



HELP US PROTECT CARMEL VALLEY NEIGHBORHOODS

by Prisc Walton



President's Letter

Monterey County Resource Management Agency Director Carl Holm recently issued an opinion in which he interprets the county zoning code in a way that could allow your neighbor

Priscilla Walton

to open an event center, holding events every day of the year, by merely planting some grape vines.

SHORT HISTORY

Hilltop Ranch LLC owns residential property at 62 East Carmel Valley Road on a narrow private shared driveway in a low-density residential (LDR) zoning district, in a neighborhood that is probably much like yours. Hilltop Ranch made three applications in 2013, 2014, and 2016, seeking to get county permission to have special events at its vineyard, which apparently was planted in the early 2000s and is approximately three acres of the 10-acre LDR-zoned property. Each of the special events applications has been met with substantial opposition from the neighbors, CVA, and the Carmel Valley Land Use Advisory Committee. The county has not approved any permits for special event use. The county code for the LDR zoning district does not list special events as an allowed use.

THE CVA APPEAL CHALLENGE

Nevertheless, Carl Holm wrote three communications to the Hilltop Ranch LLC's attorney in which Mr. Holm stated his opinion, based on his interpretations that Hilltop Ranch can have special events. The three documents are an email dated February 11, 2016, a letter dated April 11, 2017, and a letter dated May 16, 2017, which CVA collectively refers to as "the Holm Letter." CVA has filed an appeal of the Holm Letter.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WITH THE PLANNING DIRECTOR'S INTERPRETATION?

After Hilltop's three permit applications were halted by significant opposition, Mr. Holm proposed to the Hilltop applicant's attorney that -- at no cost to the applicant -- Mr. Holm could write an interpretation in order to allow special events at the site without a permit. And, that is what he did. The Holm Letter would allow special events every day of the year at the Hilltop Ranch site in the residential district.

The public process was not followed. Other than the applicant, nobody else had any advance notice of these three documents.

The Holm Letter rewarded the applicant for private lobbying and private meetings with Mr. Holm.

Below-Land Art - Following Nature's Lead by Paola Berthoin

WHO WILL BE IMPACTED BY THE HOLM LETTER?

- ▶ **YOU!** This decision by one man has the potential to impact all low-density neighborhoods, which comprise most of Carmel Valley. If this is not successfully challenged, you too could permanently suffer the noise, traffic, and other impacts of daily special events right next door.
- ▶ Competitors in the Ag Wine Corridor Plan area in the Salinas Valley who are covered by general plan policies that allows special event uses.
- ▶ Carmel Valley businesses that have permits for their special events activities.
- ▶ All of us who drive Carmel Valley Road and are forced to endure the increased special events traffic.

IS THE HOLM LETTER ILLEGAL?

Yes. It allows special events in a residential district where special events are not allowed by the zoning. It violates state

continued on page 2



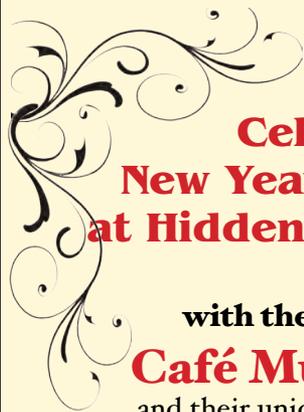
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President's Letter, continued from Pg. 1
laws and the county code. It provides an incentive for anyone in a low-density residential (LDR) zone to plant a vineyard so they can have special events. It is a corruption of the public process. If allowed to stand, the Holm Letter will cause serious long-term land use and environmental impacts in Carmel Valley. It also further weakens the public trust in Monterey County government.

PLEASE HELP CVA CHALLENGE THE HOLM LETTER!

CVA needs your help now in funding this effort to fight this disturbing action, to help with both the appeal fee and our legal fees. If we don't fight this together, you and all of us may soon have unlimited special events right next door to us.

The Carmel Valley Forum is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation whose mission includes protecting "the rural character and environment of Carmel Valley." The Forum receives tax deductible donations

and makes grants to organizations who share its mission, like the Carmel Valley Association

Please be as generous as you can, and send your tax-deductible check today payable to CV Forum, P. O. Box 221512, Carmel, CA 93922 and write "CVA Legal Defense Fund" in the memo line. You may also contribute directly to CVA online at www.carmelvalleyassociation.org. We will use your gift right away to fight the Holm Letter and to continue the legal fight to protect Carmel Valley neighborhoods.

You can also write an email to CVA at president@carmelvalleyassociation.org telling us what you think. CVA will provide email comments to the county. Please also feel free to write to Supervisor Mary Adams at district5@co.monterey.ca.us.

With your help, we will stop this outrageous illegal action by the county, and together we will keep Carmel Valley rural and protect the peace and quiet in the valley. Thank you for your extra support now.

