

APR 25 19 02:39

Agricultural Commission

311 Fair Lane

Placerville, CA 95667

Re: CUP18-0012 Horizon Tower Bavarian Hills (Madrona Vineyard) Site APN048-090-04

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Jan Mannion, a realtor with RE/Max Gold and I represent Stan and Joan Geel, owners of the farm at 3000 North Canyon Road.

The most reliable way to value property is determined by the price a purchaser is willing to pay. The Geels' property was going to be closing to very willing buyers at a price acceptable to buyers and sellers. That was until the issue of a cell tower was introduced. The escrow was cancelled. That tells us that the value of the property decreased enormously – for the Geels, it decreased 100%. I have since spoken to potential buyers who are awaiting the tower's site location to potentially submit an offer on the property at 3000 North Canyon Road.

The concerns of property owners about values should be important to cell tower proponents. The site selection should be agreed upon by those property owners most affected and the tower should be sited as sensitively as possible, knowing the concerns of the neighbors and community.

The National Institute for Science, Law and Public Policy (NISLAPP) conducted a survey in June, 2014, which they called "Neighborhood Cell Towers & Antennas – Do They Impact a Property's Desirability?" There were 1,000 survey respondents and of the group, 94% said that a "nearby cell tower ...would negatively impact interest in a property or the price they would be willing to pay for it." In that same survey, "79% said under no circumstances would they ever purchase...a property within a few blocks of a cell tower...". The survey further states that "88% said that under no circumstances would they ever purchase...a property with a cell tower."

The stigma is real and affects the value or desirability of property within close proximity or visual sight of a tower, or in the case of the Bush's property, a "faux pine". There's nothing romantic or idyllic about picking apples in the shade of an old "faux pine". The image one has of Apple Hill is important to maintain and a cell tower visible from one of the main roads or from someone's orchard/vineyard is unacceptable.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jan Mannion

Re: CUP18-0012 Horizon Towers Bavarian Hills Site APNO 48-090-04

Dear Agriculture Commissioners,

Sun Mountain Farm regrets the decision of Dick and Leslie Bush of Madrona Vineyards to promote a site for the placement of a cell tower and service area. This action will seriously impact eleven neighboring farms which rely on the rural and scenic environment to attract visitors to buy their agricultural products. The proposed site borders is in full sight of our pick your own apple orchards and blueberry patch where families come yearly from all over California, Nevada and elsewhere to enjoy a day in the country picking fruit, picnicking and participating in many other activities. There is no question that the Bush Family Cell Tower will devastate our U-Pick business as families, rather than pick fruit in the shadow of a cell tower, will certainly make alternative choices on Apple Hill or perhaps elsewhere for their activities and visits. After 30 years of farming we, without doubt, will see the demise of our apple and blueberry u-pick business if the Dick and Leslie Bush Cell Tower is approved.

The surrounding farms have all been offered the same Bay Area Horizon Company project as Dick and Leslie Bush and after consideration have chosen to turn down the offer as we felt it was not an appropriate choice for our farm as well as for our neighboring farms despite the compensation offered.

I know that all of you take your responsibility as an El Dorado County Agriculture Commissioners seriously and have the mission to protect El Dorado County agriculture. This particular area is certainly the showcase of El Dorado agriculture. Just because something can be done, it does not follow that it should be done. It is in your hands to protect the Dick Bethell, Gene Bolster, Edio Defino, Bob Tuck's "Apple Hill Miracle".



Joan Geel
Sun Mountain Farm & Vineyard

RE:: CUP16-0012 Horizon Tower Bavarian Hills Site – APN 048-090-04

Dear Agricultural Commissioners,

I respectfully request that the name of my orchard and restaurant “Bavarian Hills” not be used in referring to this communications tower project. The site for this proposed tower is not on my property or is it bordering my property or restaurant. I have used this name for my orchard and restaurant for 30 years. It has been designated on the Apple Hill Growers Association map as such for many years. I am not a part of this project nor do I favor this project. I do not wish to be associated in any way with this project.

On March 13 I contacted the Horizon Tower representative by telephone and discussed with him the problem I have with the company using my business and orchard name for the Dick and Leslie Bush cell tower. He indicated he would take care of the problem. Obviously, he did not do so. Bavarian Hills is not the name of the area where the site is proposed. The area is commonly known as Apple Hill and more specifically, Madrona Vineyard & Winery area.

