
From: Epi DeLeon < . n>
Sent: Monday, July 21, 2025 10:06 PM
To: Clerk of the Board
Cc: project@carnelianhome.com
Subject: Regarding County File # CDLP23-02046
Attachments: Physician Letter.pdf

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Dear District 2 Supervisor Candace Andersen,

Please see attached Physician Letter in support of The Carnelian.

Thank you,
Epifanio de Leon. MD

fax (800) 508-4347

<https://www.doximity.com/pub/epifanio-deleon-md>

<https://www.johnmuirhealth.com/doctor/Epifanio-DeLeon-MD/1124194907>

EPIFANIO DE LEON, MD

MEDICAL LICENSE A75985

DEA BD7773042 NPI 1124194907

<https://www.doximity.com/pub/epifanio-deleon-md>

PHYSICIAN ATTESTATION

07/18/2025

Regarding County File #CDLP23-02046

Dear District 2 Supervisor Candace Andersen,

My submission of this letter is to explain why the Carnelian Expansion Project should move forward from a physician's perspective. I share not only my views, but those of my clinic's and Hospice physician colleagues.

I have been a doctor to patients of The Carnelian for 23 years, since 2002. My clinic is 1.5 miles away. Initially, The Carnelian would bring patients to my office for routine visits. In 2013, I added Hospice services to my practice and began seeing terminally ill patients in-person at The Carnelian. By 2014, I was driving to 6 Bay Area counties to see Hospice patients. Few people have personally visited as many Board & Care facilities in the Bay Area as I have. This is why I feel confident in my assessment.

I can wholeheartedly say that there is not even a close 2nd place Board & Care facility when compared to The Carnelian. There is above and beyond, and there is way past above and beyond. The people at Carnelian continually think about how to make their ecosystem better. Upon entering the facility, one notices their secure yet subtle security measures. At the front door there is always masks, hand sanitizer, and gloves provided. The bedrooms consist of newly laundered linens and towels, freshly wiped wheelchairs, and even the garbage cans are clean. But what really stands out is the detailed décor, the live music, and the fresh smells. Inside and outside is filled with beautiful flowers and trees. There is the aroma of fresh, homemade bread or soup. The counters have perfectly arranged presentations of oranges, apples, bananas, and all in-season fruit available for all residents, families, and visitors. And the meals are 5-star restaurant level, made by their amazing, hand-picked chefs.

The care provided is outstanding. No facility can boast the near-zero bed sore statistics that The Carnelian has. This is a testament to their staff ratios and attention to detail. They truly live by the healthcare mantra, "The secret to caring for the patient is caring for the patient." In my career of tending to end-of-life patients, no facility has demonstrated love towards patients the way that the staff at The Carnelian does. The patients are treated as family, and they feel it. This is truly heartwarming.

The home blends in with all other homes in the neighborhood. And in my 12 years of visiting, I have never encountered traffic congestion or difficulty parking.

To anyone acquainted with The Carnelian, it is absolutely no surprise that there is always a long waiting list for a room. There is no place I would rather be when my time comes. It is for all of these reasons that The Carnelian has earned this need to expand. For the good of our community, please take high priority in upholding the Zoning Administrator's and the County Planning Commission's decision to approve this project. If you have any questions at all, please call or email me.



Epifanio de Leon, MD

From: Renée Boone
Sent: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 2:32 AM
To: Clerk of the Board
Cc: project@carnelianhome.com
Subject: Letter of Support for The Carnelian

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Dear Supervisor Candace Andersen,

This letter is written in support of The Carnelian Home.

Since 2020, my family has been supported and loved by the Carnelian family and staff. Without their efforts, we would not have been able to provide my mom with dignified and unfailing comfort during her most dire time of need. In addition to what Carnelian provided to her directly, they gave our entire family an understanding and wisdom that sustained us.

We recognize that not everyone is fortunate enough to find a care facility as warm and welcoming as that of The Carnelian, but every effort they make to provide such a place is to be commended and condoned, not constricted nor curtailed. Their work for the greater good should not be diminished by a few.

