



## President's Letter



### HELLO AND GOODBYE

Marianne Gawain Even in our generally mild California climate, fall is a transition period, bittersweet as we say goodbye to the dry, golden days of late summer and await the rainy season, hoping it will be generous but not overwhelming.

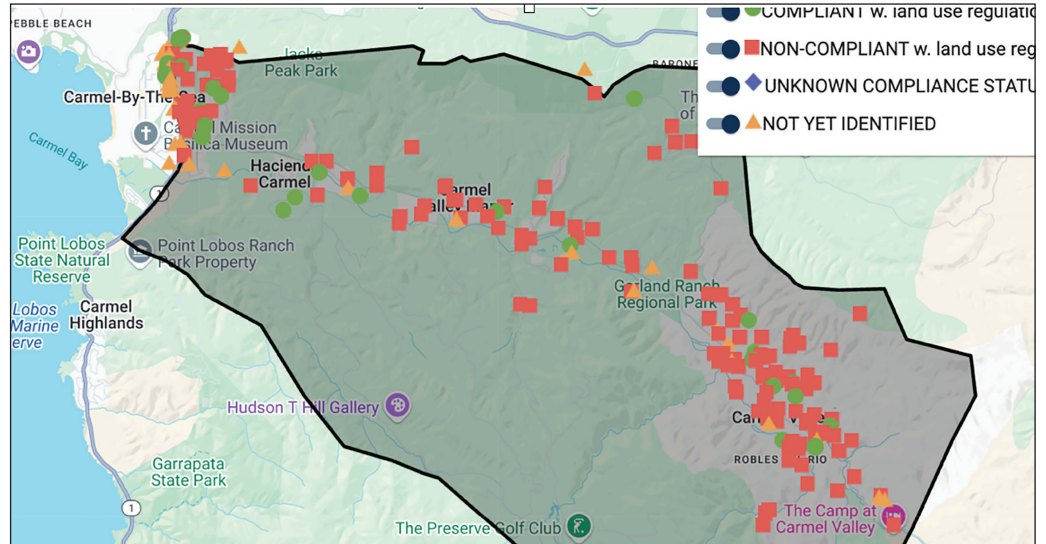
This autumn is a transitional time as well for the CVA and for our area's elected leadership. Before we talk about who's going and who's coming, I want to speak about someone who the CVA board very much hopes will stay right where she is—Amy Anderson, District 5's thoughtful and accomplished representative to the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD). It was Amy's deep concern for ensuring an adequate and affordable water supply that led her to run for this office in 2020; these same priorities have consistently guided her decision-making over the past four years. Amy brings to her water district work both the analytical capacities she developed as a Ph.D. biologist doing marine research and the collaborative management skills she has honed in her decades as artistic director of Chamber Music Monterey Bay. Amy deserves much credit for the strides that MPWMD has made in bringing the Peninsula a sustainable water supply, including the 2250 acre-feet of water forthcoming from the expansion of Pure Water Monterey. The CVA board is proud to endorse Carmel Valley resident Amy Anderson for MPWMD board and urges you to support her when you cast your ballot in the coming days.

On August 31st Pris Walton concluded her term as interim president of CVA. This was a second go-round for Pris, who

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## Supervisors Approve New Vacation Rental Regulations THE NINE-YEAR SLOG!

by Pris Walton and John Heyl



Above map from CVA's subscription to Granicus STR Tracking Data

The Monterey County supervisors agreed to certify the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) and ratify the new vacation ordinances at their meeting August 27th. The goal of the long process to adoption was to preserve neighborhoods in the unincorporated areas while allowing for economic opportunity for owners and quality experiences for visitors. Let's take a look at how these new ordinances came to be.

In July of 2016 the County Short-Term Rental (STR) Working Group convened, bringing together a diverse group of community members to provide guidance and seek consensus on Monterey County STR zoning ordinances. The group determined these underlying elements of policy:

1. Provide opportunity for visitors to access public areas of the county;
2. Preserve the residential character of neighborhoods and zoning districts;
3. Protect public health, safety, resources, and general welfare; and [carmelvalleyassociation.org](http://carmelvalleyassociation.org)

4. Integrate economic opportunity with the preservation of quality of life.

The group also determined that Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) and permit fees should be paid and that code enforcement capabilities needed to be available 24/7.

