



February 9, 2018

Flora Li
Tohigh Investment SF LLC
88 First Street, 6th Floor
San Francisco, CA 04105
Email: flora.li@tohighinvestment.com

Subject: Sonoma Country Inn – Kenwood, CA
Response to VOTMA Appeal

Dear Flora:

We have been asked to review and comment on the appeal submitted to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors by the Valley of the Moon Alliance (VOTMA) as it relates to potential new lighting impacts.

VOTMA raises again the new rooftop lounge as a source of light that was not included in the original conceptual design. As is evident from our earlier response to the Planning Commission appeal, the change in design at the rooftop terrace has been one of the primary factors inherent to the analysis of the lighting design. Although the 2004 design does not provide enough information to directly compare it to the current design, EJA's analysis of the current design shows that the overall effect of the rooftop terrace does not significantly increase the lighting impact of the project.

The current design's light fixtures are all downward aimed and shielded, meaning that none of the light sources (LEDs/bulbs) are directly visible. The original design included a skylight at the peak of the roofline at this location. A skylight is itself a light emitting surface that is unshielded when the light from within shines up and through it. Without complete interior lighting plans and specifications from 2004, a side-by-side photometric comparison is not possible between the effects of the skylights and the rooftop terrace. However, given the downward aimed lighting of the new design and the upward aimed secondary light effect of the skylights in the old design, the lighting impacts are likely similar enough that the human eye would not be able to determine a perceptible difference from the valley. The only occurrence of overhead glazing in the current design is a small skylight at the entry pavilion. The skylight utilize a shading system. The system will seal the opening thereby eliminating any light loss and will close, either manually or automatically, every day at sunset. Therefore it is not factored in to the overall lighting impact.



VOTMA also reasserts its argument that the light from the Resort will interfere with Ferguson Observatory's telescopes and instruments. However, the Observatory and the Resort are separated by 2.6 miles of hilly and mountainous terrain. Ridgelines and hilltops block any direct lines of sight between the two. Therefore, the lighting will not directly affect the Observatory. Additionally, the new design's adherence to the 2011 Dark Sky Model Ordinance eliminates and minimizes, as much as is possible, any adverse secondary effects which could interfere with the Observatory's instruments. The new design was created in accordance with the 2011 version of the Dark Sky Model Ordinance, as well as the Mayacamas Guidelines, both of which are more stringent than those in existence when the 2004 conditions of approval were drafted.

The new support building was carved out of the main building and relocated to a more favorable and less visible location. The reduction in size to the main building will lessen its overall lighting impact. Additionally, the separate support building, now outside of the primary area experienced by guests, is designed with the bare minimum lighting required for safety. This results in a lower overall lighting impact for the support building since it no longer needs to match the aesthetic design elements of the main house.

VOTMA points to just two aspects of the current design that are different from the Conceptual Design. However, there are other changes that will result in a substantial reduction in night lighting. An important example is that the 2004 parking lot utilized 12 ft. tall lights. The new design uses 3ft tall bollards to minimize light loss and light spill by providing light only where it is wanted. Further, the new design has reduced the size of the parking lot greatly.

These two design changes reduce the overall lighting impact considerably. Finally, lighting technology has advanced significantly since 2004, resulting in our opportunity to provide meaningful reductions to the lighting impacts of the resort by choosing fixtures that minimize light loss and spill.

The relocated western cottages now have minimized daytime visibility. As a result, they are also less visible at night. Furthermore, the new design uses fixtures that ensure no light sources are directly visible from outside of the property. Additionally, design elements such as trellises, plantings and lighting system programming ensure any secondary lighting impacts, such as reflected light, are minimized as much as possible.

This concludes our current comments, let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Eric Johnson Associates

Eric Johnson, Principal