

FROM THE DESK OF STEPHEN M. RIOS, ESQ.

United States Marine Corps
1966 - 1970

THE RIOS ADOBE — EST. 1794
31781 LOS RIOS STREET, SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA 92675

March 11, 2022

City of San Juan Capistrano
25925 Camino Del Avion
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

Re: City Council Meeting – March 15, 2022

Dear Honorable Mayor Derek Reeve and City Council Members,

Over three thousand years ago, my ancestors, of the now Juaneño Band of Mission Indians (Acjachemen Nation), chose the Capistrano Valley as a place to establish their village. Later, my following ancestors, Spaniards and Californios continued to reside in this valley for all the charms we know of. I am eighth generation Rios, and The Rios Adobe is now the home of ninth and tenth generations of family members in our home which was built in 1794 (228 years ago). Through the generations, we have shared our home with countless visitors, and we continue to do so today. On a typical weekend, more than a thousand people will pass by my home, many of whom I personally speak to. The Rios Adobe is the second most photographed location in San Juan Capistrano, and of course the Mission is the first. Through all these years, our constant theme has been family living and maintaining our historic neighborhood. We wish to continue that for years to come.

Today, due to the full throttled promotion of Los Rios Street as a tourist destination by the City and the Chamber of Commerce, we now have so many challenging impacts to the Los Rios neighborhood: dozens of commercial photographers, excited wedding parties looking for the right photo opportunity, hundreds of high school students and their parents enjoying high school prom night activities and making the streets impassable for up to two hours, party buses, delivery trucks stopping in the street, all night drinking, partying, and crime in the Los Rios Park, etc. There are at least 12 alcohol establishments right across the tracks from the Los Rios Street neighborhood, several of which include live music entertainment and wedding venues. This live music beginning at 6:00 p.m. daily is a constant visitor to our homes. We now see two Applicants seeking to bring their

business greater financial profits than they currently experience. This profiteering should not be done on the backs of Los Rios Street residents.

All property owners have a fundamental right of peace and quiet enjoyment of their property. As you can see from the attached photos, we have sadly and forever lost that peace and quiet enjoyment during the daytime hours in the Los Rios neighborhood. Beginning on Friday afternoons and continuing through the weekend, and certainly on all holidays, one can hardly safely drive down Los Rios Street. In fact, backing out of my driveway on those days is impossible due to the street's heavy congestion of pedestrians, cars (many parked illegally), and delivery trucks.

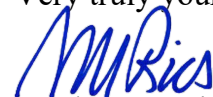
Now we are trying to save the peaceful and quiet enjoyment of our properties during the early evening and nighttime. The decision you make tonight on the Applicants' request for extended hours until 10:00 p.m., seven days a week (Tea House) and 9:30 p.m., four night a week (Ramos House) will determine whether Los Rios residents lose the nighttime, as they have the daytime. Remember closing at 9:30 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. does not mean those businesses become quiet as there are still guests finishing their meals or cocktails, then there is the cleanup and maintenance crews which can easily mean continued activity until 11:30 p.m. or even midnight. Totally unacceptable for a residential neighborhood.

Unfortunately, the two Applicants feel the need to compete with businesses such as Trevor's at the Tracks, Rancho Capistrano Winery, and Hennessey's Tavern an entitlement and use that they should not be allowed because of the Los Rios Specific Plan that has been the bedrock for over forty years guiding appropriate land use in our neighborhood. Sadly, the Los Rios Specific Plan has been chipped away and any further erosion of this plan can could make is meaningless. In years past, previous residents of Old Town San Diego and Olvera Street in Los Angeles have been forced out of their homes due to business expansion and gentrification. I believe that the business expansion and extended hours that are now being requested will jeopardize the Los Rios Street neighborhood standing with the National Register of Historic Places, and Los Rios Street will then become another Old Town San Diego or Olvera Street.

It brings me displeasure to have to speak against my neighbors, some I have known for 25 years, but it brings me substantially greater displeasure to anticipate and feel the loss of quality of life the request of these Applicants (extended hours) will bring to our homes and families. In closing let me share what my father told me many times. The nighttime brings the power and the spirits of Los Rios Street and its ancestors to life. This impalpable power of the night on Los Rios Street has been passed down for generations. Sitting under the near 200-year-old pepper tree at the entrance of my driveway brings a similar feeling as sitting under the great Mother Oak Tree at our newly recreated Putuidem Village site. The continued expansion of businesses with extended operating hours will cause yet another piece of our irreplaceable culture to be lost. I ask that you simply look at the attached photographs to understand the words I have put forward in this letter.

Please reject the Applicants proposal of extended hours.

Very truly yours,



Stephen M. Rios
Rios Adobe















RIOS ADOBE

200 YEARS
OF FAMILY LIVING

1794 - 1994

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

