From: Barbara Kelly
To: Johnson, Cliff
Cc: Vasterling, Alice; Johnston, Kathleen; Ford, John; Estlow, Trevor
Subject: FW: Humboldt Retreats Use Permits PLN-2026-19508 and 19512
Date: Tuesday, May 26, 2026 11:10:00 AM

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

Dear Mr. Johnson,

I am reaching out as Amy Gonzalez forwarded an email that you sent re: our vacation rental in Samoa.

The email mentioned that your stance is that you would likely deny our vacation rental permit due to the following reasons.

1. Approval of two additional vacation rentals would go against the County's goal of creating more affordable housing
2. Approval would exceed neighborhood concentration standards. It was noted that exceptions could be made but strong consideration would need to be given to impact on housing and character of the community.

As to item #1 – I don't think that the historic district was specifically designated as nor can be considered to be affordable housing. We paid $420k for our house and what really surprised us is how expensive the utilizes are for minimal use. Electric bills (as an example) often exceed $500 - $700 per month which seems really high for a two bedroom.
Samoa already has affordable housing via the Apartments down the road and per the general plan there is additional affordable housing incorporated. In addition, our house was not designated as affordable housing when we purchased nor have we ever listed as a long term affordable rental that we are taking out of stock for a short term vacation rental.

For items #2 – note that three of the short term rentals that you are hearing are on Vance avenue close to each other and within the 600 feet so it seems that an exception would need to be made there as well. It does not seem fair or reasonable to deny 68 Samoa Court if you are likely approving the ones on Vance. But looking at looking at old town Samoa in particular, Item #3 of the Master Plan principal planning and design objectives notes: "Incorporate a range of uses to maximize market opportunities and enhance the financial viability of the existing town". In addition, Item #7 states "Create a strong tourist/retail core for the town" and item #8 states: "Create strong relationships between future tourist accommodation, new residential, retail, historic/cultural and recreational uses. It is our believe that our vacation rental offers a beneficial tourist attraction which meets the goal of the Master Plan. We have furnished and decorated so that our home fits the historic feel which the visitors seem to love based on our 5 star reviews.

We are planning on attending the commission meeting next Thursday and would appreciate some additional information prior to the meeting.

First: In your email you note that you are going to be reviewing 7 vacation rental applications however we only received letters for 6 of them (including ours) in the mail. The ones that I received letters for are as follows:
68 Samoa Court and 35 Murphy Ave – which you indicated you would likely deny and,
756 Vance,760 Vance, 768 Vance and 80 Samoa Court. Can you let us know which address we did not get notified of?

Second: Shouldn't all of the short term rental applications you are reviewing abide by the same rules? Why are two (68 Samoa and 35 Murphy) subject to: 313.61.05.10.6.2.1.2 while the rest are only noted as 313.61.05.6.2.1?
Thank you in advance for any further information you could provide prior to the meeting and we humbly request that you consider approving our rental for the enjoyment of the visitors, benefit of the community and of course our own enjoyment as we love visiting our Samoa house.

Sincerely

Barbara Kelly

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Johnson, Cliff** <CJohnson@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Date: Mon, May 4, 2026 at 3:37 PM
Subject: Humboldt Retreats Use Permits PLN-2026-19508 and 19512
To: amygfrompg55@gmail.com <amygfrompg55@gmail.com>
Cc: Vasterling, Alice <avasterling@co.humboldt.ca.us>, Johnston, Kathleen <kjohnston@co.humboldt.ca.us>, Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>, Estlow, Trevor <TEstlow@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Hello Amy,

I am reaching out to you about the two permit applications for short-term rentals in Samoa referenced above. We have some significant concerns about what is happening with Samoa and on the likelihood of the Planning Commission approving these and I wanted to make sure that you were fully aware of these concerns. Most likely we will be recommending that these applications be denied and we do not want you to be caught by surprise when our notices and staff reports are published.

We currently have 7 applications for Short Term Rentals requesting a permit in Samoa and we are planning on hearing all of these on the June 4th Planning Commission meeting.

Of the 7 applications 5 of those appear to be for rentals that are considered existing under the ordinance (existing means they have evidence of being in operation before October 26, 2023). The ordinance was designed to give priority to those short-term rentals that were in existence before October 26, 2023 that applied soon after certification of the ordinance.
The 2 applications that do not appear to be existing as of October 26, 2023 are the two I am referencing above in the subject line, for which you are listed as the agent.

The Samoa community has historically been considered one of the more affordable communities for the greater Eureka area. Our concern is that even approval of the 5 existing applications sets up a situation where a significant portion of Samoa is utilized for short-term rentals, and the additional two would increase that number and further move the community into a neighborhood that is heavily weighted to short-term rentals and be detrimental to the County's goal of maintaining and supporting affordable housing.

The Board of Supervisors was concerned about this sort of thing happening and adopted neighborhood concentration standards to protect against this. In this case these would exceed the restriction of no more than ten percent on an access road and the limitation on having no more than one STR in a 600-foot radius. While exceptions can be granted by the Planning Commission, they will need to strongly consider the impact on housing and the character of the community in order to approve your requested permits.

Please let us know if you have any questions or need clarification.

Cliff Johnson, Planning Manager
County of Humboldt Planning and Building Department
3015 H Street
Eureka, CA 95501
(707) 268-3721

Effective July 1, 2024, the Humboldt County Planning and Building Department will reduce the in-person counter service hours. The new hours of operation will be from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, with the counter closed on Fridays.