

Packet Addition 2nd Addition

(April 11, 2019 addition)

Zoning

From: Linda Stegenga <linda@bowersharbor.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2019 7:24 AM
To: Zoning; planner@peninsulatownship.com; sarah@northview22.com; Infante, Joseph M.; Eldridge, Scott R.; Spencer Stegenga; Kristy McClellan; Dave Sanger
Subject: Bowers Harbor Vineyards

Peninsula Township,

I would like to withdraw my request for a variance regarding condition of complying with the 75% growing coverage based on the representations made by Peninsula Township. Bowers Harbor Vineyards will complete a survey of the areas defined as grapes, maples, and cold air drainage by a Professional Surveyor. We will calculate said areas and determine if/how much area is needed to be planted in order to comply with the 75% condition. This will occur in time for the first Planning Commission meeting for our Winery-Chateau request.

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,

Linda Stegenga
Proprietor
Bowers Harbor Vineyards
231-223-7615
www.bowersharbor.com

 Bowers Harbor Vineyards

Packet

Addition

2nd Addition

Opposition

Peninsula Township
13235 Center Rd
Traverse City, MI 49686
RE: April 11 ZBA meeting



To the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals,

I am writing to express my opposition to request No. 873, that will be considered tonight, April 11th, 2019, regarding the winery-chateau ordinance within Peninsula township.

The first point requesting a reduction from 50 acres to 45.77 acres, represents nearly a 10% reduction in the requirement. The requirement exists at 50 acres, and has been met by numerous other members of the Old Mission wine community, and should not be reevaluated on a case by case basis, out of convenience to a particular applicant.

The second point is even more concerning, requesting a reduction from 75% to 26.8%, active production on Old Mission. This represents nearly a 65% reduction in this requirement. To put this in the context of a real-world winery, consider the following example-

A 15,000-case winery needs to purchase approximately 250 tons of grapes to produce its wine. The average grape yield on Old Mission is 3 tons/acre, meaning the winery needs to grow, or purchase grapes grown on, 83 acres of land. Under the current winery-chateau ordinance, 75% of that production needs to be from Old Mission, which results in 62.5 acres of land kept in agriculture, to satisfy this requirement. If this variance is passed, only 26.8% of the production needs to be from Old Mission, which results in only 22.3 acres of land in agriculture. The difference being 40.2 acres of land, which no longer needs to be kept in agriculture, and could be residential, or developed in any number of ways.

This example is only a small-scale representation of the lost agricultural acreage that will be associated with this variance. As a winery grows in scale, more and more acres are left unneeded to supply grapes, and those lands are then available for development.

Since agricultural land is a priority for Peninsula township, please consider the larger ramifications to the future of the Peninsula, and deny the request for variance No. 873.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Kroupa", written over a white background.

John Kroupa
President
Peninsula Cellars

Winery ● 2464 Kroupa Rd. ● Traverse City, MI ● 49686 ● 231.223.4050

Tasting Room ● 11480 Center Rd. ● Traverse City, MI ● 49686 ● 231.933.9787

Letters
Of
Support
2nd Addition

(April 11, 2019 addition)

April 8, 2019

To whom it may concern,

As a Michigander, I take great pride in Michigan's diverse agricultural commodities. After all, Michigan is only second to California in terms of number of agricultural crops grown. It is especially important to me to buy local wines from Michigan's five American Viticultural Area (AVAs), as I know the farmers put their heart and soul into their vineyards, and the winemakers produce such a fantastic array of wines. Michigan wines are important, unless the Peninsula Township does not feel that the \$5.4 billion total economic impact of Michigan's entire wine industry is significant, nor the \$252 million in tourism spending that accompanies that, as per Michigan Wine's website. I am sure that those who get to enjoy the benefits of such a successful industry would feel otherwise, as it provides a significant number of jobs, and many of those employees would like to retain their employment. Furthermore, consumers have an incredible array of choices of wine to pick from, all over the world. Yet, Michigan wines are more popular than ever, and I imagine those consumers would be quite upset for their preferred Michigan wines were to be discontinued.

