

over the water well near the junction of highway 29 and Butts Canyon Rd that would likely have drained Middletown's aquifer and caused hardship to its resident flora and our Church's exhibition food forest in order to pipe water to the Guenoc project, we now understand and appreciate that that water facility has been donated for Middletown's Callayomi Water's use instead, which we approve of. We have already submitted multiple letters to Kevin Case of Maha, Laura Hall of the Planning Department and others expressing our collective concerns on behalf of Middletown residents and asking pertinent questions with no substantial reply other than a very pleasant call with Kevin yesterday, so we are here today again requesting a written response and a formal amendment of existing plans stating that the Middletown Worker Co-housing Site will be removed from the project and resituated either to the Guenoc Valley Project site or to some more suitable out-of-town site. We initially gave a response deadline of June 1st, but that has now passed without any meaningful written reply that we can show to other community members. If this matter is not addressed promptly and transparently in writing, we need to let you know that we are gathering forces and may need to pursue legal remedies. Still, we remain very hopeful for an amicable resolution after discussing the matter with Kevin yesterday. We urge the Planning Commission to act now with wisdom and integrity to honor the concerned voices of Middletown residents and to guide this project away from stressing our small town and toward a path of responsible land, environmental and community stewardship. Thank you for your time and consideration." Rev. Julia Bono The Rainbow Church of Living Light

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JUL 24 2025

Lake County Planning Commission – Public Hearing on MAHA Developments Middletown Site

LAKE COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

"Good afternoon Planning Commissioners, and thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Rev. Julia Bono, and I represent the Rainbow Church of Living Light in Middletown. I also speak today on behalf of many concerned Middletown residents who have reached out to us in recent months, united in their deep love for our town and their growing alarm about the large proposed Guenoc Valley Project worker co-housing development planned for Santa Clara Rd in central Middletown.

As you may know, Middletown is a small, resilient and diverse community. We have endured serious hardships together, including the devastating Valley Fire, and we continue to rebuild our small town of largely single family homes with care and intention. At our Church, we believe we have a moral and spiritual responsibility to serve and protect the surrounding land, water and the community of people who call this place home.

After extensive dialogue with local residents, our collective position is clear: the proposed Middletown Worker Co-Housing Site on Santa Clara Rd within walking distance to downtown Middletown is just not appropriate for this town's scale, infrastructure or cultural character. The intended site lies on ¹²¹ rural zoned land in a high flood risk zone and is surrounded by fire-prone terrain. It also poses possible adverse environmental effects on adjacent Dry Creek. Yet we have seen no adequate fire evacuation planning, no clear Middletown infrastructure expansion strategy or funding offers, no environmental study of the likely impact on Dry Creek, and little meaningful engagement with our residential community most affected.

Let me be clear: we are not opposed to the Guenoc Valley development. We are opposed to development that disregards the will, investments and wellbeing of the Middletowners who were living here first. There are over 16,000 acres available at the Guenoc Valley Project Site just a few miles away from Middletown which is far better suited for high-density worker housing and can be more responsibly funded and managed by the project.

While we were also concerned over the water well near the junction of highway 29 and Butts Canyon Rd that would likely have drained Middletown's aquifer and caused hardship to its resident flora and our Church's exhibition food forest in order to pipe water to the Guenoc project, we now understand and appreciate that that water facility has been donated for Middletown's Callayomi Water's use instead, which we approve of.

We have already submitted multiple letters to Kevin Case of Maha, Laura Hall of the Planning Department and others expressing our collective concerns on behalf of Middletown residents and asking pertinent questions with no substantial reply other than a very pleasant call with Kevin yesterday, so we are here today again requesting a written response and a formal amendment of existing plans stating that the Middletown Worker Co-housing Site will be removed from the project and resituated either to the Guenoc Valley Project site or to some more suitable out-of-town site. We initially gave a response deadline of June 1st, but that has now passed without any meaningful written reply that we can show to other community members. If this matter is not addressed promptly and transparently in writing, we need to let you know that we are gathering forces and may need to pursue legal remedies.

Still, we remain very hopeful for an amicable resolution after discussing the matter with Kevin yesterday. We urge the Planning Commission to act now with wisdom and integrity to honor the concerned voices of Middletown residents and to guide this project away from stressing our small town and toward a path of responsible land, environmental and community stewardship.

Thank you for your time and consideration."