They also agreed that property owners should be directly responsible for violations that arise and that there should be a limitation on the number of STRs allowed in a given geographical area. The potential impact on available housing stock also needed to be considered, with no more than two people occupying a room and the overall number not exceeding 12 people. Onsite parking needs to be available, and strong enforcement is essential.

The county refined various drafts for the STR ordinances from 2017 through 2024, finally determining that an environmental impact report would be required. CVA weighed in regularly and worked with other groups in the unincorporated area of District 5. In all, it took more than eight

continued on Pg.2





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had previously served as CVA president for seven years. Pris has led the CVA in accomplishments that are too numerous to list. Consider that just during her months as interim head, Pris guided our response to rental ordinance and Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) proposals, pushing to bring county actions into better alignment with the Carmel Valley Master Plan. To the CVA directors who have worked with Pris, her outstanding qualities include the calm, courteous, yet firm manner in which she persuasively conveys her convictions about difficult issues, whether working with fellow residents, elected representatives or county staff. Somehow Pris can start a sentence with, "Well, why don't we ..." and thanks to her balance of warmth, pragmatism and optimism, reset everyone's sense of the possible. Pris's persistence and good humor in the face of setbacks stand as a model to all of us working in the areas of land use planning, community building, and voluntary organizations. We are incredibly fortunate that Pris is staying on as a CVA director. I am honored to succeed her and grateful that she is guiding me as I learn the ropes.

Our departing public servant is 5<sup>th</sup> District Supervisor Mary Adams, who will retire in December at the conclusion of her second term in office. Mary, who is a former Valley resident herself, has consistently championed the needs of her Carmel Valley constituents. She has been a determined advocate for us, whether in response to wildfire and flooding emergencies, ongoing challenges such as road safety and fire prevention, or the need for land use planning that respects Carmel Valley's Master Plan. Special congratulations to Mary on a fitting capstone to her tenure, passage of new vacation rental ordinances that aim to rebalance the short-term rental landscape in support of home hosting over commercial operations in residential neighborhoods. Rumor has it that Mary plans to enjoy some well-deserved travel in coming years--but we can be confident that she'll always find her way back to this beautiful river valley and to her friends who live here. Au revoir, Supervisor Adams!

It's certainly easier to accept Mary's well-earned retirement when we know that the 5<sup>th</sup> District will now be represented by one of the Valley's own, Kate Daniels. It is hard to imagine a more qualified person to take on the supervisory position. As a planning

commissioner who has also served as a policy analyst and advisor to Senator Laird and Supervisor Adams, Kate has an abundance of relevant experience. Moreover, she is friendly and frank, a creative thinker and excellent listener, and possessed of a "can-do" spirit that will no doubt be put to the test by the roller coaster ride that is a supervisor's lot! Welcome, Kate Daniels!

STRs from Pg. 1

years for the final ordinances to be completed and approved.

As the final ratified ordinances indicate, the original STR workgroup was on target. While some details may have been adjusted, essentially the new ordinances fulfill the working group's original concepts.

At both the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisor hearings this summer, ideas for improvement were voiced, some of which were adopted into the final drafts. Everyone is still concerned about enforcement; some would seek more restrictions, others more freedom to operate vacation rentals without regulation.

The county and various stakeholders want to avoid delays in addressing issues that remain such as funding for enforcement, tweaking the limited vacation rental parameters, establishing the smooth and reasonably-priced home-stay and limited ministerial permits, and streamlining the commercial permits.

CVA proposes that, following up on an idea brought forward by Supervisor Church, the county form a vacation rental oversight advisory committee. The committee would report regularly to the supervisors, making recommendations to improve permitting and enforcement and propose needed modifications and amendments to the ordinance itself. An alternative might be to hire a vacation rental oversight team of persons with administrative support experience who would have oversight of STR ordinance implementation and enforcement, monitoring both during the roll out period and suggesting modifications and amendments to the ordinances to CVA and the Board of Supervisors. CVA believes that such oversight is necessary to help our community finally achieve the STR program we need.



