

To the Mayor and Town Council:

I am writing today in regards to the Oak & Vine development being considered at your next meeting.

Let me start by stating that I agree with the legislation encouraging the development of housing in California. At its best the result would add to our inventory of affordable housing. It would bring full-time residents to Yountville. The unfortunate truth, however, is that any attempt to do the best for any community also opens opportunities for those who only wish to maximize their profit. Developers of this sort will use the idea of 'our community' to sell their product.

The developers of Oak & Vine could be presenting a development for your consideration that largely honors Yountville's zoning laws, which does not require multiple waivers due to the size of the houses, or the number of houses with a second story, or without an impact on neighbors. What the developers of Oak & Vine are proposing – despite their marketing declaring otherwise -- is the development of eight new vacation homes. I think you would agree that what Yountville needs is affordable housing with full-time residents; the last thing needed is more vacation homes.

As you already know, there is little you, or your fellow citizens can do to significantly alter the course of this development. The applicant's lawyer will remind you that they do not really need our approval (as he has done before the ZDRB on both occasions the development was presented). What you may do is question their decisions and encourage change that will bring their development more in line with Yountville's values and goals. These include:

1. Reduce the number of houses that have a second story. Require the removal of a second story from houses that overlook condominiums in the Crossroads development (houses #4 and #5). These will negatively impact the value of those condominiums at resale. Addressing this is legal under current legislation.
2. Eliminate the gate the developer proposes to segregate this development from our community. This is directly contrary to the idea of community. A gate would serve to underline the idea that Yountville is for the wealthy, that those of us currently calling this home are not allowed, not quite good enough. I would also point out that, while California law allows the developer liberties, there is no legal right associated with their proposed gate, and no impact – on removal of the gate – on their proposed density.
3. Address the need for covered parking for the deed-restricted units. The lack of this was described in the presentation to the ZDRB as necessary, as an issue of the space needed for the remaining houses. To my mind this suggests that residents of these units are of a second-class, undeserving of this amenity.

As you know, I have not been shy to speak up during public comment. Those of you that reviewed video from the last ZDRB meeting will have seen how strongly I feel about the

negative aspects of this project. I hope you will see my strong feelings expressed in this letter and will spare you additional comments during your meeting.

Thank you in advance for your wise consideration.

My best regards, Michael Borck