This is very confusing for the general public, for the residents of the Apple Hill area and, specifically, for my customers. Hopefully, this was not the intention of the Horizon Tower Company. The El Dorado County residents have the right to know exactly the correct location for this proposed communication tower and the correct names of the property owners who are requesting the permit for this project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Inge Bunting, Owner
Bavarian Hills Orchard & Restaurant

Dear Agricultural Commissioners:

You are charged with the responsibility of recommending approval or denial of the Apple Hill cell tower project based on specific criteria provided in your staff report. However, my purpose in submitting this letter to you is to bring to your attention what powers and responsibilities you have according to the El Dorado County Code, which extend beyond the specific criteria for making a decision. The information herein may help you make a more informed decision by considering the larger picture for our agricultural and forest lands as envisioned in County documents. Making your recommendation without being familiar with the larger picture and County objectives may not be of benefit to you or our precious lands.

Please consider the following regarding the Powers and Duties of the Agricultural Commission:

County Code, Sec. 2.20.290. - Powers and duties.

A. The Agricultural Commission shall be an advisory body to and for the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission in all matters pertaining to agriculture.

B. The Commission shall advise the Board of procedures and techniques requiring legislative or policy actions that will encourage and promote agricultural activities that are conducive to the continued well-being of the County.

C. The Commission shall formulate and recommend to the Board general policies related to the purposes of the Commission and adopt bylaws subject to the approval of the Board as the Commission may require to facilitate the work of the Commission.

[Note: Might this allow for a recommendation to consider policies regarding reasonable distances from residences and impacts on prime Apple Hill land?]

Furthermore, the County General Plan also expands the authority of the Agricultural Commission:

OBJECTIVE 8.1.4: DEVELOPMENT ENTITLEMENTS Consideration of the agricultural use of land prior to approvals for any development entitlements. Policy 8.1.4.1 The County Agricultural Commission shall review all discretionary development

applications and the location of proposed public facilities involving land zoned for or designated agriculture, or lands adjacent to such lands, and shall make recommendations to the reviewing authority.

The El Dorado County General Plan is also clear about our agricultural and forest lands being “*regarded by residents as fundamental components of the County’s rural character and way of life.*” The General Plan calls for “*prudent management of the County’s agriculture and forestry resources needed to provide future generations with opportunities to experience both the economic benefits and rural lifestyle residents now enjoy.*” In my opinion, the intrusion of a 125-foot-high cell tower in proximity to residences and where the views and enjoyment of Apple Hill would be seriously compromised as viewed by both residents and visitors flies in the face of what the County is seeking via its General Plan, to preserve.

Another El Dorado County objective (8.1.4), as stated in its General Plan is to not create or intensify conflicts between agricultural activities and adjacent residential areas. As a commissioner, and even if production of more timber would not be at risk, how can you determine that this County objective would be met by allowing cell towers within proximity to residences? There would be both visual conflicts and potential economic consequences if a cell tower were to be installed. Economic value could be affected if the attractiveness of the Apple Hill area in general is blemished with a cell tower, and the imposition of a cell tower over 100 feet taller than the nearest dwelling. To provide some perspective, the height of the cell tower would be the equivalent of a 120-foot-high building.

In order to approve a cell tower, the County General Plan, Objective 8.1.4, in part, requires that the approving authority (being the Planning Commission or on appeal the Board of Supervisors) find that the proposed cell tower will not intensify or add new conflicts between adjacent residential areas and agricultural activities. But please note that General Plan Policy 8.1.4.1 states, *The County Agricultural Commission shall review all discretionary development applications ... and shall make recommendations to the reviewing authority.* I urge you to consider the bigger picture, including the intrusion of conflicting uses, and recommend denial of the proposed cell tower.

As a Commissioner, the General Plan ascribes even more responsibility to you, as follows:

General Plan OBJECTIVE 8.3.3: Indicates that “In determining whether particular lands constitute important forest lands, the Board of Supervisors shall consider the advice of the Agriculture Commission.” In my opinion, the success of Apple Hill as a tourist area, the appreciation of the land by local residents, and the production of timber, all point to preserving this land without the intrusion of incongruent tall cell towers. This objective further supports the “long-term viability of forest resources and timber projection, mineral resource extraction, wildlife, grazing, and recreation.” Note that there is NO mention about cell towers supporting these activities and important forest lands.

In conclusion, in addition to making your recommendation based only on the criteria put before you in your staff report, please keep in mind the bigger picture for preserving our beautiful Apple Hill environment and adjacent residences as identified in the County’s General Plan and Code.

