

Communication Received November 15, 2012
Regarding Item I:8
November 20, 2012 City Council Meeting

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TO: MAYOR GINGLES AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CARL SHERRILL AND KRISTIN CASEY, 1132 Denise Drive

RE: ENCHANTED RESORTS

There are times when it makes good sense to amend the General Plan. This is not one of those times.

Our General Plan is a community-crafted document; it is, in fact, our “planning constitution.” We all understand that it may be revised when there is a compelling reason to do so. It should definitely not be amended simply because a given property owner proposes a project which does not conform to the plan.

The site in question is designated as “Rural Residential-Hillside” for very sound reasons. The purpose of this designation was to minimize disruption of our hillsides by limiting development, to act as a buffer between the agricultural and low-impact uses and the City’s urban core, to protect environmental and scenic benefits of hillside areas, and to promote and preserve open space.

- A residential subdivision for 35 homes was approved for this site in 1992.
- In 1997, the previous owner wanted to develop a resort in this area. At a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and the City Council this proposal was denied.
- Also in 1997, the current owner purchased the property and asked the City to change the General Plan to allow an even larger commercial development. His request was rejected by two planning directors and the Planning Commission.
- During the subsequent General Plan revision process, the developer asked that the land-use designation be amended to allow the resort development he wished to build.
- In 2003, after much public input and public hearings, both the Planning Commission and the City Council rejected the proposed General Plan amendment.

Currently the General Plan makes it possible for this RR-H site to have a “small-scale winery or inn, or bed-and-breakfast units.” (LU-18) Such small-scale developments would in keeping with the character of Calistoga.

The very large Enchanted Resorts project would violate the letter and spirit of our General Plan and would be utterly inappropriate for the proposed site. We urge you to rescind your previous approval.