August 2, 2022
County of Marin/ Coastal commission
Regarding: Robert Giacomini Dairy request for Coastal Permit for Well Drilling

Robert Giacomini Dairy is requesting a permit for a new well on the property. Considering recent drought years, we feel it is imperative to our dairy operation, creamery, and existing employee housing to generate more water on our property to be sustainable. We hauled water from June to October in 2021 during the worst drought year since the 1970’s. This impacted us financially, extended our labor resources, not to mention an excess increased fuel usage and added transportation on the highways. The well we have identified is located 3,000 feet from the center of the farm where the buildings and utilities are housed. It is in a remote open area of the farm, not impacting any wildlife or natural habitats. I wanted to add the potential to lose livestock. This is probably one of the most important points, if the drought continues and we do not have new water resources we will have loss of livestock life. In June of 2021, we started to regularly review our water inventory and number of cows on the farm. We considered culling cows to conserve water. This would affect our entire operation. If we downsized the animals, we would have to purchase milk to supplement the loss in milk from our herd for our creamery and that would cost more and effect our financial stability as an operation. If we need to cull cows, we will also need to eliminate jobs to take care of less animals. The Governor of Ca has proclaimed a state of emergency related to the drought. We feel we need to be prepared and knowing we may have a well source on the property would help immensely.

We currently have an allocation of water from NMWD at 6,000/gal/day, we have 2 wells that are producing approximately 10 gal/min and the other is 5 gal/min but not consistently throughout the year because it dries up. Both wells decreased significantly last year. The aquifer is not replenishing fast enough and the well had run dry and the pump stops. We are looking for a better water supply. We hauled water last June through October, putting a financial strain on the company and not to mention resources to haul the water.
City water is being used for housing only. The well water is used for the creamery and dairy. Our 2019 and 2020 total usage was approximately 12,000/day. Since June 2020 we have implemented more water saving programs on the farm to decrease our usage about 25% to approximately 8,000 to 9,000/gal/day. In the last two years we have installed a water reclamation system to reuse the dairy sanitation water to improve the operation. We have also installed Milking robots that use less water in the milking process. We mandated 25% decrease water usage for on farm residents and work space environment. Having implemented all these programs, we continue to look for more secure water resources. We foresee Climate Change and the ongoing in and out drought becoming the norm, and a productive well will help continue to run our operation.

I hope this helps describe our urgency. I also want to mention that Well drillers are booked 8 to 10 months in advance. We scheduled the well driller to drill at the end of July (1) to hopefully have an active well supplying water by the end of summer and (2) we were told that we needed to drill the well before the coastal permit so they could test the water first (and verify if there was water). I thought we were following the process and now the concern is that it could take longer, and we may not have the well water available until later this year and thus be subject to hauling water again this year.

Sincerely,

Devan Giacomini
Owner
Rbt. Giacomini Dairy Inc.