The tasting rooms scattered along the peninsula are a direct response of Old Mission's vibrant agricultural abilities, which is all due to the incredibly hardworking farmers. If the township has unwarranted issues with the tasting rooms, that directly impacts the farmers. Without tasting rooms, farmers have no incentive to grow, as they will not have buyers. All the vineyard employees would have to find work elsewhere – and would most likely not be local. Farmers would be faced with shutting down their operations. Why should farmers, who already face a number of economic hardships then be faced with more problems that is their local government – should the local government not be helping the farmers? The township should be so enthusiastic to help the longstanding farming industry and do so by working with the tasting rooms. This only helps to benefit the local, statewide, and national economy. It benefits everyone. Or, does the township feel that the farmers are merely taking up valuable space that should be turned into multimillion-dollar housing developments? As someone who is young, I have not yet settled down and bought a home, but I am thankful I have not. I adore Old Mission with my heart, but the injustices that the township peninsula are pushing on the local wineries and farmers is too much for me – ethically, I could never move to a place where my taxes would benefit those who simply want to unfairly punish the wine region. I want my taxes to benefit the farmers.

Through my lenses, it feels as though the Peninsula township is actively discouraging the unique agricultural hotspot that is Old Mission Peninsula. Certainly, that makes no sense to me. On more occasion than one, Bowers Harbor Vineyards has been faced with impossible choices, due to unclear, not-up-to-date policies. It is up to the Peninsula township to keep current with the rules and regulations, as voted on by constituents and appropriate board members. Based on the wording of the policies, Bowers Harbor Vineyards does not qualify for a Chateau winery license. Due to the county roads, Bowers Harbor cannot get the minimum fifty acres of continuous

vineyard/agriculture in production, as the roads intercept, so they cannot purchase more land surrounding them in immediate vicinity. Further, though the entire property is forty-seven acres (just three shy of the required fifty), not all of it can be in production. Due to cold drainage, the former orchard sites on the estate had to be ripped out, as the fruit trees were not productive. Without extensive changes done to the land, the cold drainage would still negatively impact vineyard production. The does not take into account how that would impact the environment, any sort of cables and underground pipes, any many other factors that would make it economically impossible, for both the township and Bowers Harbor Vineyards.

It is highly beneficial for both the Peninsula township as well as the company for allowing the license change. By allowing Bowers Harbor Vineyards to be recognized legally as a chateau, they can continue their daily operations in a much more focused way. As the second oldest tasting room on the peninsula, the most fitting license was "roadside fruit stand" at the time they opened. However, as the tasting room has evolved, so have the different licenses involved. Winery Chateau would be a lot more apt as of now, as it would still allow for the same services (such as allowing customers to consume a drink outdoors) while drastically reducing the friction between the current legal jargon of "roadside fruit stand" and how that is interpreted between both the township and Bowers Harbor Vineyards. A winery chateau license is much more straight forward and applies so much more to Bowers Harbor Vineyard's current operation in all aspects. I can imagine this change would reduce any headaches that may result from the out of date licensing for the township. It seems counterintuitive to vote any other way.

Every single consumer votes with their money. As the second oldest winery on Old Mission Peninsula, Bowers Harbor Vineyards has done such an outstanding job of building up tourist excitement, and bringing in millions of dollars of economic activity for Old Mission Peninsula, the city of Traverse City, and the Michigan Wine industry as a whole for nearly thirty years now. Between tastings to partnering with the Boathouse for Dining In the Vines events, they have continuously brought in money – which benefits the township, the city, as well as the economy. The township should do the correct thing and vote to help Bowers Harbor Vineyards update their current licensing from a roadside fruit stand to a Chateau Winery. The township should be so excited for this opportunity – they will get to watch the Old Mission AVA flourish even more and, will benefit from it themselves. Please, vote to update Bowers Harbor Vineyard's licensing, so they can continue providing such an awesome and unique experience to every customer who walks through, and make the Michigan wine industry even more fantastic.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. It is very near and dear to my heart.

Erin McMahan



April 10, 2019

Peninsula Township
Zoning Department – Board of Appeals
13235 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686

RE: Letter of Support for Bowers Harbor Vineyards

We are submitting this letter to support Bowers Harbor Vineyards (BHV) requests for variances to their zoning conditions.

Bowers Harbor is in the forefront for being leaders in the wine industry for both Traverse City as well as Michigan. This is an important industry for this unique place and its unmatched ability to grow wine grapes in Michigan. It is essential that we support businesses that are enhancing our economy as well as our community and not try to hinder their ability.