*Sincerely,
Stan Geel.*

SUN MOUNTAIN FARM & VINEYARD

Some Commissioners may not be fully aware of our farm and activities so we have included some information about Sun Mountain Farm & Vineyard. We purchased our 12 acre farm 30 years ago with the goal to implement sustainable methods and practices where possible. We retained some of the existing orchard and planted Fuji, Cameo, Mutsu, Granny Smith, and Gala in order to provide a selection of popular fresh eating apples throughout the season. We have included some comments from our customers from the Yelp website. In addition, we added a blueberry patch to extend the season for fruit availability through our u-pick operation. Several acres were devoted to wine grapes which are sold to 2 local wineries annually.

From the onset we were devoted to conservation and sustainable agricultural practices. Sun Mountain Farm is certified by the Fish Friendly Program, Water Quality Management and by the California Sustainable Winegrowing Program. We have been awarded two EQUIP federal grants and received assistance from the Department of Agriculture to incorporate conservation practices. Stan has served as a Director on the El Dorado County Farm Bureau Board, on the Board of the Apple Hill Growers' Association and on the El Dorado County Commission on Aging. His past academic background includes teaching agriculture.



Stanley Geel, Ph.D.



Joan Geel

RE: CUP18-0012 Horizon Towers Bavarian Hills Site APNO48-090-04

Find tacos, cheap dinner, Max's

Near Placerville, CA 95667

Log In

- Restaurants
- Home Services
- Auto Services
- More
- Write a Review
- For Businesses



Sun Mountain Farm Unclaimed

★★★★★ 9 reviews [Details](#)

[Share](#)

\$ · [Fruits & Veggies](#) [Edit](#)

Google Map data ©2019 Google

3000 North Canyon Rd
Camino, CA 95709

[Get Directions](#)

(530) 621-3740

[sunmountainfarm.com](#)

[Send to your Phone](#)



Ask the Community

Yelp users haven't asked any questions yet about Sun Mountain Farm.

Recommended Reviews for Sun Mountain Farm

Your trust is our top concern, so businesses can't pay to alter or remove their reviews. [Learn more.](#)

Search within the reviews

Sort by [Yelp Sort](#)



[Start your review of Sun Mountain Farm.](#)

Yukako K.
Rancho Cordova, CA

106 friends
4 reviews
1 photo

★★★★★ 9/29/2018

Every year we visit Sun Mountain Farm to enjoy picking apples in September! My 3 years son loves their apples. They have Golden Delicious, Fuji, Red Delicious? and more! They told us that Fuji is ready next week!

Laurie H.
Oakland, CA

63 friends
844 reviews
231 photos
Elite '19

★★★★★ 10/1/2016

Really low key, enjoyable apple picking experience. We had just come from the behemoth that is High Hill Ranch, where you cannot pick your own, and wanted to easily pick apples. You pull up, park easily, see the lady at the folding table, pick a bag size, then head out to pick your apples and fill your bag. There were 3 varieties available while we were there - Golden Delicious, Fuji, and Camio, which was just winding down. Taste, bag, taste, bag, etc. As another Yelper said: tasting is encouraged. Super chill, super easy, and we all really enjoyed it here! Would definitely return.

\$\$\$\$ Price range Inexpensive

[Edit business info](#)

[Work here? Claim this business](#)

Hours

More business info

- Take-out **Yes**
- Accepts Credit Cards **No**
- Accepts Apple Pay **No**
- Bike Parking **Yes**

Denise B.
First to review

People also viewed

High Hill Ranch - Temp. CLOSED
363 reviews
\$\$ · Fruits & Veggies, Venues & Event Spaces, Donuts

24Carrot Farm
25 reviews
Fruits & Veggies, Pick Your Own Farms

Pine O'Mine
39 reviews
\$ · Fruits & Veggies

Collections including Sun Mountain Farm

Apple Hill
By Michelle M.
8 Places

[More Collections](#)

[Other Fruits & Veggies Nearby](#)



See all photos from Laurie H. for Sun Mountain Farm

[Find more Fruits & Veggies near Sun Mountain Farm](#)

Browse Nearby

- Restaurants
- Nightlife
- Shopping
- ... Show all

Work at Sun Mountain Farm? Claim your business



Claim your free business page to have your changes published immediately.

Best of Camino

[Things to do in Camino](#)

People found Sun Mountain Farm by searching for...

[Apple Picking Camino](#)

Near Me

[Fruits and Veggies Near Me](#)



Scott S.
Minden, NV
3 friends
2 reviews
3 photos

★★★★★ 9/29/2013

This is the only place on Apple Hill we go to pick apples. Sure, we go to the other farms to eat donuts, look at crafts, and do corn mazes. But when it's time to get busy pickin', there's never been anyplace other than Sun Mountain.

