

November 14, 2022

To: Humboldt Planning Commission

Re: November 17th, Agenda Item G. 1

Cisco Farms, Inc.

Assessor Parcel Number(s) (APN) 105-101-011, 104-232-005, and 104-191-001

Record No.: PLN-2021-17384

Dear Commissioners,

It is a little surprising that your commission has this particular application before it with the Planning Department staff recommending approval.

An inappropriate project proposed in a wholly inappropriate location.

Chambers Road is part of a neighborhood, and I am sure you have heard from some of the residents (many of whom operate legal farms) who are upset at the prospect of their small road and neighborhood being the site of a 5 acre farm that would require 34 employees. This area does not have the infrastructure to support this level of industrial cannabis production. This particular property does not have the water or the electrical power in place to support this level of industrial cannabis cultivation.

With what we now know about drought, lack of electrical grid infrastructure, and market influences, why this project would be put before you by staff with the recommendation for approval is very troubling.

At the corner of Chambers Road and the Mattole Road is the Mattole Valley School. These are small country roads, that small children use every day. 34 employees, large trucks etc. would be using the same small road & intersection.

This project is completely inappropriate for the location.

Please do not approve it.

Sincerely,
Robie Tenorio



Lost Coast Ranch® PO Box 157, Petrolia, CA 95558

RE: PLN-2021-17384

November 10, 2022

To the Planning Commission:

The application reference above lies a few miles from my ranch, but I am very familiar with the property and its ecological and community values. I have known Karl Cisco Benemann since he was a boy and have always found him to be a good and thrifty steward of the land and his resources. I don't doubt his word as he has never gone back on it in any dealings we have had over the past decades.

The problem before the Planning Commission does not allow the Commission or the Planning Staff to promote community values in regard to land use. You are hamstrung by misguided ordinances and regulations that have been adopted since legalization. You can strictly follow or interpret existing rules and regulations and feel you have done your duty to the citizens of Humboldt County. That would continue the poor practice that has negatively impacted the county. Adhering to what is widely considered a disruptive framework of rules will not produce the kind of planning that ensures community well-being. That horse has left the barn and you need to forcefully petition the Board of Supervisors to re-craft the playing field for cannabis.

This 5 acre project is located on a ranch of roughly 1000 acres. It's putting some agricultural land to an agricultural use. I am not against landowners doing what they want with their property as long as the impacts do not leave the property and as long as the public trust values are not negatively impacted. I do believe that neighbors should be considered if a project is within their view- or earshot. Neighbors should not hold veto power over development. This project should reach accommodation with the neighbors in regard to those two aspects. I believe the Planning Commission has a role to play in mediating any conflicts.

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Mr. Benemann has told me that he will screen his flat from the neighbors to meet their visual concerns. In regard to the concern about increased traffic, we need to consider all the possible uses of the ranch and realize that some uses need labor to run the operations. It may not be on a daily basis, but there are times and seasons when hired help is needed. That's going to increase traffic. If the land were subdivided into residences, it would increase the traffic more. If the land were used for intensive vegetable production, it would increase traffic. Any activity above simple residential use by the owner is going to increase traffic.

In addressing traffic, the county has an obligation to upgrade Chambers Road. It's in terrible shape from the school on out. The bridge over East Mill Creek is temporary. The approach to the bridge is temporary. The county is responsible for impacts of road use, not individual landowners. It is not a private road. By approving any development on Chambers Road, the county needs to up its maintenance as its part in economic development and promotion of public safety.

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My opinion is that plastic greenhouses are an abomination. They use precious resources with a short useful life and toxic consequences as waste when that life is over. The Planning Commission is not looking long-term enough when it approves their use. And allowing for exhaust fans is likewise a terrible idea. Ventilation can be accomplished through venting the crown. It might be more expensive, but it is quiet, passive and needs no electrical inputs.

Similarly, no light should escape the facilities such that it causes light pollution. Period.

I applaud Mr. Benemann for planning to grow cannabis outdoors. I also am heartened that there will rain-catchment or winter diversion storage ponds in his operation and no water draws from either above or below ground sources during the growing season. That scarce water is needed for fish and wildlife. This is as it should be.

