

**Mono County  
Community Development Department**

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**Planning Division**

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**June Lake Highlands Specific Plan  
Amendment #2 and modification to Tract  
Map #34-24 and #34-26**

COMMENT LETTERS RECEIVED BY 06/17/2020, 4:30PM

Steve Amante  
Kurt Erikson  
Judy & Jim Robinson  
Gary Johanson  
Christine Tobin-Smith  
Douglas Smith & Christine Tobin-Smith  
Glen & Carrie Davies

**From:** [Steve Amante](#)  
**To:** [CDD Comments](#)  
**Subject:** June Lake Highlands  
**Date:** Monday, June 15, 2020 1:34:36 PM

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Hello,

My name is Steve Amante and I am a property owner in the June Lake Highlands sub-division.

The purpose of this email is to provide comments with regards to the amendments that are being considered by the commission. We purchased this property last year with the plan to build a second home for our family. One of the appealing aspects was that it was a quiet area of June Lake where no transient rentals were allowed.

I would like to communicate my opposition to the proposed amendments. I believe allowing transient rentals will have a negative impact on the overall sub-division and jeopardize the appeal that drew us to purchasing a lot there.

At the last meeting in May it was discussed that the commission was not clear on the property owner's position with regards to this matter. It was decided to re-notice the property owners with the objective to determine if they were in favor or opposed the amendments. I was anticipating a notice that would allow owners to identify their position and return it to you so you could determine the number or percentage of owners who were in favor or opposed.

Unfortunately, if people do not provide comment either via email or during the meeting the commission will still not have a clear understanding of how the owners feel about the matter.

I truly hope that the commission votes to oppose these amendments.

Regards,  
Steve Amante.

**From:** [Kurt Erikson](#)  
**To:** [Michael Draper](#); [Charlott Erikson](#); [Kurt Erikson](#)  
**Subject:** My comments for tomorrows meeting June 18, 2020  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 17, 2020 8:20:48 AM

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**Hi Michael,**

I will not be able to log into the meeting tomorrow but wanted to give you my comments for the commission below.

Dear planning commission and Highland residents

My name is Kurt Erikson. My address is 16 Alderstrasse and we live directly next to the Interlaken condominiums. I am for short term transient rental approval in the highlands.

I listened to the last meeting on May 21 and wanted to give my perspective on some of the comments that were made.

We built our property ourselves and have spent a lot of the last 3 years in June Lake. Being a next door neighbor I had the opportunity to meet many short term renters from Interlaken. I found that almost everyone I met had been coming to June Lake for years and some for generations. Almost all were families. We have not heard excessive noise trash or partying from Interlaken. I have a smart home with cameras and have never had a trespasser on the building site either. We are looking forward to sharing our home with people like I have met from Interlaken if approval is granted for short term rentals in the Highlands.

### **Home Values**

My opinion is the opposite to the comments I heard from the last meeting. I believe short term transient rental will increase property values in the Highlands. Not many home buyers can afford to purchase a custom home and keep it empty for 10 months out of the year. Many potential buyers in the future will see the opportunity for short term rental approval to help pay the cost of ownership. This will increase property values. A no to short term rentals will limit the highlands only for the rich.

### **Impact on Nature**

With forest service land surrounding June Lake there is limited population growth for our community. The highland is a planned community with architectural restrictions and limited capacity. The Highlands is limited in capacity. I believe that short term rental approval will not change the charm and amazing nature of June Lake.

### **Impact on Community**

June lake needs more lodging. Short Term rental approval for the highlands will help local business gain from short term renters purchases year round instead of homeowners that come only 2 months out of the year.

**Best Regards**  
**Kurt Erikson**  
**760 818 5162**

**From:** [Judy Robinson](#)  
**To:** [CDD Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [jjr@cox.net](mailto:jjr@cox.net)  
**Subject:** Specific Plan Amendment and Tract Map Amendments 34-24 and 34-26My  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 4:32:19 PM

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## Secretary of the Planning Commision

My husband and I bought a lot in the Highlands in about 2003 and completed our home in 2005. We bought the property with certain CC and R's and followed the guidelines. We love the area and spend 1 or 2 weeks a month here.

We received notice that Mr Larson wanted to change many of the unsold lots to allow permits to have transient rentals. We were asked if we wanted to be in this group allowing rentals or decline. I believe to maintain property value it would be better to have this added feature wether or not you intend to rent your home. We opted into the group.

