vida Valiente Document 2024-07-21\\_174246.pdf](#)

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Hello Matt,

Please see the attached letter supporting the Vida Valiente Winery Use Permit Appeal. Thank you.

best,

john reinert, proprietor  
brilliant mistake wines  
(510) 506-3667  
[www.brilliantmistakewines.com](http://www.brilliantmistakewines.com)  
[www.whenshewaskingwines.com](http://www.whenshewaskingwines.com)

# brilliant mistake wines

July 21, 2024

Matt Ringle

1195 Third Street,

Napa, CA 94559

Re: Vida Valiente - Winery Use Permit Appeal

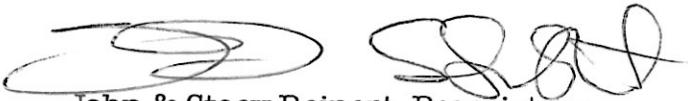
Dear Matt,

We are writing to you in support of the appeal by Vida Valiente of their winery use permit application that was initially denied by the Planning Commission. I strongly believe that the Vida Valiente winery is exactly the type of winery that Napa County should be supporting. This is an attractive, well thought-out project utilizing caves with modest production and visitation expectations. As we understand it, these property owners followed all the county rules and invested significant amounts of money to meet the requirements set forth by the county with the expectation that those rules would be consistently enforced. Changing the rules by placing an unreasonable burden on the applicant to improve public roads to meet a standard is something that has never been required of any winery applicant in the past. We believe this to be an unfair and unjust burden placed upon this applicant, and honestly a failure on the Planning Commissions part to treat each applicant fairly and consistently through these types of processes.

Hayes and Susana Drumwright, their beautiful family, and the entire team at Vida Valiente are examples of who Napa County should be championing and supporting as they continue to maintain the standards and quality the world has come to expect of Napa Valley Wines. Hayes and Susana are passionate individuals who give of their time to various causes here in Napa, supporting a variety of charitable organizations, including their very own Vida Valiente Foundation. One would be hard pressed to find two better, more passionate ambassadors for Napa Valley and the wine industry than these two people.

On a personal note, over the years Hayes and Susana have offered support and guidance to my wife Stacy and I as we try to navigate the challenges of owning a winery, and we couldn't be more appreciative of their support and advice. They are two people totally committed to helping their fellow winemakers, working together to help ensure that we all have the best opportunities to succeed. Wouldn't it be inspiring if that same commitment and support were afforded to them via the Planning Commission righting the wrong placed upon their winery use permit application with the previous denial? In denying this winery use permit, the planning commission has denied these two individuals the opportunity to continue to inspire others in the wine industry by placing unfair burdens and obstacles in their way. This is a mistake by this planning commission, one that we hope is quickly overturned.

Sincerely,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature on the left is a stylized, cursive 'JR' for John Reinert. The second signature on the right is a more complex, cursive signature for Stacy Reinert.

John & Stacy Reinert, Proprietors

Brilliant Mistake Wines



**From:** [Karen Williams](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Vida Valiente Winery Project  
**Date:** Monday, July 22, 2024 5:01:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)  
[VV Letter July 2024.docx](#)

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Matthew,

In the attached document, you will find comments I wish to be shared with those appropriately involved. If you have any questions or comments, please do let me know.

Many thanks for your time ~

Karen

**Karen Williams**  
**Founder**  
**ACME Fine Wines**  
**Napa Valley, CA**  
**707.963.0440 x 002**



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Napa County | RE: Vida Valiente Winery Project

It is with concern that I write to you today. Having lived in the Napa Valley for over 25 years, 21 of those years being dedicated to my own wine business, it has been an honor and a privilege to commit my time, energy, and resources to our industry while watching it evolve and grow into a destination where tourists and locals alike get to enjoy what surrounds us.

I initially got my start while at Tra Vigne Restaurant where connections with the people in our community and their wine brands led me to want to turn my focus to a business dedicated to promoting small wine businesses, as well as legacy wine brands. My business, ACME Fine Wines, has helped launch new brands for 21 years. Since our inception, we have been what we call “Invoice 1” for thousands of brands that got their initial purchase of their wine and start in the industry by being selected for inclusion in one of our worldwide wine clubs. These brands start with a “friends and family” mailing list but need assistance reaching a broader audience of wine consumers. We have been a part of the history of so many wineries as they got their feet on the ground and ultimately grew into viable businesses that support their families and teams. No doubt, it has been rewarding beyond what I ever thought possible.

Some of the brands that started very small didn’t dream of growing big enough to require having their own winery, nor did they want to be encumbered by what that entails, including the incredible time and effort that precedes the building process. Others dreamed bigger. ACME supported the one I am writing this letter in support of as well as its founders and their brands, seeing each of them as standing apart in their excellence, and what wine lovers around the country would want to know existed so they could, too, enjoy their extraordinary wines. Yes, Vida Valiente embodies the commitment to our community, both agriculturally and through diligently attracting and supporting tourism, from which we as a community benefit. The proprietors of Vida Valiente aren’t new to the wine business. Their collective efforts are solidly woven into the fabric of Napa Valley. They are keen masters at preservation and stewarding our land, promoting our Valley, and setting the standard for a high level of hospitality, as evident in the related and exquisite brands of Memento Mori and MAXEM. Consequently, they are educated in the county’s regulation process and are committed to following the rules, knowing their livelihood and that of their children growing up here depend on it. Yet after each step of the way – that they followed to a “T” - including investing significant monies to meet all requirements, they were denied their application for alternate reasons unbeknownst to them at the beginning of the lengthy, costly process.

Information publicly shared about the denial of Vida Valiente’s project has created much dissent, namely surrounding the fire and road improvement issues left out of the original regulation documentation. We should be supporting this very type of endeavor for it is exactly what we need: a project that will utilize limited production and visitation, much of which will be safely and visually tucked away within the modest infrastructure and caves, while investing in ultra-premium fruit contracts that continue to draw attention to the luxury reputation for which Napa Valley has become known, continuing to raise the bar with Napa Valley as the beneficiary, all the while providing an excellent product highlighted in international publications that naturally increase occupancy in our hotels, and bring business to our restaurants and shops.

It is with great hope that you reconsider and change your stance for the betterment of our community.

Sincerely,

Karen Williams  
Founder  
ACME Fine Wines, St. Helena

Karen Williams **ACME Fine Wines** 707.963.0440  
www.acmefinewines.com / karen@acmefinewines.com