October 30, 2018

TO:      David W. Louie, Chair
         Elvin W. Moon, Vice Chair
         Doug Smith, Commissioner
         Laura Shell, Commissioner
         Pat Modugno, Commissioner

FROM:    Shanna Farley-Judkins
         Coastal Permit Section

Project No. R2015-03796-(3) – Conditional Use Permit No. RCUP-201500135,
Parking Permit No. RPPL2017009910
RPC Meeting: October 31, 2018 – Agenda Item: 9

The Project is a request for a Conditional Use Permit CUP for a remote tasting room for Cielo Winery. The request includes accessory special events, which may include weddings, fundraisers, receptions, etc. The request includes a Parking Permit to allow tandem parking for the accessory special events, a non-residential use. The Project was approved by the Hearing Officer on July 17, 2018. The approval was appealed to the Regional Planning Commission, to be considered on October 31, 2018.

The find the nine enclosed emailed letters regarding the above project, that were received on October 30, 2018 subsequent to the hearing package submittal to the Regional Planning Commission.

If you need further information, please contact Shanna Farley-Judkins at (213) 974-1516 or sfarley-judkins@planning.lacounty.gov. Department office hours are Monday through Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Department is closed on Fridays.

RG: SFJ

Enclosure:
Comment Letter from Philip and Leslie Paton dated October 30, 2018
Applicant Response dated October 30 to Letter from Philip and Leslie Paton dated October 30, 2018
Comment Letter from Anthony Jones dated October 10, 2018
Comment Letter from Robert and Michelle Humphreys dated October 9, 2018
Comment Letter from John and Jennifer Gonzalez
Comment Letter from Dr. Edward D. Wagner dated October 15, 2018
Comment Letter from Wedny Bellissimo dated October 10, 2018
Comment Letter from Ruth Gerson dated October 24, 2018
Comment Letter from Joe Bellissimo dated October 11, 2018
Shanna Farley-Judkins

From: Phil Paton <philpaton@mac.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 30, 2018 2:41 PM
To: Shanna Farley-Judkins
Subject: Re: Cielo permit application violation. (R2015-03796, 31424 Mulholland Highway)

Shanna,

I need to make a correction as I got my date wrong. It WAS Saturday but October 27th not 28th. Please forward to the necessary recipients.

Further, according to Ms. Leslie Gail, it appears that there was another event in the requested permit area on Saturday 27th October so Cielo did hold TWO events at the same time. No part of the application allows for multiple events at the same time.

Please confirm receipt. My apologies for the confusion.

Thanks + regards,

Phil Paton

On Oct 30, 2018, at 10:36 AM, Shanna Farley-Judkins <SFarley-Judkins@planning.lacounty.gov> wrote:

Hi Philip,

I will forward these comments to the Regional Planning Commission, as they will be considering the appeal of the permit at the October 31, 2018 meeting of their commission.

I will also forward to our Hearing Officer and post to the website shortly.

Shanna

Shanna R. Farley-Judkins
Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
Coastal Permits Section
County of Los Angeles
(213) 974-1516
Dear Hearing Officer Garcia, panel members,

On this Saturday last, October 28th, in direct contradiction to their sworn testimony before your panel, Cielo hosted what appeared to be a large wedding, with music, in the courtyard at the house (see images below), something they have not applied a permit for and testified that they would not do. People were seated at tables outside the house and loud noise emanated across to our property. Again, the owners testified that all events would be on the opposite side of the house and therefore obscured both visually and aurally from Thrift Road properties. Sound would be projected, therefore, down into the valley towards Kanan Road and was an integral part of their testimony in satisfying noise issues.

This is clearly not the case.

In the past Cielo owners have advised of family events (two earlier this year) at the house. No such advice was forthcoming for this event. Any claim that this was a family event must be thoroughly investigated to confirm that this was not, indeed, a paid event. Regardless, why was this party held at the house and not at the requested permitted area - an event space specifically designed for this type of event? Was the requested permitted space was already booked with another event? If so, why would they schedule two events for the same day?

We understand that there are “grey” areas in the permit application process but blatant disregard for the truth undermines the integrity of the panel and must not be tolerated. As a result, we ask that their permit be resolutely and permanently denied and recommend that you investigate the matter further for possible violation of Penal Code 118 PC.