BHV not only operates a successful business locally but also has a big picture mind set in measuring their practices against the best in the country for the wine industry. I, David Bos, was previously the Vineyard Manager for Grgich Hills in Napa and have hosted Spencer, Kristy, and team, on several trips to Napa so that they can learn the intricacy of practices being done by the best in the industry from the vineyards, to the wine making and in the tasting room. They always apply important aspects of what they have learned to their business and that mind set is why they are so successful today. They are making it their continued effort to run a top-notch operation.

They are also community minded in not only supporting many great organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters but also supporting people like my wife and I as we have moved back to Michigan to start our own winery. The efforts they have gone to support our endeavors is a testament to the type of community we have here in Michigan and the unique camaraderie this industry has. Holding them back from being able to run and operate their business, over technicalities that they have had no control over, not only hurts them but it also hurts the rest of us in the industry that need people like Linda and Spencer Stegenga to pave the way.

We implore you to work with BHV in their endeavors and be apart of building up a business and an industry that will continue to thrive and be an essential part of our community and its economic health.

Thank you for your consideration!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D+J Bos', written in a cursive style.

David and Jackie Bos
BOS Wine

April 10th, 2019

Old Mission Peninsula Township
Zoning Board
13235 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686

Re: Request 873
Bowers Harbor Vineyards

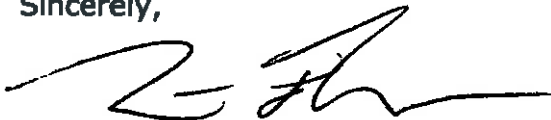
Dear Zoning Board,

I am writing to you in support of the requested variances that your board is considering for Bowers Harbor Vineyards (BHV). I have been an OMP resident since 2012 and now live close to their property. I have been to all the vineyards on OMP with my wife and with the many family and friends that stay with us every year for annual and spontaneous vacations. I am always so impressed with the entire operation that BHV is every time we visit them. They are the perfect fabric for what a winery on OMP should look like. I am a small business owner and I see no reason why there should be any hinderance in the way OMP currently does and wants to run their business.

As I stated, we now live close to the BHV property, so I drive by it every day. I am always impressed by the how they care for their land and their surroundings. It is always beautiful, and their type of farming and business is at the forefront of sustainability and land stewardship.

BHV makes OMP a better place to live and visit, so please approve the variances that they need so they can continue being one of the gems of our little paradise that is OMP.

Sincerely,



Michael Frederick
14877 Shipman Rd
Traverse City MI 49686

Zoning

From: Rebecca Chown <clerk@peninsulatownship.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2019 11:52 AM
To: Christina Deeren
Subject: FW: Request #873 Bowers Harbor Vineyards.

Hi, Christina,

More BHV comments for you!

Becky

Rebecca Chown

Peninsula Township Clerk

13235 Center Road

Traverse City MI 49686

phone: 231-223-7321

fax: 231-223-7117

clerk@peninsulatownship.com

Office Hours: Mondays 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Tuesdays–Thursdays 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and closed Fridays–Sundays and holidays

From: W. Bruce Rogers [mailto:wbr@voyager.net]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2019 11:41 AM
To: clerk@peninsulatownship.com
Cc: wbr@voyager.net
Subject: Request #873 Bowers Harbor Vineyards.

Old Mission Township Zoning Board of Appeals

April 9, 2019

Dear board of appeals members,

My wife and I have lived on East Shore Road since 1974. We have known the Stegenga family for many years. The high quality vineyard they have developed on the Peninsula is a community/township asset and we seek your support in granting them variances on their upcoming hearing # 873. It appears that from our prospective these requests are not going to destroy or upset the ordinances already in place in our township and would be a benefit to all township residents.

We are currently out of town and respectfully seek your approval.

