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Grand Re-opening Today at Vineyard Park

From above, the new configuration of amenities at Yountville's Vineyard Park reveal four pickleball courts, one tennis court, public exercise pad, outdoor fitness equipment, half basketball court, picnic tables, public restroom, walking paths, water station, drainage improvements and new landscaping. The public ribbon cutting ceremony at 5:30 p.m. today (October 18) will celebrate the completion of this major renovation. (Photos taken by drone courtesy of John Mullins.)

Elyse Winery Sold to Locals

Something rare these days has happened in the wine business in Napa Valley.

Two locals who started their own winery here 30 years ago have sold it to two younger locals who will continue to make wine at Elyse Winery, situated south of Yountville's Town limits.

Elyse founders and operators Ray and Nancy Coursen announced the sale of their business yesterday through winebusiness.com.

The sales price was not disclosed.

Elyse currently produces under 10,000 cases annually.

The Coursens started Elyse Winery in 1987 with 286 cases of Zinfandel. After a decade of nomadic winemaking at various custom crush facilities, they purchased a small winery and vineyard on Hoffman Lane in 1997. It became and still is the site of the Elyse Winery and tasting room.

The new owners are Yountvillians Josh Peeples and Cheryl Foil and other undisclosed investors. Both Peeples and Foil have extensive business experience.

Peeples, 41, has multiple associations with Napa Valley wines, including the Addax, Chateau Boswell and Bure Family

labels. He told winebusiness.com he had been looking for a permanent home for wine labels and that a new label, Institution, is planned.

Foil, whose background is in computers and venture capitalism, is new to the wine industry.

The purchase includes the winery, the inventory, a two-bedroom cottage and about an acre of vineyards.

Ray and his son Jacob will retain the rights to the Jacob Franklin label, with an annual production of about 600 cases.

Ray said the young blood coming in now is a positive change for the winery.

The sale started about six months ago, when Ray, who turned 70 this year, mentioned he was ready to retire.

Peeples, Elyses' new chief executive officer, said the business will employ five employees, including long-time Elyse winemaker Mike Trotta. Nate Reeves will join the team as associate winemaker.

"One thing I've found so enjoyable," said Nancy as she looked back on the experience, "is that I have continued to learn so much on my feet over a course of 30 years."

Public Weighs In on General Plan Draft's Areas of Change at Community Open House

By Devon Avery

The first public draft of the updated Town of Yountville General Plan is available online at www.envisionyountville.com, and it was the subject of a community-wide open house last Saturday.

Over 60 residents and interested parties listened to an overview provided by consultant Christine O'Rourke and Town Planning Director Sandra Liston and were then invited to offer their direct feedback.

Large poster boards were arranged around the Generations Room, each asking for community input on a different topic: Built environment (land use and mobility), natural environment (open space and conservation) and safe environment (hazards and noise).

Armed with sticky green and red dots, attendees attached a "go" or a "stop" indication of their preference for the various options detailed in this first draft.

Liston advised those options are still in concept form and have been derived thus far from previous public meetings, Council discussions and Town Advisory Group findings.

Post-it notes were also available for those wishing to offer more detailed thoughts, compliments or criticism and to pose questions.

Participants took full advantage of all forms of communication, adorning the boards with lots of red and green dots and Post-it notes. A staff member was also available at each station to offer explanations, answer questions and provide comment cards.

Importantly, there are "four areas of change" embedded in the new draft plan, all of which drew strong responses, pro and con. Acknowledging slow growth over the next 20 years, the draft plan identifies these areas as opportunities for development and/or redevelopment. All four attracted their fair share of dots.

Permitting three-story buildings along the west side of Washington Street elicited written concerns ranging from parking to view restrictions.

Rezoning the remaining six residential parcels on the east side of North Washington Street to allow for mixed use also drew criticism.

Notably, there were some fans of both these proposals as well.

The proposal to rezone the two, 5,000 sq. ft. residential lots on Humboldt to commercial/residential garnered as many green as red dots.

The strongest areas of approval were seen for amending the master plan for the Vista Condominiums to allow a second story and to consider use of "dark sky lighting principles" in the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance, which would be designed to cast very little light upward in public areas, thereby letting the night sky prevail.

View corridors are of univer-

sal concern in this small valley town blessed with stunning mountain ranges to the east and west. A subject in the last General Plan update in 1992 as well, the same view designations will be included again with an additional one in town.

People seemed generally pleased with the process as it has unfolded. Those who have attended several of the earlier planning meetings felt that the ideas and previous feedback offered then had made their way into this draft and were pleased to learn that their voices have been heard.

The open process and public interaction has made a difference to most, although some still feel a more conversational approach, in which residents could debate the pros and cons, would be preferable over merely addressing the audience followed by a Q&A session.

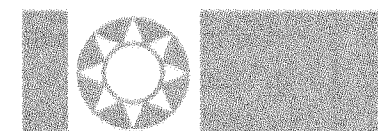
A number of participants expressed continued concern regarding three-story structures on Washington Street, while conceding they might defer if the right restrictions are observed.

The overall sentiment was one of relief that the process is still in motion and changes will continue to be incorporated.

Not addressed in this plan are the challenges of how the town has changed with the influx of many part-time homeowners. A few participants theorized that the rather small attendance at this meeting itself implies a lack of hometown commitment. With that loss, they fear a slow decline of loyalty to small town values.

There are several more opportunities for public comment, as the plan is still in draft form. An online survey will be available soon. E-comments as well as attendance at each November Commission meeting and the Council meeting in December are all welcome and encouraged.

Go to www.townofyountville.com and www.envisionyountville.com to see meeting dates and/or offer e-comments.



sundial

	High	Low
Wednesday 10/10	74	47
Thursday	78	45
Friday	88	44
Saturday	80	42
Sunday	82	42
Monday	85	51
Tuesday	83	40
Precipitation =	nil	
Season Total =	0.47	
Last Year =	0	