With so many pending permits for outdoor/recreational events in this immediate region it is important to convey the message that all involved, on both sides, are fair and honest and that there are swift and severe consequences for misleading the panel.

We expect a response detailing your findings of this serious violation.

Sincerely,

PHILIP AND LESLIE PATON
615 Thrift Road
Malibu CA 90265
818-852-7148
Hi Shanna,

Thank you for the email. I checked with Richard Hirsh, who informed me that he told the President of the HOA ahead of time that he was hosting a wedding ceremony for a family friend at his house. I asked for details and was told everyone parked in the Cielo lot, the ceremony was at Richard’s house at 4pm for 20 minutes and there was a microphone for the ceremony. From 4:30 to 5:30 cocktails were served with a violin playing that had no amplification. There was no microphone for cocktails. Everyone headed down to the barn pad at 5:30 for dinner. Again, I am being told that this was a private event for a family friend. Additionally, Richard did give the HOA a heads up and went out of his way to ensure there was no noise or disturbance to any neighbors even though it was a private party at a private house.

Also, I have included support letters for the Regional Planning Commission as well, several of which are from immediate neighbors.

Thank you and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Beth

---

Hi Beth and Dustin,

We received one comment regarding the Cielo project. Please see the email below which will be transmitted to the Regional Planning Commission.

Thank you,

Shanna

---

Shanna R. Farley-Judkins
Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
Coastal Permits Section
County of Los Angeles
(213) 974-1516
October 10th 2018

To whom it may concern,

Richard Nash is my next door neighbor. I enjoy Richard and his family as my neighbors. They are very nice people we get along very well. His property and mine border each other, I have never had any problem with noise or traffic of any kind. Please feel free to call me at anytime. My cell is 714 688-1354

Thank you

[Signature]

Anthony Jones
31372 Mulholland Hwy
Malibu, CA 90265
Robert + Michelle Humphreys  
31431 Mulholland Highway  
Malibu, CA 90265  
mrsbobh@hotmail.com  
bobhumphreys@msn.com

October 9, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

Richard Hirsch/Cielo Farms is our neighbor, directly across Mulholland Hwy, in Malibu. We have enjoyed the Hirsch Family as our neighbors for many years. We have not had any issues with noise or traffic from them, and they have always been respectful neighbors.

If you need any further information from us, please feel free to contact us.

Regards,

Michelle Humphreys

[Signature]
John and Jennifer Gonzalez
645 Latigo Canyon Road
PO Box 6396
Malibu, CA 90265
310-924-4754

Re: Project/Permit: R2015-03796, RCUP - 201500135, RPPL2017009910, RENV-201500254
Project Location: 31424 Mulholland Hwy

To Persons Concerned:

We are writing this letter to express our support for the CUP at the above referenced address. We share property lines just west of the property in question and live within shouting distance of the property. During the past 5 years we have had many interactions with Richard Hirsh with regards to the events on his property. We have found him to be honest, accommodating and respectful of our wishes. As neighbors, we support the permit as long as our quality of life is not compromised by the activities that take place on the neighboring property.

In our experiences, we have not had to sacrifice that quality of life because Richard Hirsh has taken efforts to ensure the mitigation of sound and other impacts on our property. For example, Richard moved the location of the speakers to direct the sound away from neighbors; this made a huge difference in the amount of noise we hear. He also removed light poles that cast very bright light onto our home at our request. He has given us his direct number so that in case of any issues that arise during any of the events on the property we can call him to immediately address the concern. Other property owners are not nearly as responsive or attentive to our concerns. There are several homes in our direct vicinity that do not operate with the same sense of personal responsibility; those properties operate without permits and without much consideration to our quality of life. Richard does and for that reason we support his efforts.

In short, he has been very responsible and attentive to any impacts we may feel as a result of activities on his property. Because of his attitude and genuine concern to work with us as neighbors, we feel confident that if granted the CUP he will continue to develop his property while being cognizant and respectful of our concerns and desires.

Sincerely,

John and Jennifer Gonzalez
Monday, October 15, 2018

Re: Richard Hirsh

To Whom It May Concern,

I purchased the property located at 182 S. Kanan Dume Rd., Malibu in 1989. This property is located next to the property which Mr. Hirsh purchased in 1988. I was neighbors with him until I moved away, approximately December 2010 and closed escrow on December 2012.