Very truly yours,

George A. Vinyard & Judith A. Shepelak

12715 Sundown Lane
Traverse City, MI 49686

April 10, 2019

Old Mission Peninsula Township
Zoning Board of Appeals
13235 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686

Re: Request 873
Bowers Harbor Vineyards

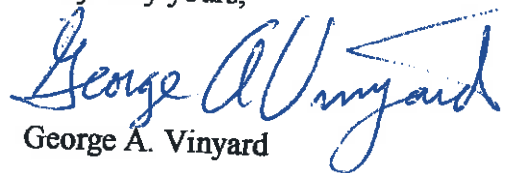
Gentlemen and Ladies:

We have been homeowners and tax payers on Old Mission Peninsula since 2005. We were regular vacationers and visitors here for several years before that. During this time, we have come to appreciate the importance of the wine industry to this community and the positive impact it has had on the local economy and our property taxes and the value of our home.

More recently, we have come to appreciate the role of Bowers Harbor Vineyards as a local pioneer in this industry for years before our arrival, and to understand that their operations pre-date any applicable zoning ordinances. We have also learned that their business and contributions to the local community and economy have been needlessly, and perhaps unfairly, burdened and impaired by the fact that subsequently adopted regulatory schemes have not been sufficiently flexible to allow their established practices and unique circumstances and location to "fit" the newer mold, despite their continuing efforts to adjust to ever-changing regulatory requirements.

Therefore, we urge the OMP Zoning Board of Appeals to approve the requested variances so that Bowers Harbor Vineyards can operate subject to the Winery Chateau ordinance and once again focus on growing and improving their business while complying with clear and predictable rules and guidelines.

Very truly yours,


George A. Vinyard

Zoning

From: Richard Laney <rick@rjlaneydesign.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2019 8:35 AM
To: Zoning@peninsulatownship.com
Subject: BVH Variance

April 10, 2019

Zoning board of appeal Peninsula Township,

I find it troubling that our township can not figure out how to let BVH continue with its current business. It has tax paying peninsula residents as employees. Peninsula guests and residents both, go to the winery regularly and purchase the wonderful wine they produce. They have proven to be a great Old Mission business, and a tourist destination. It has helped to create the beautiful wine business that we have on this peninsula. We should only consider how to help BVH in their business. NOT help destroy it! I can't even fathom why this is being considered?

Richard Laney
18181 Mission Rd.
Traverse City, MI 49686

Zoning

From: Chuck Kass <cpkass@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2019 6:28 PM
To: zoning@peninsulatownship.com
Subject: BHV Zoning Variance Approval

Dear Christina,

My wife Alyson and I are writing to recommend approval of Request 873, Bowers Harbor Vineyards. We are residents at 9958 Peninsula Drive, Old Mission Peninsula. We are long time property owners with vested interest in the continued welfare and value of residential property on Old Mission Peninsula. We strongly urge the Zoning Board of Appeals to approve the variances that will allow Bowers Harbor Vineyards to continue to function as a viable, responsible vineyard. The owners and employees of Bowers Harbor Vineyards are good friends and neighbors and well deserving of the Old Mission Peninsula Zoning Board of Appeals support and approval.

Sincerely,
Charles Kass DDS

Old Mission Peninsula Township
Zoning Board of Appeals
13235 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686

Re: Request 873
Bowers Harbor Vineyards

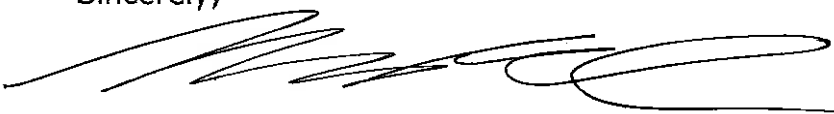
Bowers Harbor Vineyards (BHV) has been an integral part of Old Mission Peninsula since 1992. BHV has worked successfully for the past 26 years to establish their brand as a recognized Michigan winery and has contributed to not only the success of the Michigan wine industry, but also to the prosperity of Traverse City and, most importantly, to Old Mission Peninsula.

As there were no winery ordinances in 1992; we were given permission to do business as a Roadside Stand. Many times, over the years, we tried to work with the township to write an ordinance. They created the Winery Chateau and the Farm Processing ordinance, but BHV did not fit into either of these ordinances. Beginning again in June of 2015, we have been working diligently to come into compliance with the township; we are still working in that direction. After many meetings, legal counsel, hiring of our own planner, building permits, additional expenses, etc. they think the best fit is the Winery Chateau ordinance. We would need several variances in order to fit into this category.