The County of Humboldt has made many mistakes in crafting ordinances and applying them to Cannabis permitting. The Planning Commission must stop permitting pumping water during the dry months county wide and insist on rain catchment systems. It must not permit operations to run on fossil fuel generators –both now or at some future date. It should ban the use of fans and plastic temporary (less than 25 year lifespan) greenhouses. Following these guidelines, I believe we can have a stable cannabis agriculture with far fewer impacts than what the county has permitted in the past.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Evenson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Lost Coast Ranch®
PO Box 157
Petrolia, CA 95558

From: [Holtermann, Michael](#)
To: [Giannini, Trip](#)
Subject: Fw: Regards to PLN-2021-17384
Date: Tuesday, November 15, 2022 4:51:50 PM

From: Alexander Roney <alex@pacific-roots.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2022 4:49 PM
To: Holtermann, Michael <mholtermann@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: Regards to PLN-2021-17384

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To whom many concern,

My name is Alex Roney. I am writing in support of Karl Benemann and his proposed project PLN-2021-17384. I was raised in Petrolia and have known Karl for as long as I can remember and have always known Karl to be a reasonable and caring community member. I own a neighboring cultivation and nursery on chambers road in petrolia (631 chambers road) and believe that Karl's proposed project is an important project for Humboldt county cannabis.

Humboldt counties craft cannabis is losing a battle of scale in the cannabis market, and having farmers like Karl who are choosing to invest in this counties process and community is our only hope to continue in this market. We have seen too many farmers and community members leave to other counties where permitting is easier and more readily available. We need good community members like Karl to be able to have the breadth and flexibility in their permits, in order to effectively adapt to an ever changing market.

Having gone through the Humboldt county cannabis permitting process myself, I am in full support or Karl applying for every possibility that he is entitled to with his property. I made the mistake of only permitting the minimal amount of square footage and not obtaining all the licenses I could on my property, and now am faced with an overwhelming process in order to expand my cultivation area. Just because something is proposed doesn't mean it will be done, but it's important for farmers to secure that privilege from the county to do it so that they can respond to changing market or environmental conditions when they occur.

Karl's project has the opportunity to create jobs and have a positive impact on other surrounding cannabis support facilities such as our neighboring nursery. I have faith that Karl will take community concerns into consideration when creating his project and put those minds at ease who are concerned. Please take this vote of approval into consideration.

Alex Roney
Pacific Roots Cannabis
(707)845-9010

From: [Holtermann, Michael](#)
To: [Giannini, Trip](#)
Subject: Fw: 17384 (1414 Chambers Project)
Date: Monday, November 14, 2022 10:51:12 AM

From: Brenden Law af <bsurfabeachbreak@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2022 10:22 AM
To: Holtermann, Michael <mholtermann@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: 17384 (1414 Chambers Project)

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I am writing in support of the proposed agriculture project at 1414 Chambers Road. This project is positive for the community as a whole. Karl Benemann was born in Petrolia and is a good neighbor. He consistently supports the local fund raising events and deserves the opportunity to be able to work the land and provide for his family and help other locals like myself do the same. I work and have worked with Cisco on various agriculture projects and have come to respect his values and his own respect for the community. In a time where many permitted farms are visible by all and impact many, this proposed project is tucked away in a location that impacts very few. My wife and I live at 29295, at the intersection of Chambers Road and Mattole Road, and would love to see the Benemann family afforded this opportunity, they are locals that always stay mindful of our small community.

Brendon & Ashley Law

PLN 2021-17384

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Holtermann, Michael](#)
To: [Giannini, Trip](#)
Subject: Fw: 17384 letter of support
Date: Monday, November 14, 2022 12:39:42 PM

From: Nancy Atkinson <atkinsoncivilengr@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2022 12:21 PM
To: Holtermann, Michael <mholtermann@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: 17384 letter of support

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

This email is in support of the Planning application number 17384. I have worked with Mr. Benemann for many years.

He is an honest, trustworthy person and responds in a timely manner.

This makes him an ideal applicant. The cannabis business is complex. Cisco has the capacity and interest in making this project successful, including meeting all of the county requirements. For example, his existing farm is 100% compliant.

Thank you for your interest, Nancy Atkinson, PE

From: [Holtermann, Michael](#)
To: [Giannini, Trip](#)
Subject: Fw: Cisco's cannabis project
Date: Monday, November 14, 2022 10:50:43 AM

From: Matt Goforth <littlejoeandstuff@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 13, 2022 2:18 PM
To: Holtermann, Michael <mholtermann@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: Cisco's cannabis project

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To whom it may concern,
My brother and I have been close neighbors with Cisco for the last 36 years. We grew up on chambers road, and have know him our entire life. He has been nothing less than a great person and neighbor the entire time. We are in full support of his project, and hope that a great local guy has the opportunity to succeed in this current market. We would like nothing more than to see his project approved, and help the future of the cannabis industry in Petrolia.
Sincerely, Jason and Matt Goforth

Sent from my iPhone