# UNCERTAIN FUTURE FOR HISTORIC ROBLES DEL RIO LODGE SITE

By Luana Conley and Marianne Gawain



Site Plan from 2000, by TKD Associates, Inc., Land Planning - Landscape Architecture, Palm Springs

Local residents formed fond memories at Robles del Rio Lodge since its operations began in 1928, of holidays, weddings, and celebrations with family and friends. Over the decades, lodge operations were never intrusive, and the 30-room facility did not interfere with peaceful life in the Robles neighborhood. The CV History Center has Lodge exhibits, and an illustrated monograph is available on the Shop page at [carmelvalleyhistoricalsociety.org](http://carmelvalleyhistoricalsociety.org).

A 1997 plan for luxury condos, with county approval for 24 additional rooms, failed to get off the ground. The property then languished after the 2010 fire reduced it to ashes. The next owner attempted an incongruent row of petunias, which were predictably gobbled by deer, and a few imported palm trees still straggle forlornly. Rumors flew, and neighbors discussed buying the property as a preserve, but everything remained at a standstill until recently.

This year Glen Gurries, whose family bought and managed the lodge beginning in 1985 and sold it in 2012, announced that a Robles Del Rio Carmelo LLC had been formed and had purchased the property. Gurries has recently shared a plan that was drawn up by a landscaping architectural firm in

2000, when the old lodge closed. A permit application, submitted to the county, shows an expanded footprint encompassing 59 suites, two pools, a wellness spa, and many new buildings, and appears out of scale with the neighborhood. Gurries has also mentioned plans for a staging area at the walnut grove parcel at CV Road and Esquiline, with shuttles for supplies, guests, and employees.

A CVA search found that the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District has authorized potable use for the existing irrigation well for a visitor-serving facility, submitted in April 2024, and a county permit for modifications to the T-Mobile tower. The previous permit expired, but as of our publication date, a county representative says the expired permit could be reactivated fairly easily by Gurries if no changes are made to the approved plan.

Should development planning proceed, Valley residents deserve that careful thought be given to reviving the lodge at its historical best, with a rural ambiance and on a modest scale compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Please contact the CVA: [cvvoice@carmelvalleyassociation.org](mailto:cvvoice@carmelvalleyassociation.org) with questions or concerns.

## Storage Unit Project Dev

Story and photos by Paola Berthoin

The Carmel Valley Association is deeply concerned that the storage unit project proposed for land between Chase Bank and the current Storage Pro violates several policies of the Carmel Valley Master Plan (CVMP). The Carmel Valley Land Use Advisory Committee (CVLUAC) recommended, by a 4-0 vote, that the project be returned for redesign, which has yet to happen.



Looking north, this photo shows height and bu

Additionally, this project indicates it may deny access to Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) location site #56 and that it may draw water from wells on that opportunity site. Correspondence from attorneys Moita & Moita indicates that this project is disproportionately seeking 80% of the Federal Acquisition Requirement (FAR), whereas other projects in the region have been limited to 53% FAR. Correspondence from local residents refers to flooding issues on Center Street due to inadequate drainage.



Looking east, this photo storage unit project; as

The submitted plans do not show drainage work indicated for Center Street.

Following are the CVMP policies that this project does not adhere to: (Some of the policies have been abbreviated for this article.)

**CV-1.9** Structures proposed in open grassland areas that would be highly visible from Carmel Valley Road or Laureles Grade shall be minimized in number and be clustered near existing natural or man-



made vertical features.

This proposed storage facility is not in keeping with CV-1.9 as it covers practically 80% of the project's parcel.

**CV-1.14** Provision should be made for service centers in Carmel Valley. They shall be limited to urbanized areas such as the mouth of the Valley, Carmel Valley Village, or Mid-Valley area. Sites shall meet the following criteria: low visibility, safe and unobtrusive access away from pedestrian traffic areas, low noise impact on surrounding uses, conformity with all other plan requirements.

This proposed storage facility violates CV-1.14 because it features highly visible buildings and access is in a residential area.



