

From: [Gary Helfrich](#)
To: [Alisa Sanders](#)
Subject: FW: Exclusion Zone Proposal for GuerneWood Park in Sonoma County Planning Commission Meeting - March 16, 2023
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 5:39:45 PM

From: Old Cazadero Cabin <info@oldcazaderocabin.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 4:44 PM
To: Gary Helfrich <Gary.Helfrich@sonoma-county.org>; Sonoma County Coalition of Hosts <sonomacountycoalitionofhosts@gmail.com>; district5 <district5@sonoma-county.org>; mags@russianriver.com; Eric Koenigshofer <Eric.Koenigshofer@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: Exclusion Zone Proposal for GuerneWood Park in Sonoma County Planning Commission Meeting - March 16, 2023

EXTERNAL

Gary Helfrich
Planner, Sonoma County Planning Department

CC:
Lynda Hopkins, Supervisor, District 5
Mags Van Der Veet, President, Russian River Chamber of Commerce
Eric Koenigshofer, Commissioner, District 5

March 15, 2023

Gary.

I recently received your letter regarding the proposal to create an X zone that over time would eliminate vacation rentals in GuerneWood Park and Monte Rosa as well as for Neely Road and Armstrong Woods Road.

As you know, I'm the host of the [Old Cazadero Cabin](#), an 1960's cedar cabin that is an Airbnb Plus vacation rental with over 300 reviews.

I've been operating the rental and self managing it for several years with a licensed vacation rental permit and TOT certificate generating thousands of dollars of TOT revenue for Sonoma County, and contributing wages to several local workers and businesses to help me maintain the cabin.

During that time, I've made significant improvements to the cabin to preserve our neighborhood character and pass along to a future owner including painting, roofing maintenance, pest fumigation, new septic, new windows, new green heating/cooling system, and landscaping improvements.

The preservation and improvement of my cabin has been a welcome part of our neighborhood, **adds to** not detracts from the neighborhood character and has helped improve the overall value of the property and the property of my neighbor's.

I disagree with the planning department's statement that vacation rentals detract from the character of the neighborhood. As you know Guerneville has been for decades a visitor destination and visitors are an integral part of our community character.

My guests are also quiet, thoughtful and contribute to the local merchants and economy, so I was disheartened to hear that your department is recommending an exclusion zone for Guerneville Park.

I have included [a link to an estimate](#) model using my conservative averages from my own business with 50% occupancy for a small cabin of the economic impact to the community if an X zone would have on the local economy if you include all the housekeeping wages, landscaping wages and contribution to the local economy that these visitors have.

Guerneville relies upon these visitors to help us maintain our economy through good and bad, so eliminating just these few rentals would have a devastating impact to our community.

My estimate shows an impact on TOT of \$2.8M over 6 years and an overall economic impact of \$8M.

While I understand this X zone will not revoke my permit, I beg you not to implement an X zone and destroy the Guerneville economy, but take a more nuanced approach and maintain the current level of permitting at 14%, 19% and 11% or some lower number such as 10% which would be a middle way as opposed to an outright ban.

I also think allowing a current vacation rental permit holder to sell to a new owner and transfer their license to a new owner would be a welcome addition to the ordinance. Why have we not considered this option? All business owners hope someday to pass along their business to their family or at least receive a benefit from their hard work.

I am also an active member of the Sonoma County Coalition of Hosts which has worked with the Planning department on the new ordinance.

The membership of the coalition opposes this X zone, and as the Treasurer of the Russian River Chamber of Commerce I can tell you that the business community in the lower Russian River area is very concerned about this draconian approach. However, my views also only represent my own and not the Chamber of Commerce as an organization.

I respectfully ask you to refrain from implementing an X zone in Guerneville that would devastate the workers and businesses in an economically disadvantaged area that needs help.

I look forward to hearing from you on the future of the Vacation Rental Ordinance that is balanced

and takes into account all voices.

Regards,

David Wabel
 Owner, The Old Cazadero Cabin - oldcazaderocabin.com
 Treasurer, Russian River Chamber of Commerce

CC:
 Lynda Hopkins, Supervisor, District 5
 Mags Van Der Veet, President, Russian River Chamber of Commerce
 Eric Koenigshofer, Commissioner, District 5

	Total Guerneville	Impact of X Zone in Guernewood Park and Monte Rosa	Neely Road	Armstrong Woods
All Parcels	528	321	96	111
% VRs	14%	14%	19%	11%
# VRs	76	45	18	12
Average Daily Rate	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250
50% Occupancy (Annual Room Nights)	180	180	180	180
Annual Revenue for 1 VR	\$135,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000
Annual TOT	\$18,900.00	\$6,300.00	\$6,300.00	\$6,300.00
Annual Housekeeping	\$21,600	\$7,200	\$7,200	\$7,200
Annual Landscaping	\$5,400	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,800
Annual Local Other Spend	\$27,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000
Total Economic Impact	\$54,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000
1 Year TOT	\$476,167	\$283,122	\$116,122	\$76,923
6 Year TOT	\$2,857,000	\$1,698,732	\$696,730	\$461,538
1 Year Economic Impact	\$1,360,476	\$808,920	\$331,776	\$219,780
6 Year Economic Impact	\$8,162,856	\$4,853,520	\$1,990,656	\$1,318,680