I firmly believe the Highlands Specific plan should be the same for all homeowners in the area. All Highlands homeowners should have the right to apply for permits. With the application they should show that they have off street parking to accommodate at least 2 vehicles. Three complaints from neighbors on their proximal street would invalidate their permit . Permits would not be issued for vacant lots. A home must be on the property to verify the off street parking. Because of snow and plows no street parking should be allowed. Perhaps no rentals in the winter months .

Changing the Specific Plan should be voted on by owners, not and outside party.

Best,

Judy & Jim Robinson  
173 Mountain Vista Rd  
June Lake  
805-570-5555

Gary Johanson  
10521 Blockade Drive  
Reno, NV 93529  
775 560-9031  
June 16, 2020

Secretary, Mono County Planning Commission  
PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Secretary,

I am writing to express my opposition to the June Lake Highlands Specific Plan Amendment and Tract Map Amendments 34-24 and 34-26 which would allow owner occupied and non-owner-occupied transient rentals (less than 30 days).

Let me start by expressing my recognition that June Lake's economy depends heavily on tourism. As a second homeowner, I am also a tourist. The tourists need a place to stay when they come to the Eastern Sierra. However, the solution to this housing issue does not require turning the Highlands into a neighborhood of short-term rentals.

In the 18 years since the first phase of the Highlands development was approved by the County, a dozen houses have been built. That averages out to one house built every 1.5 years. Given the high cost of house construction in June Lake and the less expensive option of buying an existing home in June Lake or the surrounding area, it is unlikely that the existing rate of home construction in the Highlands will accelerate any time soon. About half of the Highland homeowners have publicly stated their opposition to short-term rentals, so a change in the rules to allow short-term rentals would contribute little to the issue of housing tourists. Secondly, building sites in the Highlands were sold with the understanding that the area was not designated for short-term rentals. The County's approval of the first phase of the Highlands was silent when it came to short-term rentals and the County's approval of the second phase of the Highlands specifically prohibited this usage.

I disagree with the Mono County Development Department Planning Division's May 21, 2020 recommendations that the proposed modification(s) allowing short term rentals "do not impose any additional burdens on the present owner of the property" and that the change "will not have a substantial adverse effect on surrounding properties." If the proposed change is approved, Highlands residents who do not rent out their properties will suffer adverse quality of life consequences due to their neighbors' rentals with no economic gain. Furthermore, it is likely the change to a neighborhood populated with short-term rentals will result in a decrease in property values for homeowners who do not participate in the short-term rental program. This is because a large percentage of short-term renters, particularly skiers, unwind after a day on the slopes by drinking, playing loud music and excitedly recalling the day's highlights. Nothing wrong with that. My brother Ed has been a full-time resident and homeowner in the June Lake Village area since 1982 and over the years I frequently visited and contributed my share of celebratory noise to that neighborhood.

The Village is approved for short-term rentals and it is understood that the venerable Tiger Bar, the brewery, the ski boot cloggers and late-night revelers come with the territory. However, the late-night uproar and parked cars outside his house proved too much for a friend and long-time June Lake village homeowner who lived next door to a rental house in the Village. He sold out and moved away 1-1/2 years ago.

My experience visiting my brother and other friends in the June Lake Village explains why, after looking at building lots in all the neighborhoods of June Lake, my wife and I chose a lot in the upper reaches of the Highlands, as far away as we could get from street lights, traffic noise and loud neighbors. We just wanted a peaceful getaway with dark skies and no barking dogs, a sentiment shared by my two closest Highland neighbors. We found that location at 176 Highland Drive.

I cannot reconcile my experience and the experience of June Lake residents I know with a statement in Mono County Resolution R20-02, Section Three, which states, "Single family homes that are rented on a transient basis will still be used a single family home and in a manner that is not substantially different from how they would be used if they were occupied by full-time residents or long-term renters ... As a result, rental of a single-family residence is not an expansion of use, and is no more intensive or impactful than for example, conversion of single-family residence to office use." Homeowners using their vacation home on an occasional basis are, with rare exceptions, much quieter and respectful of the neighborhood tranquility than short-term renters who are more inclined to party late into the night and crowd numerous people into "single family residences." Comparing the noise level of a short-term rental to an office makes no sense. Offices are generally low key and relatively quiet when people work during the day and they are vacant in the evening. I guess an office would be like a short-term rental if the office employees were enjoying a late evening alcohol-fueled holiday party.