Please know that our personal feelings are shared by countless others. No one ever visits The Carnelian without remarking on the abundance of warmth and professionalism that is consistent and present throughout the home. Given the horror stories we have all seen, heard or feared about the low standard of care found in too many facilities for the aging, we hope and pray that The Carnelian's place in the community as a safe refuge will remain and grow in the years to come, offering peace and relief to many, many families and standing as a leader and example of what exceptional care-giving looks like.

Sincerely,

Renée Smith Boone

From: Tim Boone <timboone@carnelianhome.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 7:33 AM
To: Renée Boone
Cc: Clerk of the Board; project@carnelianhome.com
Subject: Re: Letter of Support for The Carnelian

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I think it's perfect!

On Tue, Jul 22, 2025 at 2:32 AM Renée Boone <rsmithboonie@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Supervisor Candace Andersen,

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Please know that our personal feelings are shared by countless others. No one ever visits The Carnelian without remarking on the abundance of warmth and professionalism that is consistent and present throughout the home. Given the horror stories we have all seen, heard or feared about the low standard of care found in too many facilities for the aging, we hope and pray that The Carnelian's place in the community as a safe refuge will remain and grow in the years to come, offering peace and relief to many, many families and standing as a leader and example of what exceptional care-giving looks like.

Sincerely,

Renée Smith Boone

To: Supervisor Candance Andersen,

My name is Alison Albert. I'm a Recreation Therapist with 35 years of experience in health care and have been an independent contractor at The Carnelian Assisted Living for nearly 5 years. Throughout my career across the Western United States and Canada in various facilities, including hospitals, skilled nursing, and assisted livings, I have not come across one as unique as The Carnelian. It excels in providing exceptional care, a home-like environment, family and community inclusion and a high quality of life for seniors. Their formula makes them one of the premier facilities in Northern California, if not in the Western United States, and it should serve as a model for senior care institutions across the country. That being said, the owner's siblings recognize the necessity for expansion to enhance the experience of their facility in the community. This facility is a Recreational Therapist dream, along with the multitude of activities provided to improve the quality of life for their seniors, the addition of their Garden, the "Crown Jewel" of their facility provides a home like environment that is beyond compare. Home being the key word.

Seniors the wise and wonderful backbone members of our residential communities. Have raised families, built friendships and watched the world change from their front porches. They deserve to feel safe, valued and connected. But let's be honest: aging in a place can come with challenges. Mobility, access to

health care, social isolation-these are real concerns. As a community, we must ask ourselves: what are we doing to make life easier, safer and more meaningful for our older residents. Creating home-like, senior friendly residential facilities like the Carnelian provides health care, social activities and the dignity of independence. Programs like community gardening, seniors walking through Saranap and intergenerational events are not just “nice extra’s” – they’re bridges. They help connect generations and remind us all that aging isn’t about decline, it’s about legacy and continued contribution. All things the Carnelian Sibling owners are trying to share and expand with this project.

To our seniors: we see you we honor you, and we are grateful for the foundation you’ve built. To everyone else: Lets’ make sure our neighborhood aren’t just places to live-but places where people of every age feel truly at home.

From: Benjamin Dunphy
Sent: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 9:27 AM
To: Clerk of the Board
Cc: project@carnelianhome.com
Subject: Letter of support: County File # CDLP23-02046

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Dear Supervisor Candace Andersen,

I am writing to express my support of the applicant for County File # CDLP23-02046, Carnelian Assisted Living. Below is a copy of the public comment I presented for the Planning Commission on April 23, 2025.

In today's appeal, the opposition argues the current expansion will lead to the following issues:

1. Safety - more people is a safety hazard, especially in an emergency that requires evacuation.
2. Incompatibility - it's a commercial building that doesn't fit well with the neighborhood
3. Development and property values - Construction is a disturbance and property values will decrease

So I found it quite interesting to watch the opposition's own attorney stand at this podium to invalidate each of these points. When Mr. Bovee argued that their concerns would be satisfied not by stopping the expansion directly, but by making this into a single story building, it was a direct argument against each of the opposition's core arguments.

Moreover, a single story is not without impact – it would require construction on an existing building which would displace 9 residents, require layoffs, and impact the financial viability of the company.

