

Sonoma supervisors postpone hearing on KV winery plan

By Kim Beltran

Tribune Editor

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors Tuesday postponed a public hearing on Jess Jackson's plan to build a winery and tasting room in Knights Valley.

Paul Kelley, the supervisor whose district includes Knights Valley, was called for jury duty and was unable to make the scheduled 2:30 p.m. hearing. It has now been set for 2:45 p.m. on Nov. 4.

Several dozen Knights Valley residents, many members of an organized group opposing the plan, showed up for the hearing, as did Jackson's legal team.

But members of the Maacamas Watershed Alliance (MWA) have hired an attorney of their own, as well as environmental experts, to refute the county's claim that an environmental impact report on the project isn't necessary.

They are also upset that the Board of Supervisors decided to take what is known as "original jurisdiction" of the project, bypassing planning commission hearings and bringing it straight to the board for a decision.

Jackson and his wife, Barbara Banke, want to build a 5,000-case

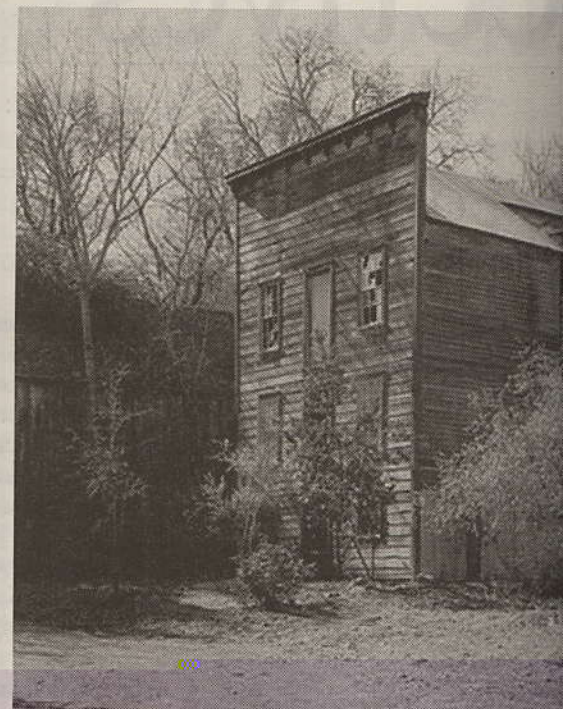
a year winery with a tasting room that is open to the public seven days a week. The Pelton House Winery would also, if approved, have up to four special events a year for up to 200 people.

Neighbors argue that the project "will be precedent-setting in its scope and introduces new land uses in tranquil Knights Valley."

At least one neighbor of the project, Everett and Gloria Ball, support the plan and have been outspoken in their belief that the winery will be "unobtrusive" and will not harm nearby creeks, which supply water to Ball and several other families in the area.

Kelley has said that "the project has been completely reviewed and scrutinized by planning staff like every other winery proposal" and that "there is no preferential treatment in this case; the application is similar to other applications."

Other residents argue that approval of Jackson's plan would be disastrous for their peaceful valley, opening the floodgates for any number of other winery proposals and "commercializing" one of the last unspoiled landscapes between the Napa and Sonoma valleys.



Old Mill Days tur

Old Mill Days at Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park, just south of Calistoga, recreates a 19th Century Napa Valley Harvest when grain, not grapes, was the area's primary crop.

On Saturday, October 18 and Sunday, October 19 visitors can wander down the park's oak-shaded path to experience live old-time music, hands-on crafts, and learn about the grain milling process

of years past.

Old Mill Days handicrafts of the as blacksmithing, lace making and f cornhusk dolls. M Dr. Edward Turne trayed by living h Troy Dunham, wi to share his storie California in the 1 Materials and inst craft making are in the cost of admiss