When I shared my concerns with Mono County, I was referred to Chapter 26 of the Development Standards, which is titled Transient Rental Standards and Enforcement. This document details the rules of conduct covering rental properties and provides an administrative mechanism for enforcement of the rules. It looks good on paper, but it has the hallmarks of a cumbersome and lengthy administrative process which would likely require the reporting of multiple violations before any significant action was taken against the property owner. I try to get along with my neighbors and would not be inclined to report a violation of transient rental standards to the authorities. Better to not allow transient rentals and head off the problems before they occur. I find the rental standards notable because they do not require fire sprinklers in rental properties, yet I was required to have sprinklers in my house.

Instead of approving a conversion to short-term rentals for a handful of homeowners in the Highlands, I recommend the County focus its attention on the shortage of affordable housing in June Lake and throughout Mono County. When the first phase of the Highlands project was approved by the County nearly twenty years ago, it allowed for 39 single family lots and up to 114 multi-family units. The multi-family units were to be built adjacent to the Interlaken development. Whatever happened to those multifamily units? At least some of them would have been suitable for short-term rentals.

Thank you for your review and consideration of this letter.

Respectfully,  
E/s,  
Gary Johanson

**From:** [Christine Tobin-Smith](#)  
**To:** [CDD Comments](#)  
**Subject:** J.L. Highlands tract amendments 34-24 & 34-26  
**Date:** Friday, June 12, 2020 2:41:54 PM  
**Attachments:** [Highlands\[1285\].pdf](#)

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Dear Planning Commission Secretary,  
Please see attached letter regarding the June Lake Highlands Specific Plan Amendment.  
Kindly confirm receipt.  
Thank you,  
Christine Tobin-Smith

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.  
[www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

Douglas Smith  
Christine Tobin-Smith  
P.O. Box 21  
June Lake, CA 93529  
APN # 015-290-009-000

June 11, 2020

Dear Planning Commission Secretary:

The June Lake Highlands is an upscale development where we chose to build our home in 2006 at 193 Mountain Vista Drive. The developer had strict architectural guidelines for each home constructed designed to protect the values of all the properties.

We are one of the few homeowners which live in the Highlands full time. It is our preference that the Planning Commission deny the request for short term rentals, however, if the Commission chooses to approve the amendments, I strongly urge the Commission to make conditions that provide existing owners whom have built that their applications would be processed and not blocked out by a percentage threshold.

1. The Highlands has poor snow removal. The County sometimes does not clear the roads until the afternoon.
2. The development was not designed with adequate parking for short term rentals. When homes are rented short term there are often more cars than parking available. It is in our CC & R's that cars must be parked off the street.
3. Short term rentals change the quiet and peaceful nature of the Highlands into a party atmosphere.
4. For the developer to change the CC&R's for his interest and financial gain is incorrect and selfish. It erodes the atmosphere which the Highlands currently represent. Which is the attraction of the current home owner's
5. To change the architectural design and requirements at the current level will devalue the current homes values.
6. The greater percentage of property owners which are in favor of short term rentals are second home owners looking for income. They will not be here and will not feel the impact that short term rentals may create.
7. If the amendment is approved we would want the opportunity to be included in the rental program.

Sincerely,  
Douglas Smith  
Christine Tobin-Smith



**From:** [Carrie Davies](#)  
**To:** [CDD Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Highland Amendment Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 17, 2020 3:01:48 PM

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I would like to voice our Opposition to the Highland Specific Plan Amendment. When the Highland properties went on the market it was clear to local homeowners that we would not be dealing with the inherent problem of more transient rentals. The Highland properties are large, larger groups and bigger parties, which is not consistent with the peaceful town that we have been living in for the past 20 years. On financial benefit, If Mono County allows the Highland transient Amendment, the consequence is a direct competition on the local rental establishments that have supported the June Lake community for years. These local rental establishments have provided verified tax revenue to our community as well. The Highland Transient rental market would not be a reliable tax stream, many rental websites don't require paying local taxes at all, the county task of trying to catch tax evaders impossible. The purpose of changing a Specific Plan is to enhance the quality of life in the community, or to improve public safety and none of these objectives will be served under the Specific Plan Amendments changes.

I have not seen any clear evidence stating that changes to June Lake Specific Plan provides any real benefit other than to the owners of the Highlands properties.

More trash, traffic and noise would be an unnecessary burden on the current rental establishments and June Lake residences. Please deny the June Lake Highlands Specific Plan Amendment.

Respectfully,

Glen & Carrie Davies