As to other arguments, that "This is a large overpowering structure":

This is simply not true. The Carnelian is placing its second story a full 25 feet BEHIND the existing 1-story building facade. That's a full 55 feet from the sidewalk. Add in the canopy of trees that cover the area, plus the existing cypress trees on the side property fence, and you will barely even notice it unless you're actively looking for it. And it's 14 feet from the side fence, not 10.

And as opposition's own attorney stated for the record: he went to visit the Carnelian and couldn't find it because it blended in with the neighborhood so well. The current expansion is done in a respectful manner that maintains this character. As to disturbance from construction: Construction is a fact of life, things need to get built, maintained, improved. The very homes the opposition live in at one time were constructed, and at some point will require maintenance or expansion.

I empathize with the arguments of traffic safety. I have a 19-month old and the street we live on a residential street where traffic still exists. This is just the reality of living in a high-density area such as the Bay Area. There is no evidence to suggest any of the incidents brought up by opposition today are a direct result of the Carnelian's operations.

I just wanted to close with a bit of context: it was the State of CA Licensing Division that requested the Carnelian Assisted Living to be built. In 1970, they called RCFE pioneer Doreen Dubose out of retirement to request that she do for Contra Costa County what she did for Marin County. Ms. Dubose came out of retirement to establish the Carnelian, and she chose Saranap largely for its proximity to Rossmore. Ms. Dubose is the grandmother of the applicants Jay, Adlai, and Katherine, and they continue her legacy today.

I urge you to affirm the prior rulings of the Zoning Administrator and the Planning Commission and to approve the application.

Thank you,

Benjamin Dunphy

1 Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

From: Adlai Grutas
Sent: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 9:36 AM
To: Clerk of the Board
Cc: Katherine Dunphy; Jay Grutas
Subject: Carnelian Project: CDLP23-02046 - A. Grutas Opening Statement
Attachments: Public Hearing Opening Speech 2025.07.22.pdf

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Good morning,

Attached is my opening statement, which I will be presenting at today's Board of Supervisors public hearing. I hope it provides a clear and concise overview of our goals, mission for care and vision.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration,

Adlai Grutas

Carnelian Assisted Living

Phone (925) 938-0200

Direct (925) 478-7557

Email agrutas@carnelianhome.com



The Carnelian exists to serve seniors and their families with the intention of building relationships filled with affection, dignity, and hope

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The Honorable Board of Supervisors
Contra Costa County Administration
1025 Escobar Street
Martinez, CA 94553

RE: Carnelian Holdings LLC County File # CDLP23-02046

Opening Speech

Good afternoon Supervisors, neighbors, and fellow community members.

My name is Adlai Grutas, and I am one of the owners of The Carnelian—a small assisted living and memory care home here in Saranap.

Over these past months - through hearings with the Zoning Administrator and Planning Commission - we have discussed the evolution of this project. We have presented our plans, demonstrated our commitment to community engagement, actively listened to feedback from both the community and county, and made meaningful changes to our project based on that valuable feedback. We come before you today with a project that is stronger and more responsive because of that process.

As we return today seeking final approval for our expansion project, I want to step back from those technical details for a moment. Instead, I want to share something we haven't fully explored together. Behind every measurement on our blueprints, behind every design choice we've made, lies a philosophy. Today, I want to share the 'why' behind our proposal — our fundamental belief about creating a truly exceptional environment for seniors. This project is more than a building; it is the physical embodiment of our philosophy on senior care.

Our mission is simple: We exist to serve seniors and their families with the intention of building relationships filled with affection, dignity, and hope.

That mission began in 1973, when my grandmother, Doreen Dubose, moved to this neighborhood with a quiet but revolutionary idea: that seniors deserve something better than institutions. That they deserve homes. That even in the hardest moments of aging, there is still joy, connection, and purpose.

We carry her vision forward today, and it guides us as the needs of our community evolve. Now, as more families face the complex reality of dementia, her core belief that care must honor the person remains our bedrock. That is why we see a memory care diagnosis not as an ending, but as a calling—a call to lead with greater compassion and to honor the humanity that always remains.

