

Dear Zach,

I am writing to you today in support of the proposed mural on an existing wall of Dr. Wilkinson's on Fair Way.

While watching the Planning Commission meetings and while reading neighbors' opinions on Nextdoor, I have appreciated the property owners' and the artists' willingness to receive input from the community. And I love the additions of the popcornflower and swallowtail butterfly.

I enjoy this mural more and more as I look at it, and it becomes even more meaningful when reflecting on the history of both the indigenous Wappo tribe and the healing waters of our area. At Golden Haven we have a sign that touches on this. "For over 100 years, Calistoga has been famous for its mineral water and hot mud baths. Even before the first European settlers arrived, the local Wappo Indians used this area as a place of healing and called it Coo-lay-no-maock, the oven place." To me, the mural evokes some of the earliest history of our community.

When looking at other murals in town, I recognize that Carlo Marchiori is a superb artist and his work contains wonderful details that reveal themselves with time and viewing. I think this new mural, although absolutely and completely different in style and subject, may also reveal itself slowly to people as they look at it. And even those people who are now not instinctively drawn to the mural may find that they grow fond of the palm trees, a jewel-like green leaf, or a butterfly or two.

Thank you for considering our opinions.

Sincerely,

Erika Pusey  
PO Box 1145  
Calistoga, CA 94515  
707.536.3427

January 13, 2021

**Subject: Dr. Wilkinson's Mural – Sign Permit SP 2020-4**

Dear Planning Commissioners,

As a citizen of Calistoga, I am voicing my support for the Dr. Wilkinson's mural. There is nothing offensive, inflammatory nor morally objectionable about the project. The City of Calistoga has an opportunity to work with a professional experienced mural artist that is creative and has deep pride and commitment to his work.

Please represent my point of view on this matter before the Planning Commission.

The owners of Dr. Wilkinson's property and artist William Callnan have acquiesced to your previous demands to change the original design. Following that revision, they were again denied approval of the mural. Members of the Planning Commission voting to deny the approval then asked the property owners to display a facsimile of the work on the side of building for public critiquing.

To reject the work on our own personal view of what historical Calistoga should look like has no bearing on the municipal code and appears as a form of censorship. I know you are concerned about the final painting of the mural and citizens' reactions but when has the creative process become so restrictive that everything must conform to the all subjective views of what Calistoga must look like? When does the municipal code regarding murals not stand on its own merit, but must seek approval and design direction from the public?

The views of citizens are important, but the suppression of expression is concerning.

I urge you to uphold the municipal code regarding murals and vote in favor of this project.

Sincerely,  
Donna Higgins  
1410 Fourth Street

## Zach Tusinger

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**From:** hr@ci.calistoga.ca.us on behalf of City Administrator <hr@ci.calistoga.ca.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 12, 2021 7:34 PM  
**To:** Zach Tusinger  
**Subject:** Mural opinion

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Message submitted from the <City of Calistoga> website.

**Site Visitor Name:** Martha Casselman  
**Site Visitor Email:** marthaspecial@gmail.com

Zach, I vote NO on the mural. Wrong art for downtown Calistoga.

I cannot read my own writing: what kind of certification do I need from an engineer and/or surveyer to get the process going to get off the Flood Plain? My number is 707 483-0515; email above. Many thanks. Martha

## Zach Tusinger

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**From:** Kelly Oliver <connect@kellykoliver.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 12, 2021 7:57 PM  
**To:** Zach Tusinger  
**Subject:** Wilkenson Mural

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am full time resident of Calistoga. I am sending this short note as a vote of 'dislike' of the Wilkenson Mural.

Also, I vote 'dislike' on the nude woman design on black and white sign in the front of their resort ("Where Wellness Meets Happiness"). If that's an option too ;-)

Thank you for taking my feedback.  
Kelly Oliver

\*January 12, 2021

Subject: **Dr. Wilkinson's Mural – Sign Permit SP 2020-4**

Dear Planning Commissioners,

As a 26 - year Calistoga resident and the executive director of Nimbus Arts, I would like to voice my support for the Dr. Wilkinson's mural. It does not appear that this design has provoked any offensive, inflammatory nor moral objections from our community. The City of Calistoga has an opportunity to work with a professional experienced mural artist and a 15-year instructor with Nimbus Arts, who is deeply committed to his work and our community.

Please represent my point of view on this matter before the Planning Commission.

The owners of Dr. Wilkinson's property and artist William Callnan have worked very hard to accommodate the previous concerns and changes you have requested with the last revision, and the property owners' effort to display the requested facsimile of the artists' design on the side of building for greater public exposure and comment. To reject this artwork based on individual personal view and preference suggesting this opinion represents Calistoga's look and feel has no bearing on the municipal code. I know several commissioners are concerned about the final mural design and a few citizens' reaction which I would like to address.

- Mural fade and repair - I personally have never seen any of the other murals in town upgraded, repainted, or repaired... that said there are many products that are available to maintain mural paint quality and longevity, of which Will Callnan should be the qualified expert referral.
- Community participation – Will as an artist instructor has had decades of experience with public art mural work with Nimbus Arts, including youth mural classes and many public events with great success and community engagement. These activities can easily be quality controlled and contained **creating incredible opportunity for community connection and impact.**
- “Canvas” surface challenges – Will Callnan III is an expert in his medium, and has a particular studied genius in in 3-D artistic expression. The surface challenge is absolutely manageable and within his professional purview.
- Mural style – Do all murals have to represent “one look”? Does this Calistoga look you are establishing represent us all? Certainly, this business owner has a right to the look that represents their business and their investment in our community. Is homogeneity representative of us all, is a semi-historical “look” of Calistoga the only way to represent Calistogans or moreover the millions of visitors that come through Calistoga each year? Do the few lovely historical murals created by one local artist represent all of community members' style, or the accurate account of who Calistoga is today?

Art can express the diversity of a community, and it is exciting when it provokes thoughtful conversation... but as mentioned, Calistoga does not have an “art commission” which if it had, would be comprised ideally of numerous people with backgrounds in our community's history, regional industry and geographical understanding, cultural composition, and those with arts culture and installation experience.

As we do not have an established public art code or committee, I feel this ad hoc decision and denial of this design is not representative or inclusive of our diverse artistic community. As the director of an arts organization, we have had 15 years of public art installations under our belt, both permanent and temporary, as well as hundreds of community participation art making events, of which Will Callnan has been a part. I feel we need to both value the many diverse languages of art, and our community of talented artists. I would encourage the commission to investigate the important art districts across our country, including our own Napa Railroad Art District, all of which represent the incredible world of art styles, and that they do not have to be contrary to a towns collective aesthetic or historical expression.

In fact, these multifaceted arts districts create community vitality, and have proven very impactful to visitor draw and added economy.

I am very disappointed that this very thorough effort by the owners of Wilkinson's Spa and this artist has been previously denied based on commissioner personal opinion, rather than those outlined by municipal code. I support this mural design and its placement in my beloved town, and look forward to our town's future of creating more public art and interest representative of the diversity that is undeniably Calistoga's strength.

Jamie Lewis Graff – 1621 Cedar St. Calistoga CA

Executive Director & Co-Founder - Nimbus Arts LLC