

Received
Watsonville
City Clerk

FEB 26 '25 AM 11:36

2546 Rolling Hills Ct.
Alamo, CA 94507

February 25, 2025

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Watsonville City Council
275 Main Street
Suite 400 (4th Floor)
Watsonville, CA 95076

Re: Ethical Concerns with Watsonville City Government and CEIBA Land Use Issues

Members of the Council:

The Ceiba Charter School operates on an industrial lot with illicit land entitlements that are the subject of ongoing litigation by adversely affected neighboring stakeholders. Watsonville City Government is the entity that approved the entitlements and is the named respondent in the litigation. City government officials have been aggressively lobbying the Pajaro Unified School Trustees for over a year to approve an illicit zoning exemption to evade judicial review of the CEIBA entitlements. Recent news coverage indicates that the PVUSD officials are getting close to making a decision on the CEIBA issue.

Concurrently with these recent events, the Council has held a meeting to receive instruction and guidance on ethical governance. With these two events ongoing, it seems appropriate to inform the Council of a serious defect of governmental ethics that occurred with the CEIBA situation that helps to explain what has gone wrong with the City. The fundamental question at hand for the Council on the CEIBA matter is whether a children's school could equitably be placed in an industrial zone district.

This was and is a very serious question. Heavy industrial zones have the most permissive standards for hazardous and dangerous uses; school zones have the least permissive. With the involved industrial zone being the existing environment, the question became refined as to whether the school had an adverse impact on the zone during its operation. Leading up to the related February 28, 2023 City Council Meeting,

City Staff had an ethical and professional obligation to inform the Council as to any such impacts caused by the school before the Council voted on the matter.

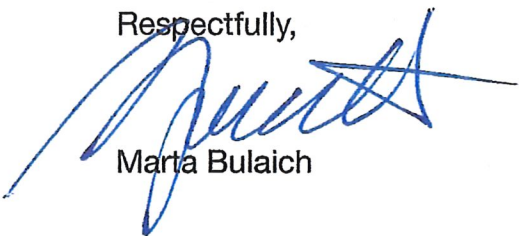
It is a fact that Staff provided no such notification to the Council, which led the Council to believe that the school was compatible. **This belief was false because Staff withheld objective and factual information from the Council** about the past interference that had been caused by the school as to the establishment of proposed industrial uses in the area.

Please see the attached correspondence dated September 3, 2020 from Watsonville Associate Planner Ivan Carmona to an industrial applicant, Jason Sweatt, regarding the establishment of his proposed industrial use. The proposal was formally accepted and then prohibited by Planning Department Staff due to the presence of the school in the industrial zone.

The school, just by being there, destroyed the functionality of the industrial zone district, which undercut the purpose of having a zoning code in the first place.

As the City government officials have expended time and resources to receive instruction on ethics, it behooves them to review the ethical failure of their planning department staff in the zoning administration conducted regarding the Ceiba school and seek a path to learn and improve from this failure of governance.

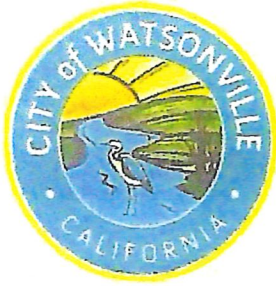
Respectfully,



Marta Bulaich

Attachment:

Zoning Verification Letter dated September 30, 2020 from Ivan Carmona



City of Watsonville

"A Community of Opportunities"