Mr. Hirsh was always the best neighbor one could have. Whenever we had an issue involving grading or construction noise, he would be available for meeting with me to work it out. For years he allowed me to cross his property with my horses until his development made it impossible. We had a serious property line issue which neither of us was aware of until permits for building were pulled. We worked out a compromised new adjoining property line with no conflict at all.

As his neighbor, I went through the development of his vineyard, the roads on his property, the large project of laying water lines and finally the building of his home, which he finished in 2009. He was always considerate and amicable concerning the hours of building and any disturbance that it may have been causing.

During the period of time that I was his neighbor, I can honestly say that he demonstrated to be “the perfect neighbor”.

If you have any questions regarding Mr. Hirsh, please feel free to call me.
310-435-2223 cell

Sincerely,

Dr. Edward D. Wagner
Wagner Holistic Center
17383 W. Sunset Blvd, A-230
Pacific Palisades, Calif. 90272
310-230-2145
October 10th, 2018

LA County Planning Commission,

I have known Richard and Diana Hirsh for over 20 years. They have always proven to be the most kind, honest and supportive friends without fail for over two decades. We have four daughters and all of them look to Diana and Richard as an inspiring couple, amazing parents and true, forever friends. My husband and I have so much love and respect for Richard and Diana that we made them the Godparents to our daughter Cecilia. We all have a deep admiration for them as some of the best people who have touched our family's lives. My mother also has a deep love and respect for the Hirsh's as they have always proven to be a family with the utmost integrity.

Our whole family has great respect for the area that Cielo Farms is in and we feel that Richard and Diana have created such a special place that enhances the beauty of the region to be enjoyed by people who love nature. We support wine tasting and events in the beautiful Santa Monica mountains and we are grateful to have a place as special as Cielo Farms to do so with the kindest people running it. It is always the most loving vibe to be in the presence of Richard and Diana Hirsh!

Sincerely,

Wendy Bellissimo

CEO & Creative Director
Wendy Bellissimo Media, Inc.
October 24, 2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am sending you this letter of reference for Richard and Diana Hirsh. I have personally known them for about 25 years. In all those years, they have always been trustworthy and honest people. When they started their wine business, it was with the desire to provide something for the general public, wine tasting. That has been a success as so many people enjoy the wine tasting experience.

The Santa Monica Mountains needs more recreation-oriented businesses where people can dine and enjoy wine tasting. They would also benefit by being able to actively hike, bike, and ride horseback on over 400 miles of trails. This a place where people can thoroughly savor all the recreation and variety that the Santa Monica Mountains offers.

Sincerely,

Ruth Gerson
To the Los Angeles County Planning Commission:

October 11th, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Joe Bellissimo. I was born, raised and have spent my entire life in this area and, along with my wife, Wendy, have raised four daughters here as well. I am the publisher of two local magazines, Hidden Hills and The Polisades, and I spend a good amount of time in the Santa Monica Mountains for a variety of reasons. I write this letter in the hopes of lending my voice to support two of the best people I know. Richard and Diana Hirsh, who I have known for more than 20 years, are the kind of friends you feel blessed to be able to have in your life. They are dependable, honest and caring souls whose generosity and compassion for others is beyond compare. This is why they were the first choice to be godparents to one of our four daughters.

I also have a tremendous amount of respect for the life they have built for themselves and their family. Both started from next-to-nothing and through hard work, passion and dedication have built several businesses that have enriched the lives of so many, all the while raising their children into adults who are equally as loved and respected among their peers. As they continue to evolve their presence in the heart of the Santa Monica Mountains, I believe that every step of the way and every decision Richard and Diana have made has been balanced with a love and reverence for that region. They, along with some of their neighbors, have enhanced that area with special qualities that have caused so many others to discover and become enamored with those mountains as well.

I respectfully submit to the Commission that, while I certainly agree everyone affected by their proposed Conditional Use Permit should have a voice and the right to oppose, it would be prudent to consider that the most vocal dissenting voice in this conversation seems to have ulterior motivations or is not thinking clearly. I truly believe anyone who would question the character of Richard or Diana Hirsh either does not know them at all or is acting from a knowingly disingenuous position.

If you have any questions or if there is anything further I can do to lend my support to their efforts please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Joe Bellissimo
Co-Owner/Publisher
Long Valley Media
818.324.7105

5115 Douglas Fir Rd. Suite C Calabasas, CA. 91302