.....

CVA ANNUAL PICNIC RETURNS

DATE: September 17, 11:30-3pm PLACE: Trail & Saddle Club

All CVA members are invited to attend our annual picnic at the Trail and Saddle Club with food provided by Chef Jerome Viel of Jerome's Carmel Valley Market and Catering. A delicious menu is planned along with music and a silent auction. Non-members are welcome to attend for the price of a membership.

John Laird, Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency and our former state assemblyman until 2008, will update us on natural resource issues affecting Carmel Valley and our surrounding area.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Contact
Mibs McCarthy,
mibsmccarthy@comcast.net
for more info.



EXPLORING A SENSE OF PLACE

A Program of the Carmel Valley Association/Natural Resources Committee



Nature Outing near Trail and Saddle Club
Photo by Paola Berthoin

SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING OUTINGS

All outings start at 10:00 am and end at 12:30 p.m.

These outings include reflective opportunities such as creating a simple drawing, realistic or abstract, of what one is seeing and hearing, writing a poem about the experience of being along the river or in the company of oaks and willows, expressing what it may be like to be an animal of the bioregion or creating land art... No need to fear the creative aspect!

The opportunity to share our creativity, readings, walks, and encounters allow us to gain a closer connection to the watershed that sustains all our lives.

RSVP and any questions, call Paola Berthoin at 831-624-9467, or just show up. We look forward to your participation!

DATE: August 12, 2017

LOCATION: Carmel River, meet at the Carmel Valley Little League Field parking lot

GUIDES: Riparian and Native Plant Ecologist Nikki Nedeff; Watershed Arts Educator Paola Berthoin

DATE: October 14, 2017

LOCATION: Carmel River Lagoon, meet at the Lagoon parking lot

GUIDES: Carmel River Steelhead Assoc. VP Frank Emerson; Paola Berthoin

DATE: November 11, 2017

LOCATION: To be determined

GUIDES: Linda Yamane, Rumsian Ohlone basket weaver and storyteller; Paola Berthoin



Free monthly Senior Lunch in CV Village is prepared by volunteers every first Monday of the month. Seating begins 11:30 at the Community Center on Ford Road.

Photo by Mibs McCarthy

POLL HIGHLIGHTS RES

What do Carmel Valley residents want? Mostly, they want "to maintain the rural beauty and nature of Carmel Valley," according to a recent two-page questionnaire filled out by 128 respondents. The questionnaire was distributed at the Carmel Valley Association's annual meeting in March and made available to be submitted online until June 1.

The full numerical results along with anonymous comments can be accessed by going to the CVA website at carmelvalleyassociation.org, but some trends were interesting enough to be mentioned here. The questions that received the highest percentage of yes votes of those responding to the question were 1) whether there should be better steps to conserve excess water (92%) and 2) whether CVA should encourage the purchase of the airstrip property by a buyer who would preserve it as a park and staging area for emergency services (91%).

Other high percentages were shown for the questions of support for the CVA lawsuit against the county in regard to Rancho Canada Village (85% yes), and opinions on the Val Verde development (85% no). Results relating to on-going hot-button issues showed 82% very or somewhat concerned with the growth in short-term rentals, 80 % very or somewhat concerned about the growth of events in the valley, and 50% believing there are too many wine-tasting establishments in the village.

Regarding traffic issues, most respondents believe, to no one's surprise, that the worst traffic congestion is occurring at Highway One and the mouth of the valley and that the county is not measuring traffic levels correctly (89%). The question of whether there should be traffic signals on Carmel Valley Road elicited only 28% of yes responses, and 59% approved of a roundabout at Laureles Grade and Carmel Valley Road.

When respondents were asked which organized activities they would be most interested in attending, they overwhelmingly favored public forums dealing with valley issues, followed by educational walks and visits to sites of interest. The CVA Events Committee would appreciate hearing from the public about

RESIDENTS' CONCERNS

by Sandy Schachter, based on analysis
by Dick Stott and David Burbidge

specific issues or speakers for forums.
E-mail Mibs McCarthy, mibsmccarthy@
comcast.net, with your suggestions.

The comments were numerous, and almost
all expressed concern about development
in the valley and its effects, especially on
traffic and water. Almost all were positive
in regard to CVA's work and the *Carmel
Valley Voice* and e-bulletin. Many will be
very useful as specific suggestions for the
road, traffic, and land use issues before us.
CVA's committees will study them as they
work on these issues.

CVA would like to thank all respondents
for the time they took to fill out the
questionnaire, the results of which will
be of great help to the board in future
actions. Many thanks to board member
Rick Manning and the CVA Communication
Committee for their work.