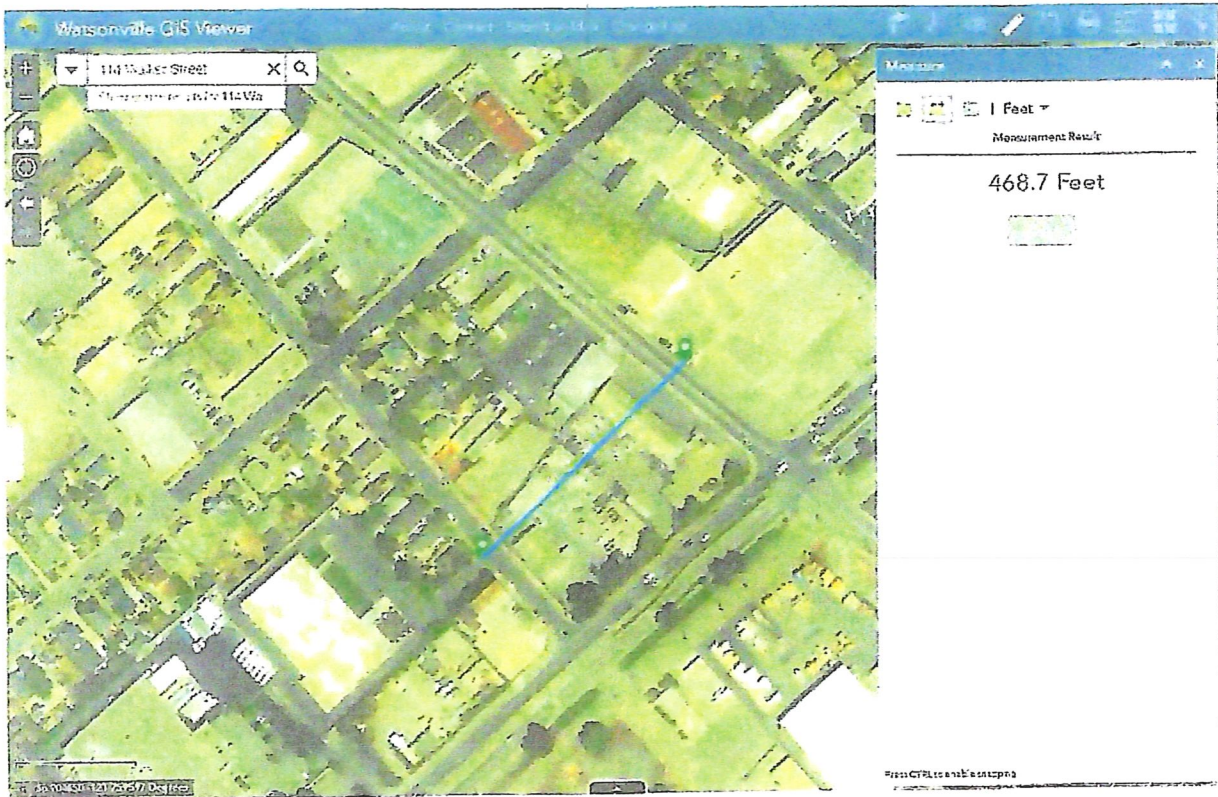


Figure 1. Distance from subject site and school.

Source: City of Watsonville GIS Database

The zoning verification determination measured the property line of the proposed cannabis facility to the property line of Ceiba College Preparatory Academy. The proposed cannabis facility is approximately 468 feet from the school and therefore is **not eligible** for establishing a cannabis facility.

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this letter or the regulatory permit process for the purpose of regulating a cannabis facility, please call me at the number listed below. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Ivan Carmona,
Associate Planner
Community Development Department
(831) 768-3078

831-768-3050
cdd@cityofwatsonville.org
www.cityofwatsonville.org

Community Development Dept.
250 Main Street
Watsonville, CA 95076

From: Ivan Carmona [mailto:ivan.carmona@cityofwatsonville.org]
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 10:48 AM
To: Gregg Walsh <gsw200@aol.com>
Cc: Jason Sweatt <jason@scva.us>
Subject: 114 Walker Street - Previous letter in error

Hello Gregg and Jason,

I am sending this email because I made a mistake in the previous zoning verification letter for 114 Walker Street.

I apologize for my mistake as it may have created an inconvenience for you. My sincere apologies.

Attached you will find the new letter which shows that the subject site, 114 Walker Street is not eligible as a cannabis facility.

In order for the subject site to qualify as a cannabis facility, it needs to meet the following separation requirements.

Separation Requirements

	Cultivation	Manufacture	Distribution	Testing	Retail
School (K-12)*	600'	600'	600'	600'	600'
Park	600'	600'	600'		600'
Residential zone	250'	250'	250'		250'
Legal residential use	100'	100'	100'		100'
Faith based facility, licensed daycare, preschool or library	600'	600'	600'		600'

The distance is measured in three ways:

1. For all facilities, property line to property line measurement from schools.
2. For cultivation, property line of sensitive use to nearest wall of cannabis facility.
3. For all other cannabis facilities, path of travel from sensitive use to main door of the cannabis facility.

The site is 498 Feet from Ceiba College Preparatory Academy located at 260 West Riverside Dr. measured from property line to property line.

Again, my sincerest apologies for my mistake as I had two letters prepared, a denial and the other an approval. I sent the wrong letter by mistake.

If you have any questions please feel free to reach out. Attached is the letter.

Thanks,

Ivan Carmona

Associate Planner

Community Development Department

831-768-3078

ivan.carmona@cityofwatsonville.org



114 Walker Street (Denial).FINAL.pdf
527K