Bulk of the proposal.

**CV-1.20** Design and site control overlay district designations shall be applied to the Carmel Valley area. Proposed development encourages and furthers the letter and spirit of the Master Plan. Development either shall be visually compatible with



to shows historic trail and height of proposed s presented, the project would block this trail.

the character of the Valley and immediate surrounding areas or shall enhance the quality of areas that have been degraded by existing development. Materials and colors used in construction shall be selected for compatibility with the structural system of the building and with the appearance of the building's natural and man-made surroundings. Structures should be controlled in height and bulk in order to retain an appropriate scale. Development, including road cuts as well as structures, should be located in a manner that continued on Pg. 5

By Terri Tracy, CVAP President

The Carmel Valley Angel Project was founded by Carmel Valley resident Dorothy McEwen (former founder of Digital Research and former owner of the Holman Ranch) in about 1995. It was subsequently incorporated in 2001 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. It has always been a completely volunteer organization with a volunteer board of directors and countless Valley volunteers.

Dorothy's vision recognized various needs of Carmel Valley residents that she hoped to meet through the establishment and continued operation of this project. In particular, her desire was to help Valley residents mingle and enjoy the holidays and also to provide a place for seniors to gather together throughout the year.

As originally conceived, it provided one program for the residents of Carmel Valley, called The Angel Project, which operated a Seniors Program (including a First Monday Free Seniors Lunch) through 2009. The Seniors Program was then turned over to various groups, and there are hopes that it will be revived in the near future.

Not content with the Seniors Program, the organization expanded its community impact to organize and sponsor a Community Thanksgiving Dinner and the Angel Project Holiday Store. For many years, the Community Thanksgiving Dinner had two venues, the Carmel Valley Community Center on Ford Road in Carmel Valley Village, and the Cachagua Community Center. More recently, it has only taken place at the Community Center. It continued to occur even during the pandemic, when "take home" meals were provided.

In 2023, a collaborative effort with the Carmel Valley Kiwanis began, which increased the community benefits of this event. There were 280 reservations. Diners were treated to a free, delicious meal of turkey, dressing, potatoes, green beans, cranberry sauce, and pie. There was music and dancing. Dinners were delivered to 83 residents of Rippling River. Leftovers were delivered to St. Dunstan's church for its homeless program. Turkey remains were turned into turkey noodle soup that was either given free to those in need or used for additional fundraising. All in all, it was



Angel Project photo

a great event that many Valley residents were able to enjoy together.

Mike Thatcher, Carmel Valley Angel Project Vice President, long-time Kiwanian, and well-known Valley activist, praised this joint effort as a renewed effort by both organizations to further the positive impact on Carmel Valley residents.

The Angel Project Store has also changed in recognition of the changing nature of Valley needs. It remains true to its roots, however, as a free "store" set up by volunteers for those who would otherwise have little or no holiday meals or gifts for their children. It is stocked with new jackets and a wide variety of stocking stuffers for children. Valley schools, churches, businesses, other civic organizations, and local residents all pitch in to collect the stocking stuffers and provide the funds to purchase the jackets. Recently, the store has distributed certificates so parents can purchase things that their children need or want.

Carmel Valley Angel Project has continued to fund year-round events for Rippling River residents and recently expanded its partnerships with other local groups to further broaden its community impact.

President Terri Tracy said, "I never had the chance to meet Dorothy. However, I think she would be proud that her vision has been honored and continues to be implemented in her beloved Carmel Valley. It is an exciting time for the Carmel Valley Angel Project. I know our board, our volunteers, our generous donors, and our beautiful Valley residents are up to the challenge! It takes a village for these things to happen, and we certainly have an Angel Village here. Let's keep it going!"

# New CVA President Balances Valley History and Future

by Carolyn Rice

Marianne Gawain, our new CVA president,



Marianne with Clementine

has witnessed huge changes in Carmel Valley since the time she grew up in her family home in Mid-Valley perched above the Carmel River. When she was a youngster, her family could look across the river toward the Carmel Valley

Ranch, then a working cattle ranch, and see open pasture land and hills with cattle, poppies, and lupine. Their family dog, Putter, could cross the Carmel Valley Road and amble down to the river for a swim on a hot day, sometimes triggering a call from the Farm Center owner, reporting on his whereabouts.

