

Hello, I am Alex Wignall, one of the owners and operators of Pura Vida Recovery Services.

I owe everything I have...my work, my wife and 3 children, and my friends to my sobriety. And it all started in a facility like the one we have proposed.

I would like to start by thanking everyone who has shown support for our project. Most notably our immediate neighbors at the project location: Joe Zeblewski the owner of Massage Envy, Patrick Kam the owner of Anytime Fitness, Bob Duffield the owner of the Edward Jones office, Collene Falconer the owner of Colleen's Coffee Shop, and Ken LaFranchi the owner of the entire neighboring building. These neighbors all have a vested financial interest in the operation of their respective businesses, with whom we share common space and parking.

Given the level of opposition our project has faced, it was no small gesture for them to publicly support our project. It is a testament to the good faith in which we have worked together to foster true neighborly relationships and an affirmation that the good work we strive to do every day is making an impact and achieving its desired goal: to provide quality, affordable, addiction treatment to as many people as possible.

Secondly we would like to thank Dr. David Chen, President of Skyhawk United, for acting as a community liaison in our efforts to reach out to the community to provide outreach and educational opportunities.

Over the past weeks we held two public meetings which were attended by members of the Leadership Team at Pura Vida for this purpose. Dr. Chen graciously notified his sizable community email list of these opportunities, and we also posted public signs next to the Notice of Public Hearing signs, as well as flyers at Colleen's Coffee shop. The first meeting was held in person at Colleen's Coffee shop, which she generously offered for that purpose, the second was held via video conference at the suggestion of Dr. Chen.

While the turnout was low, we were notified by several members of the community that they and their neighbors were aware of the meetings and received numerous invites and saw the signs we had posted.

I want to take a few minutes to address some misconceptions about our program that we have heard:

1. NO Change in Service: The proposed 24-bed facility would provide the exact same services that the current 6 bed facility has provided for nearly 3 years- No outpatient or medication assisted treatment like a walk-up methadone clinic

2. Neighborhood Effects: There have been no complaints reported to the City, Pura Vida or neighboring businesses or landlords. Further, there have been no law enforcement calls for service relative to our residents, and many members of the surrounding community

have not even noticed our operations. Our other locations have likewise generated no complaints or calls for service.

3. Neighboring Businesses: The proposed use will not affect the existing business at the center. The facility will only use the existing 7 residential units upstairs.

4. Supervision: Residents are supervised by between 4 and 6 staff members 24 hours a day

5. Traffic: A professional Trip Generation Memo found that our use will have no increase on traffic and may reduce traffic from 5761 Mountain Hawk Dr

6. How does Pura Vida manage security: Pura Vida maintains an active and unblemished license from the California Department of Healthcare Services as well as an active and unblemished accreditation from the Joint Commission. These regulatory bodies have sole authority to govern the operation of facilities of our type. They require strict guidelines for client safety. By operating a non-medical adult residential addiction treatment facility Pura Vida is obligated to operate under these guidelines and hold ourselves to the highest standard in order to maintain a safe and effective treatment environment for our clients and neighbors. This includes policies and procedures of the highest standard for client intake, admission, privacy, and discharge.

When this project was presented to the Planning Commission in 2022 there were several aspects of our program that we did not do a good enough job of explaining. I'm hoping that we can take a minute to correct some of the errors we made and give the Planning Commission all of the necessary information to make an informed decision about the nature of our project and its suitability for this location.

As Noor's excellent staff report outlines, Pura Vida Recovery Services is proposing to operate an "Alcohol and Drug Program", which the California Health and Safety Code explicitly states, cannot be considered a medical facility.

Here to shed some light on that issue we have with us our Medical Director. Forgive me while I introduce him...this usually takes a minute.

This is retired Lieutenant Colonel Roderick Fontenette, a 21 year Air Force Veteran with deployments to Afghanistan, Kuwait, Turkey, Africa, and Germany. Dr. Fontenette is Board Certified in Emergency Medicine, Critical Care Medicine, Neuro Critical Care, and is currently waiting to sit for his Addiction Medicine Boards. He earned a Masters of Health Care Management from Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health, he is the Medical Director of the ICU at St. Helena Hospital caring for critically ill patients, many of whom have substance use disorder.

At Pura Vida we treat clients who are attempting to recover from addiction in a residential setting.

This should not be confused with an “inpatient” setting, which would imply a setting of a medical nature.

Residential settings are ones in which clients are fully capable of all activities of daily living, including at the detox level of care.

To ensure that clients meet these requirements they undergo a rigorous screening and admissions process. This step ensures that no patient who requires an inpatient medical detox is admitted to our facility. If, at any time during that process, myself or my colleagues determine that a patient needs a higher level of care they are referred there.

My role as Medical Director is to provide incidental medical services in accordance with DHCS guidelines to ensure patients can thrive safely in the residential level of care.

Clients of Pura Vida do not receive any medical treatments at the facility.

All other aspects of the program are administered by non-medical personnel. In the event that a client needs medical intervention, they are transported to a medical facility.