Public Comment by Rev. Charles Bono of The Rainbow Church of Living Light, Middletown, CA

Regarding: Guenoc Valley Mixed-Use Planned Development Project – Middletown Worker Co-Housing Site

Good morning Planning Commissioners,

I'm Rev. Charles Bono, speaking today as a spiritual leader and longtime resident of Middletown, on behalf of our congregation and many concerned neighbors. Our community has weathered hardship and fire, and we've rebuilt with care, preserving the small-town character that defines us.

We are deeply troubled by the proposed worker co-housing development planned for Santa Clara Rd in central Middletown. This site lies in a flood-prone, fire-sensitive zone, adjacent to Dry Creek, and lacks adequate infrastructure, evacuation planning, and environmental review. The scale of this project is incompatible with Middletown's modest size and the site's rural zoning.

Let me be clear: we do not oppose responsible development. We oppose development that disregards the voices and well-being of those who already live here in Middletown. With over 16,000 acres available at the Guenoc Valley Project site just a few miles away, there is a more suitable location for high-density housing—one that can be better managed and funded without overwhelming our town.

We appreciate the recent decision to allocate the water facility near Butts Canyon Rd to Middletown's Callayomi Water District, which we support. However, our repeated letters to planners and developers have gone unanswered. We now ask for a formal written response and an amendment to the project plans removing the Middletown co-housing site and relocating it to a more appropriate location outside of town.

If this request is not addressed promptly and transparently, we may be forced to pursue legal remedies. Still, we remain hopeful for a peaceful resolution and urge the Commission to act with wisdom and integrity.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of our concerns.

Rev. Charles Bono, The Rainbow Church of Living Light, Middletown, CA

RECEIVED

JUL 24 2025

LAKE COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

JUL 24 2025

LAKE COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

To: Senior Lake County Planner Laura Hall, Lotus Land Developers
Subject: Middletown Resident Concerns and Demand for Resituation of Worker Co-Housing outside of Central Middletown for the Guenoc Valley Mixed Use Planned Development Project
From: Revs. Julia and Charles Bono of The Rainbow Church of Living Light
Date: 5/2/2025

To Ms. Hall, Lotusland Investment Holdings Inc. (developers of the Guenoc Valley Mixed-Use Planned Development Project), and Whomever Else it May Concern,

We are writing again during the latest public comment period to express the general concerns and strong opposition that have arisen within the residential community of Middletown where we live and work about the planned worker co-housing location(s) to be situated in the central Middletown area that are associated with Parts I and II, as well as any subsequent planned phased developments, of the Maha development project centered in Guenoc Valley, known as the "Guenoc Valley Mixed-Use Planned Development Project", henceforth referred to here at The Project. Specifically, these comments refer to the "Middletown Site", identified on the Lake County website as related to:

- Use Permit UP 24-08
- General Plan Amendment GPAP (Map) 24-03
- General Plan Amendment GPAP (Text) 24-04
- Rezone RZ 24-02
- Subdivision Map SD 24-05

You will find our previous letter dated September 3rd, 2024 on this subject copied below and attached in PDF format, along with a copy of this letter. To date, we have not yet received any substantial reply addressing our questions and concerns, so we can only assume they have not yet been addressed in any meaningful manner by either the County or The Project's developers Lotusland Investment Holdings Inc. On behalf of the concerned people of Middletown, we ask again that these matters be fully addressed by the County and by The Project developers themselves in a written response sent to us at this email address or the mailing address below that we can share with other concerned Middletown residents.

We also note that a recent court decision requested another Environmental Impact Report for this project, but after reviewing the new material made available at the Middletown Library, we still do not see any significant documentation regarding mitigating the severe environmental impact this large worker co-housing development will have on the environment and people of Middletown itself that will likely include serious fire evacuation, infrastructure, water and sewer service availability and cost, schooling, religious, social, business, nonprofit and cultural impacts.

Given the irresponsibly excessive magnitude of the worker co-housing project planned for the Middletown Site relative to the existing population size of Middletown, we are very concerned that this portion of The Project will seriously adversely impact safety and living conditions for existing central Middletown residents who have collectively invested their hearts, souls and funds in this small town over the past 151 years of its existence. Furthermore, since Middletown

is a community, consisting largely of single-family homes, from a community planning perspective, this sort of mass occupancy co-housing development seems entirely inappropriate for this small-town community, its fragile fire-prone environment, and its long-established small-town culture, so it should never have been permitted at all.