Since then, the Valley has grown, developed, and faced many complex issues. As she assumes the CVA presidency, Marianne notes many tough questions, such as “How do we retain the rural character we love and provide housing for our children and co-workers?” Climate resilience, fire and

earthquake preparedness, watershed ecology, and traffic are other issues she fires off in rapid succession for which residents and government officials must plan.

With long blond hair and sparkling eyes, Gawain talks about local issues seriously but about herself more playfully, answering personal questions with lighthearted comments and a chuckle. A proud graduate of York School, she currently serves on its board and on several other nonprofit boards. She focused on public policy in her studies and holds degrees from Stanford, UC Berkeley, and Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government.

For three years she presided over the Monterey County League of Women Voters, a job that calls for nonpartisan investigation of candidates and issues, and she has worked as a public utility regulator. Her experiences have cemented her resolve that organizations such as the CVA, whose board she has served on for several years, must work collaboratively and proactively with county government and other organizations to develop a constructive path forward. She hopes CVA actions will continue to preserve the rural characteristics of Carmel Valley that residents value and that attract visitors as it creates plans to satisfy state regulations on housing and other issues.

Marianne’s personal interests include sewing, cooking, gardening, drawing, photography, and a cat named Reginald who walked in her

door during Covid, and a labradoodle named Clementine. She has two adult daughters, Zoe, an art teacher, and Alida, a psychologist, who both live in New York City.

“I remember my parents reading the Carmel Valley Property Owners newsletter and discussing changes,” recalls Marianne who lives in her 70 year-old family home. She remembers the CVA, as it is now called, as being a constructive force and is looking forward to heading up plans for political advocacy as the organization heads into its 75th year. “It is better to communicate and plan rather than just respond to emergencies that arise,” she said.

### Storage Project, continued from Pg. 3

minimizes disruption of views from existing homes.

**CV-3.3** Development (including buildings, fences, signs, and landscaping) shall not be allowed to significantly block views of the viewshed, the river, or the distant hills as seen from key public viewing areas such as Garland Ranch Regional Park, along Carmel Valley Road, and along Laureles Grade Road. This policy applies to commercial and private parcels including existing lots of record.

This proposed storage facility is not in keeping with either CV-1.20 or CV-3.3 policies as it is not visually compatible with the character of the Carmel Valley and immediate surroundings. It does not enhance the quality of areas that have been degraded by existing development. The structures do not retain appropriate scale, especially when it comes to preserving the viewshed, i.e. views of the hills and riparian area.

**CV-3.14** Wherever possible a network of shortcut trails and bike paths should interconnect neighborhoods, developments, and roads. These should be closed to motor vehicles, and their intent is to facilitate movement within the Valley without the use of automobiles.

This proposed storage facility is not in keeping with CV-3.14 as it will block the historical walking trail from the Robinson Canyon Road bridge to Center Street/Mid-Valley Shopping.

The cumulative approval of projects that deviate, in ways large or small, from the Carmel Valley Master Plan seriously undermines the Valley’s unique character and its livability.

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 Fog after heat wave.

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**DARK SKY UPDATE:**  
**The Monterey County Regional Parks Board voted unanimously to move ahead on Dark Sky International (DSI) recognition for Garland Ranch Regional Park. Their motion authorizes their staff to explore collaboration with CVA and DSI and to pay the initial fee to apply for recognition. More details to follow.**

<b>HOLIDAY DATES</b>	<b>Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony</b> —December 7, 4:30 pm Carmel Valley Community Park	<b>HOLIDAY DATES</b>
	<b>Santa's Fly-In &amp; Parade</b> —December 14—Gather at the airfield	
	<b>Thanksgiving Community Dinner</b> —November 27, 12-3 pm Carmel Valley Community Center Reservations: <a href="http://cvangelproject.org">cvangelproject.org</a>	
	<b>CV Historical Society Christmas Party</b> —December 14, 3-6 pm Carmel Valley History Center	