This no-frills farm offers one thing: orchards. Mostly apple, but they also have blueberries. There's one little stand where you pick up your bags and pay, and that's it. There are no distractions and, refreshingly, no crowds. The apples here are the best to be had on the Hill, and when we go (late Sept, early Oct) they are in abundance. Each kids gets a bag, and we wander the rows looking for the perfect fruit. Our Apple Hill trip is not complete unless we come home with bags full of Sun Mountain apples in the back of the car. There is no place else you can go to get such a pure apple picking experience, in our view.



D.H.
Brentwood, CA
0 friends
8 reviews
2 photos

★★★★★ 9/22/2017

Best place in Apple Hill to pick apples. Fun experience without all the crowds! Super nice owners and great prices!

<>



Jennifer K.
Lake Forest, CA
0 friends
4 reviews
1 photo

★★★★★ 9/26/2015

Just had a great experience here today. The apples are really good quality, and my kids loved getting to pick apples themselves. Loved this place.

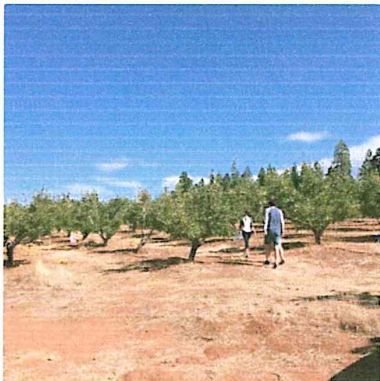


Charles W.
Roseville, CA
0 friends
5 reviews
1 photo

★★★★★ 10/4/2015

1 check-in

Great apple picking only .80 a pound sweet couple love buying from small American business. No problem with sampling and stuffing the bag they encourage it. Would come back. Great for kids.



Denise B.
San Francisco, CA
84 friends
763 reviews
163 photos

★★★★★ 10/19/2010

First to Review

Sun Mountain Farm was an incredible, quiet shrine of gorgeous apples that was a break from all the crowds throughout the rest of Apple Hill. If you want the REAL experience of apple picking rather than simply trying pre-picked apples and prepared apple products, Sun Mountain Farm is where you should go. Based on the small number of people here, Sun Mountain Farm is still an undiscovered gem compared to the rest of Apple Hill.

Sun Mountain Farm has a wide variety of apples on rows of adorable trees. You can use a bag of 5, 10, or 15 lbs to pick your apples, which at 80 cents a pound was definitely



throughout the rest of Apple Hill. If you want the REAL experience of apple picking rather than simply trying pre-picked apples and prepared apple products, Sun Mountain Farm is where you should go. Based on the small number of people here, Sun Mountain Farm is still an undiscovered gem compared to the rest of Apple Hill.

Sun Mountain Farm has a wide variety of apples on rows of adorable trees. You can use a bag of 5, 10, or 15 lbs to pick your apples, which at 80 cents a pound was definitely cheaper than the pre-picked apples I saw at the rest of Apple Hill. I've never been apple picking before, and now I can say I crossed it off my bucket list with a fun, homey type of experience.

The customer service was great as well. The owner insisted on making sure my bag was heaping full of apples, and he only charged half price to people who didn't fill up all of their bag. If this place were closer to home, I'd definitely buy all my apples from here!



Wendy V.
Dublin, CA
86 friends
392 reviews
4 photos

★★★★★ 10/12/2014

Their apples are delicious!!! I think I've eaten at least 2 per day since we were there. :) this is a no frills place. Park, go talk to the owners and grab a bag. They will tell you the best places to find fruit. Owners are friendly! Check it out.

Page 1 of 1

1 other review that is not currently recommended ▾

Best of Yelp Camino – Fruits & Veggies



[See More Fruits & Veggies in Camino](#)

About

- [About Yelp](#)
- [Careers](#)
- [Press](#)
- [Investor Relations](#)
- [Content Guidelines](#)
- [Terms of Service](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Ad Choices](#)

Discover

- [Yelp Project Cost Guides](#)
- [Collections](#)
- [Talk](#)
- [Events](#)
- [The Local Yelp](#)
- [Yelp Blog](#)
- [Support](#)
- [Yelp Mobile](#)
- [Developers](#)

Yelp for Business Owners

- [Claim your Business Page](#)
- [Advertise on Yelp](#)
- [Yelp Reservations](#)
- [Yelp WiFi](#)
- [Yelp Nowait](#)
- [Business Success Stories](#)
- [Business Support](#)
- [Yelp Blog for Business Owners](#)

Languages

[English ▾](#)

Countries

[United States ▾](#)