Because of the indecision and the change of planners, staff, and board members, we have had to cancel countless events, wine dinners, activities, etc. which has been a huge hardship to the annual revenue that we need to employ 34 Peninsula people.

I/we strongly recommend that the OMP Zoning Board of Appeals approves these variances and allows BHV to get back to business.

Sincerely,



Old Mission Peninsula Resident
Mike Seward
7800 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686

Old Mission Peninsula Township
Zoning Board of Appeals
13235 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686

Re: Request 873
Bowers Harbor Vineyards

Bowers Harbor Vineyards (BHV) has been an integral part of Old Mission Peninsula since 1992. BHV has worked successfully for the past 26 years to establish their brand as a recognized Michigan winery and has contributed to not only the success of the Michigan wine industry, but also to the prosperity of Traverse City and, most importantly, to Old Mission Peninsula.

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I/we strongly recommend that the OMP Zoning Board of Appeals approves these variances and allows BHV to get back to business.

Sincerely,



Old Mission Peninsula Resident
Laura Seward
7800 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686



April 4, 2019

Old Mission Peninsula Zoning Board of Appeals
13235 Center Rd.
Traverse City, MI 49686

Regarding: Bowers Harbor Vineyards

Dear Neighbors:

It is my distinct honor to advocate for my dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Stegenga, owners of Bowers Harbor Vineyards in their effort to correct for long standing zoning issues relative to their vineyard. I am confident that many of you know Spencer and Erica well and perhaps Spencer's family going back several decades. They have worked tirelessly to promote and create a sustainable business on the Old Mission Peninsula without which our community would be poorer in many ways. My wife and I moved to Traverse City 10 years ago and we settled in the Old Mission Estates subdivision of the Township. A tremendous reason why we chose to do so was the feel of the area which includes both agricultural, residential and obviously the tremendous industry at their crossroads which are the Old Mission Wineries. Spencer and Erica Stegenga have epitomized this agrarian business and over the years they have become tremendous friends who have supported our endeavors as we have supported theirs. As such, with many other similar examples, I suspect you will come to know Spencer and Erica as pillars of the community and absolutely integral to the fabric of it. Without an intimate knowledge of the zoning restrictions that they face, I would humbly beseech you to consider whatever measures possible to sustain, foster and help grow the Bowers Harbor Vineyard as it is important to so many of us. Through their outreach efforts and multiple events and partnerships, the Stegengas are vital to our community as I am sure many of you are aware. The Old Mission Peninsula simply would not be the same without sustaining the Bowers Harbor Vineyard in its current iteration and allowing for generations of future growth. I hope that you can see from the out pouring of support from the Stegengas that the zoning should make this happen is extremely important to many members of the community.

Yours Truly,

Christopher and Lauren Jeffries
11602 Snowfield Court
Traverse City, MI 49686
CCJ/vhm 4/4/19

Old Mission Peninsula Township
Zoning Board of Appeals
13235 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686

Re: Request 873
Bowers Harbor Vineyards

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I/we strongly recommend that the OMP Zoning Board of Appeals approves these variances and allows BHV to get back to business.

*Dr. and Mrs. Roger Myers
12655 Center Rd
Traverse City, MI*

Old Mission Peninsula Township
Zoning Board of Appeals
13235 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686

Re: Request 873
Bowers Harbor Vineyards

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BEST,
TRAVIS BEYNON
624 HIDDEN VALLEY DR.
TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49686

Old Mission Peninsula Township
Zoning Board of Appeals
13235 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686

Re: Request 873
Bowers Harbor Vineyards

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They would need several variances in order to fit into this category. Because of the indecision and the change of planners, staff, and board members, BHV has had to cancel countless events, wine dinners, activities, etc. which has been a huge hardship to the annual revenue that they need to employ 34 Peninsula people. We strongly recommend that the OMP Zoning Board of Appeals approves these variances and allows BHV to get back to business.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim and Jennifer Dutmers", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Tim and Jennifer Dutmers
Residents, Peninsula Township

Casey and Dana Cowell
6025 Peninsula Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686

Old Mission Peninsula Township
Zoning Board of Appeals
13235 Center Road
Traverse City, MI 49686

Re: Request 873
Bowers Harbor Vineyards

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Sincerely,



Casey and Dana Cowell