Accordingly, on behalf of the concerned people of Middletown, we now demand that the Middletown Site's Use Permit UP 24-08 be revoked and that this portion of The Project be removed entirely from the central Middletown area and instead be re-situated upon the 16,000 or so other acres that The Project intends to develop 3.5 miles from Middletown on Butts Canyon Rd known as the "Guenoc Ranch Site". If this requested re-situation of the worker co-housing project outside of central Middletown is not promptly reflected in an amendment to The Project's planning documents and notification is not duly given to us that this has been done within the coming month (i.e. by June 1st, 2025), you are all hereby notified that we will take steps to escalate the matter using various legal methods available to us.

Sincerely,

Revs. Julia and Charles Bono
The Rainbow Church of Living Light
P.O. Box 1408, Middletown, CA
(707) 881-7573 (vm and text)
rainbowchurchoflivinglight@gmail.com

known for its unique small-town character—a characteristic that many residents deeply value and wish to preserve. We would also like to know if and how the will of local residents has been considered in the planning process, and what steps are being taken to mitigate any negative impacts on our community.

Furthermore, we question why these worker housing facilities are being placed in or near central Middletown, where they could potentially place an overwhelming burden on local infrastructure and services. It seems more appropriate that these facilities be located at the larger Guenoc Valley site, where the impact could be more effectively managed and funded by the project developers.

Finally, we are concerned about the potential impact of the proposed water well for this large development, planned to be located at the junction of Highway 29 and Butts Canyon Road, just north of Middletown. Specifically, we are worried that this increased water usage could lower the water table in the central Middletown area. Many people in Middletown have made a significant investment in fruit and nut trees and bushes, and we are concerned that a drop in the water table could prevent these plants from accessing the groundwater they need to thrive without regular watering, which is both expensive and time-consuming.

We appreciate your attention to these concerns and look forward to your prompt response. Your insights will greatly assist us in understanding the implications of this development on our community and in planning for the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Revs. Julia and Charles Bono
The Rainbow Church of Living Light
P.O. Box 1408, Middletown, CA
(707) 881-7573 (vm and text)
rainbowchurchoflivinglight@gmail.com

COPY OF PREVIOUS LETTER

To: Senior Lake County Planner Laura Hall

Subject: Request for Information on Worker Housing Locations for the Guenoc Valley Mixed-Use Planned Development Project and Possible Water Table Implications

From: Revs. Julia and Charles Bono of The Rainbow Church of Living Light

Date: 9/3/2024

Dear Ms. Hall and Whomever Else It May Concern,

We hope this letter finds you well. We are Revs. Julia and Charles Bono, representing the Rainbow Church of Living Light based in Middletown, CA. We are writing to request more detailed information and to express concerns regarding the Middletown worker housing locations and groundwater requirements associated with Parts I and II, as well as any subsequent planned phased developments, of the Maha development project centered in Guenoc Valley, known as the "Guenoc Valley Mixed-Use Planned Development Project." See here:

<https://www.lake-countyca.gov/1762/Guenoc-Valley-Mixed-Use-Planned-Developm>

Specifically, we would like to know the following:

1. **Number of Sites and Size:** The total number of worker housing sites to be developed near central Middletown, the size of each site, and their planned locations within Middletown.
2. **Number of Dwellings and Occupancy:** The exact number of dwellings planned for each site and the maximum and expected occupancy at each location.

In addition, we are concerned about the potential adverse impact of this development on our community, particularly in light of Middletown's history of devastating wildfires, such as the 2015 Valley Fire. *Therefore, we seek detailed information on the following:*

- **Fire Evacuation Plans:** How are fire evacuations being planned for these Middletown worker housing sites? What measures are being put in place to ensure the safety of all of Middletown's residents in case of a wildfire given such a huge planned population expansion?
- **Infrastructure and Facilities:** What provisions are being made regarding parking, traffic flow, and utilities such as water, sewer, and power? Also, how will the greatly increased Middletown population impact local facilities, such as the Senior Center, schools and low-income food distribution services? Finally, how are accompanying infrastructure and facility expansions that may arise from the presence of these Middletown worker housing sites being planned for and funded?

Considering the substantial expansion of Middletown's population that this project appears to intend, we estimate that the population growth could be as high as 33% or more just for Part I of this project based on official documents we have reviewed. This raises significant concerns about the potential social and quality of life impacts on our tightly-knit historical community, which is