So, what does that truly human approach look like? A story from my sister and co-owner, Katherine, is the best answer I know.

She told me about our resident Bob who joined us last October. Bob was living with Alzheimer's, and his time with us was brief—but I have to say, his impact was lasting.

Just before Halloween, our team had transformed the Carnelian driveway into a pumpkin patch. Bob was captivated. As he admired the decorations, He gently gestured for Katherine to follow him across the street. He didn't say much, but positioned her to stand beside him and look back at their work from a distance.

"Now look," he said.

Katherine said that from across the street, she saw their work differently—the colors, the scale, the joy. In that quiet moment, Bob gave her a gift: the perspective to see the full beauty of what they were creating.

Bob's gift to Katherine is our 'why'—a quiet call to always look deeper at what care, community, and presence can mean.

That quiet call from Bob—to be truly present—is not just about a single moment. It's about where we root ourselves. It's why we believe so strongly that this kind of care shouldn't be separated by gates or isolated on the city's commercial artery, away from the familiar sights and sounds of home. It belongs here, as a quiet and steady presence in the neighborhood.

Because aging touches every block, and the people we care for are, and have always been, this community. They built the homes. They raised the kids. They helped shape the Saranap we know today.

So when we ask for your support, we're not asking to bring something new into the neighborhood—we're asking to hold space for the people who already made it what it is. We've designed our expansion to be a quiet, seamless part of the neighborhood fabric—a true home, not a disruptive facility.

Our vision is to challenge the norms of this industry. To reimagine what assisted living can feel like. To move beyond institutional care and create places that foster real connection. Where people can feel safe, and also feel seen. Where joy still has room to grow, even in decline. Where families rediscover the possibility of just being present with one another.

That's why we're expanding—not to grow in size, but to grow in capacity to care. To say yes to more families. To offer more dignity. To stay rooted in this neighborhood, while serving it more fully.

Because for us, this isn't just about adding space. It's about deepening a promise. A promise that began as a quiet idea—and over time, has become something more.

We've often been asked what we're building. And sometimes, gently, people ask, "Will this still feel like a home?" We understand that concern. In a world where senior care too often becomes institutionalized—where facilities grow larger and more impersonal—we've chosen a different path.

The truth is, we're not building a facility. We're not just adding rooms. We're shaping a way of caring—one that reflects the spirit of this neighborhood: close-knit, personal, and deeply human.

We've designed this expansion to preserve the intimacy that defines The Carnelian—no long hallways, no separation from community, no compromise on human connection. What we're building is still a home, just with room to say yes to more families.

And lately we've been reflecting: When does that kind of care become part of a community's identity? Maybe it's when neighbors start to recognize it as their own. When a family says, "This changed how we see aging." When a caregiver brings that sense of dignity home with them. When our small acts of presence quietly shift expectations.

That's what we hope for.

Not to grow into something apart—but to grow with and through the neighborhood.

Not to stand at the edge of community, but to remain part of its daily life—

A home that belongs here, because it grew from here.

Supervisors, this isn't just a building. It's a belief. That even in the final chapters of life, there is still time for meaning. Still time for connection. Still time for beauty. We're proud of what we've built. We're proud of how we care. And we're honored to continue this work—together—with your support.

Thank you.

From: C Merhoff <
Sent: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 10:11 AM
To: Supervisor Candace Andersen; Clerk of the Board
Subject: CDLP23-02046 BOS Opposition to Land Use Permit Approval for RCFE Facility in R-10 Zoning District

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Dear Supervisor Andersen and Members of the Board Of Supervisors:

My husband and I are concerned residents of the Saranap neighborhood. We are deeply concerned that the proposed expansion of the Carnelian Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE) will disrupt the character of our neighborhood, lead to more traffic, congestion and noise, and will significantly impact the value of our property and the investment we have made therein.