Marianna, Freya Read, and Penny Wood remind us to shop locally at July's Perch Decor opening in the village. Local resident and new owner Freya has "escaped from corporate" to focus on her interior design vocation. Perch Decor offers a mix of consigned and antique pieces.

Photo by Mibs McCarthy

CALL TO ACTION: ERADICATE GENISTA THREAT

by Carolyn Rice



Genista (French Broom)

plant crowds out native plants.

Christy Fischer, Santa Lucia Conservancy executive director, said regionally this has been the worst year for genista. She said the extensive growth may result from a combination of the drought followed by ash fall from the Soberanes Fire and the wet winter. Besides crowding out the native plants needed for thriving communities of insects, birds, bees, butterflies, and animals, the genista creates a fuel menace. "It is a very significant concern," Fischer said. But ridding genista from the region will be a long-term project, she cautions, adding it will take an ongoing community commitment.

Carmel Valley resident Paolo Berthoin hopes to form a GET IT OUT club for residents to educate people about genista and help eradicate it. The best way to get rid of the plants is to pull them out by the roots when they first start to grow, she noted. When the plant goes to seed, the seeds can remain viable for five to 80 years. The clippings should not be chopped and used for compost as that spreads the seeds.

Berthoin, a CVA board member, organized a neighborhood attack on her street with a number of neighbors contributing to have workers clear genista from their streets and have it hauled to the land fill.

GET IT OUT! may be the battle cry for a genista eradication team some residents hope to form to counter the French broom invasion in Carmel Valley. A wet winter germinated many new plants, according to local native plant authorities, and caused established bushes to grow like gangbusters. While the yellow blooms may look appealing on the hillsides, the invasive

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COMMUNITY DOG PARK AT RANCHO CAÑADA?

by Donna Kneeland



These dogs would like a dog park

Photo by Mibs McCarthy

Local residents are working to establish a fenced public dog park at the former Rancho Canada. Sound familiar? Well, the vision for this is quite different from the earlier Canine Sports Center proposed for Valley Greens Drive, across from Quail Lodge. The earlier project caused controversy both because of its location in a residential neighborhood and because of increased traffic from special events. It was ultimately turned down by the county's board of supervisors in October 2015.

Linda and David Mullally, together with Norm and Fran Leve, are now seeking support for a different kind of dog park. The goal is to give dog owners a place where they may safely exercise their dogs off-leash. Owners will also have opportunities to meet and mingle with neighbors as well as develop new friendships. No special events are planned, and there will be no charge to those who wish to make use of the fenced four-acre section of land. It is intended to serve local residents and therefore will not be a destination for out-of-town visitors.

The proposed site lies along a section of land adjacent to Carmel Valley Road on Rancho Canada's former east course at the 10th hole. Because of its proximity to

the valley's main road, noise will not be a factor, nor are there any neighbors who would be disturbed by an occasional bark.

Linda Mullally, a travel columnist, and David, an attorney, are Carmel residents who have lived on the Monterey Peninsula for over 30 years. They are a writer/photographer team and co-authors of outdoor recreation guides, including dog-friendly hiking books.

Sound familiar?

Norm Leve, retired from real estate, and Fran, also retired, have called the Carmel Highlands home since 1994. They credit their standard poodles for introducing them to new two-legged friends on many of their walks.

Linda Mullally is meeting with local groups to present the plan and answer questions, as she did at a July 12 meeting of the park district. She has also had "some positive conversations" with Rafael Payan, the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District's general manager, who now supervises this newest addition to park district properties.

To contact the organizers of this initiative, email rcDogPark@gmail.com.

CARMEL VALLEY KIWANIS FIESTA 2017



CARMEL VALLEY FIESTA

The Carmel Valley Kiwanis Fiesta is sponsored by the Carmel Valley Kiwanis Club established in 1951, and the Carmel Valley Kiwanis Foundation, a 501c3 non-profit established in 2001. The Fiesta consists of several events:

Friday August 4th, starting at 5:30 pm.: the Hoopla family-style BBQ with musical entertainment at the Carmel Valley Trail and Saddle Club (85 E. Garzas Road CV)

Saturday and Sunday August 5th and 6th, starting at 8 a.m., in the Carmel Valley Community Park, 25 Ford Road CV: pancake breakfast, musical entertainment, a classic car show, arts and crafts and food vendors, an informal dog show

Sunday morning, August 13th: the annual mountain run in Garland Park

See cvkclub.org for full details or call 831-298-0018 to leave a message.



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Summer Fun at CV pool

photo by Mibs McCarthy

Last chance for a dip! The Carmel Valley Community Youth Center provides supervised aquatics for adults, children and families. Members and non-members alike are welcome.

Monday-Friday: Noon-4:00 PM
Saturday & Sunday: Noon-5:00 PM
The weekday swim hours continue through August 6. Weekend dates may be extended past August 6th.

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