I am happy to answer any additional questions about the nature of the facility at a later time should they arise.

Thank you.

Many concerns sent to the city via email focus on vagrants, vandalism, criminal activity, property values, and danger to schoolchildren. These have been left unaddressed until now because I think we can all agree that they are baseless, discriminatory and according to our nearly three years of operational success, false. The proposed project will continue to have no negative impact on the residential neighborhoods near our program.

Our community is not immune to the effects of our Country’s broader addiction crisis. In fact, Sonoma County just lost one of its longest standing and largest residential addiction treatment facilities in the past month when Azure Acres closed its doors, eliminating 50+ available beds. We hope to help fill that gap and allow our neighbors a place to land when they need it most.

I would like to pose a question as I get ready to finish our presentation.

We currently operate 18 residential beds in Santa Rosa

Of all the concerns and fears you have heard tonight, have any of them come in the form of a concrete complaint about one of our existing programs, locations, services, or any of our clients or employees?

As evidenced by the Staff Report and their recommendation for issuance of the Minor Conditional Use Permit, our plan is consistent with the Zoning Code, General Plan and other required findings. Our use is non-medical residential addiction treatment, in the form of a community care facility.

Pura Vida has been a pillar in the treatment community in Santa Rosa for 10 years. Our reputation is one of quality addiction treatment and neighborly conduct. Our only goal is to continue to quietly and effectively treat struggling members of our community.

It is our hope that the Planning Commission sees the value in our work, the quality of our proposal, and recognizes the years of quality service we have provided and votes to approve this life-saving project.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the support we have received. Our work can often times seem unrewarding, but it means the world to us that you took time out of our busy lives to be here to support us.

Pura Vida Recovery Services

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In engaging the community about our permit application with the city to operate 24 beds at our existing facility at 5761 Mountain Hawk Drive, a number of common questions have arisen, and we have compiled this Q&A document to help inform community members.

1. Have you been operating the same services that are proposed in the minor conditional use permit application with the city?

YES, for nearly 3 years we have been operating a 6-bed facility at the site. The proposed 24-bed facility would provide the exact same services.

2. Have there been any issues or complaints with your existing 6-bed facility?

NO, there have been no complaints reported to the City, Pura Vida or neighboring businesses or landlords. Further, there have been no law enforcement calls for service relative to our residents, and many members of the surrounding community have not even noticed our operations. Our other locations have likewise generated no complaints or calls for service.

3. Will this expansion to 24 beds impact the existing businesses in the complex?

NO, all the existing businesses are remaining and will not be displaced or negatively impacted by our expansion. The facility will only use the existing 7 residential units upstairs. The existing businesses have a positive relationship with us as neighbors. In our nearly three years of operation at 5761 Mountain Hawk none of the businesses have made complaints regarding our occupancy. Furthermore, nearly all of the businesses are actively supporting our project and have submitted letters stating as much to the City.

4. Are residents supervised?

YES, Residents are supervised by between 4 and 6 staff members 24 hours a day, including bed-checks at night. They are not permitted to go anywhere unattended and they have a very structured schedule to promote treatment.

5. Will you be providing outpatient or medication assisted treatment (Methadone) services at the site?

NO, the services are only for the maximum of 24 residents. There will be no outpatient services or medication assisted treatment at the site now or in the future.

6. How will this impact traffic?

A professional Trip Generation Memo found that our use will have no increase on traffic and may reduce traffic from 5761 Mountain Hawk Dr. Our units that are not currently used for

residential treatment have been rented for general residential use, which generates more traffic than our intended use.

7. What services do you provide to residents in your program?

We provide evidence based residential drug and alcohol addiction treatment services. We are licensed by the state to provide non-medical drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation. We serve people referred through their health insurer or direct enrollment who voluntarily sign up for our services to help them with drug and alcohol addiction. These are people from across our community seeking to break cycles of addiction, and they receive comprehensive services and monitoring in a drug and alcohol free environment.

8. Is the proposed use consistent with the City of Santa Rosa General Plan and Zoning?

Yes, Pura Vida actively helps the City of Santa Rosa accomplish many goals in the General Plan, not least "Policy 6-2.3: Prevent, disincentivize, and reduce harmful addictive behaviors." We are a Community Care Facility, as defined in Santa Rosa's zoning code, as well as the California Health and Safety Code. Furthermore, the City of Santa Rosa has issued two separate Minor Use Permits to Pura Vida for other locations, of the same nature and use.

9. How does Pura Vida oversee the clients in their care, and to what standard?

Pura Vida maintains an active and unblemished license from the California Department of Healthcare Services as well as an active and unblemished accreditation from the Joint Commission. These regulatory bodies have sole authority to govern facilities of our type and their operation. They have strict guidelines for client safety and facility operation. By operating a non-medical adult residential addiction treatment facility Pura Vida is obligated to operate under these guidelines and hold ourselves to the highest standard in order to maintain a safe and effective treatment environment for our clients and neighbors.