The Carnelian is not a single property, it is **three properties** put together to house 30 residents currently without the expansion. This project as presented by the Carnelian only addresses a single property. That single property in the proposal cannot function without the other two properties. It is a large commercial entity, not an in-home care facility, which usually houses 6-8 residents. Even the state licensing agency treats the three together when they do an inspection as the reports are exactly the same for all three buildings. If this proposal is approved, then it will lead to piecemeal development of the other two properties, which would make the facility even larger. By declaring only one building with 6 residents, the Carnelian is claiming exemptions applicable to small RCFEs when in fact the total facility of 30 beds should be evaluated.

The Carnelian's application asks for a zoning variance for which there is no legal basis. In addition, the proposed building does not include a second exit stairwell. Lastly, the application tries to include compact parking spaces which are not allowed.

The height and size of the proposed building does not fit into the neighborhood of single family homes. It will look down into the yards and house of the neighbors behind thereby decreasing their privacy and consequently their property values. This would affect the entire neighborhoods property values if their properties sold and were use as comparisons.

The argument that the apartment building net door is two stories is not a valid one. The apartment sits lower than the existing Carnelian building and was already in existence when the neighbors bought their home, therefore it will not affect the current values of existing homes. The argument of a 2 story house in the neighborhood are not a good comparison due to the size of the project.

Though the Carnelian has somewhat cleaned up the parking on Warren Road since it was brought to their attention, we do not believe it will continue once the project is approved and construction is underway. Now, however, at times, Flora Avenue is now congested and difficult to get through on. In addition, in the last 6 months, they have had some work done and the contractor's equipment and trucks were parked along Warren Road, making it almost impossible for two cars to pass together. It basically became a single lane road for cars. Though the residents do not have cars, their family,

friends, care providers, fire trucks, ambulances, etc., do and will need more parking than what will be provided. With additional residents, will come additional staff who will need a place to park while they work.

We live on the corner of Camino Posada and Warren Road. We cannot tell you how many trucks on a daily basis use our street turn around. They back up onto Camino Posada, then turn back toward the Carnelian. In some cases, they have hit our curb and shrubbery. When they do this traffic on Warren Road has to stop until they have turned around.

We have concerns with evacuating the neighborhood in the event of a fire. We did have an Evacuation Warning on 10/27/2019 due to a fire at the Lafayette Tennis Club. So it is possible. Evacuating 30 plus residents and staff, plus all of the neighborhood could result in a traffic nightmare and potential loss of life. How will the residents of the second floor be evacuated safely?

We and our neighbors recognize that The Carnelian is providing a useful community service in terms of elderly care. We did not object to a minor increase in capacity. We very much object to the manner in which the application has been considered and processed. We feel that this Board cannot make the required findings on the strength of this application but that a substantively complete application with construction alternatives could lead to an approval consistent with zoning and use permit requirements. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application for a land use permit be denied.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns,

Sincerely,

Cathy and Eric Merhoff

11111 11111, CA 94033

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am writing in support of the proposed expansion of the Carnelian Assisted Living Facility at 2374 Warren Road, Walnut Creek, California.

Alzheimer's cases in California are expected to double by 2040. Our communities need more assisted living facilities that provide the kind of unique and loving care the Carnelian provided for my father and brother-in-law for over four years. The need especially for memory care can be seen in the omnipresent waiting list of desperate families needing full-time care for their loved ones.

Regarding the daily parking, I never had an issue parking or having to take a neighbor's spot during my many visits over a four-year period. The event parking is now off site with valet service.

Neighbors of the Carnelian recently stated in a letter that "additional profits with no apparent concern for others and with the entitlement that their business interests outweigh the needs and interests of the permanent residents."

Nothing could be further from the truth. The desires of the Carnelian are much more about satisfying the needs of the community, residents, and their staff than any profit margin. The staff and family are some of the most caring and considerate people I have ever known. They take great pride in making the facility a clean, comfortable, and happy place for residents and family members. You can see the staff's appreciation for their employer by their loyalty and longevity to the Carnelian. Their community outreach is demonstrated in many ways including hosting countless community education opportunities to educate families on elder care.

Increasing the number of beds will help

alleviate a huge and growing need for
compassionate senior care.

Please allow this plan to move forward.
You or your loved one might need this wonderful
place some day.

Sincerely,

Joan Grier

Dale Dickerson