

#14

City Council
Mayor Sarah Glade Gurney
Vice Mayor Una Glass
John Eder
Robert Jacob
Patrick Slayter



City Manager-City Attorney
Larry McLaughlin

City Clerk
Mary Gourley

City of Sebastopol City Council Staff Report

Reviewed by City Manager 

Meeting Date: May 17, 2016
To: Mayor and City Council
From: Kenyon Webster, Planning Director
Subject: Sebastopol Independent Charter School Hearing on Mitigated Negative Declaration and Use Permit by Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments, Potential City Comments
Recommendation: Provide Direction for any Comments
Applicant/Owner: Sebastopol Independent Charter School
Address: 6665 Sebastopol Avenue
Funding: Currently Budgeted: Yes No N/A
 Net General Fund Cost:
 If Cost to Other Fund(s):
 Yes No N/A

The attached notice from the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD) is regarding a hearing by the County regarding the proposed Sebastopol Independent Charter School project, proposed at 1080 and 1088 Hurlbut Avenue, just north of the City border.

The City previously submitted comments on the project to the County. On May 3, the County issued a proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), and the City may wish to provide comments on that document and the project generally. PRMD is transmitting a copy of the MND to the City, but it has not been received as of writing of this report.

The Council has previously expressed a number of concerns regarding the proposed project (see attached letter). The Council may wish to authorize the Mayor to work with staff on drafting and issuing a comment letter regarding the MND, and project generally, to PRMD and the Board of Zoning Adjustments.

Attachments:

PRMD notice
Prior City comment letter

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR
A USE PERMIT FOR A CHARTER SCHOOL AND
INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

WHO: Sebastopol Charter School, c/o Bob Haroche, has applied for a Use Permit to allow a new charter school. **PRMD File No. UPE14-0090.**

WHAT: The proposed project is request for a Use Permit to allow a new charter school with a maximum attendance of 360 students in six new classroom buildings totaling 20,200 square feet, a 19,500 square foot assembly hall, and reuse of the existing 4,800 square foot residence as an administration building on three parcels totaling 20.36 acres located at 1080 and 1088 Hurlbut Avenue, Sebastopol; APN's 060-400-019, -018, and -071. Supervisorial District 5.

Zoning on the parcel is: RR (Rural Residential) with an allowable density of one dwelling unit per two acres and a combining zone of SR (Scenic Resources).

The **Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments** will hold a public hearing to consider adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration and an action on the requested Use Permit for the charter school in which all interested persons are invited to attend and provide comments. The County will accept comments on the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration between May 3, 2016 and June 1, 2016.

The potential project impacts have been analyzed and an Initial Study is available for review at the address below. A Mitigated Negative Declaration is proposed which finds that potential impacts to Cultural Resources, Noise, and Transportation/Traffic resources have been fully mitigated by measures incorporated into the Conditions of Approval and agreed to by the owner.

**WHERE &
WHEN:**

The public hearing will be held on **Thursday, June 2, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.** in the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department Hearing Room, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION:**

Details of the project and the environmental documents are available at the Permit and Resource Management Department at the address noted above.

HOW TO

GET INVOLVED: If you have any questions or concerns regarding the proposed project please contact Brian Millar at (530) 902-9218 or via email at brian@landlogistics.com. In addition, you may contact the project applicant Bob Haroche at bharoche@beyerscostin.com or at (707) 547-2000).

Written comments may also be submitted prior to, or at the hearing. Please submit written materials 10 days prior to the hearing date so that it can be distributed and considered by the decision-makers. Any written material submitted after this date will be distributed to the decision-makers prior to or at the hearing.

If you challenge the decision on the project in court you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Permit and Resource Management Department at or prior to the public hearing.

PUBLISH ONCE: Press Democrat

DATE: May 3, 2016

City Council

Mayor Patrick Slayter
Vice Mayor Sarah Glade Gurney
John Eder
Una Glass
Robert Jacob

**City Manager**

Larry McLaughlin
lwmcLaughlin@juno.com

City Clerk

Mary Gourley
mgourley@cityofsebastopol.org

City of Sebastopol

December 22, 2014

Sigrid Swedenborg
County of Sonoma
Permit and Resource Management Department
2550 Ventura Avenue
Santa Rosa, California 95403

Re: UPE14-0090

Dear Ms. Swedenborg:

Thank you for consulting us regarding Application UPE14-090, an application from the Sebastopol Charter School Foundation for a new school proposed to be located at 1080 and 1088 Hurlbut Avenue in Sebastopol.

We support the Charter School, which has been a center of activity in our downtown, and added to the diversity of Sebastopol.

While we appreciate the work of the school, we have issues with the planned location. As I am sure you are aware, the planned school site is immediately adjacent to our City limits and voter-approved Urban Growth Boundary and so is of particular concern to our City. The application raises important questions concerning appropriate land use, safety, infrastructure, and circulation impacts. Our City Council discussed the application at its December 16, 2014 meeting, and authorized a letter to communicate our concerns.

- **Land use issues.** This would be an intensive development immediately adjacent to our City. Generally, our City believes that it would be more appropriately developed within the City limits/UGB or other urbanized area, and, that as planned, it would constitute a form of undesirable sprawl. We are open to working with the school on in-City locations. The County should carefully consider whether the application is appropriate.
- **Locational issues.** The project location, on the edge of the City of Sebastopol, with less-than-desirable access, will encourage use of the automobile. The substantial number of planned parking spaces supports this conclusion. This is contrary to the efforts of this City and other jurisdictions to facilitate other forms of transportation, and slow the effects of climate change. The project would require a conditional use permit and conformance with the General Plan. Policy LU-6e requires nine specific criteria to be met; this project would require a creative interpretation of a number of them.

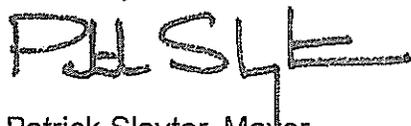
- **Access issues.** Vehicle access to the new site would be via an easement across the West County bike trail. Emergency access would be provided at Hurlbut Avenue. Limited access raises concerns as to emergency response to the school campus; and the access across the bike trail raises a pedestrian/bicycle safety issue, which should be carefully reviewed by the County. This limited access configuration is unusual for a public school, which would be more appropriately located on a public street, preferably a collector or arterial, as required by General Plan Policy LU-6e. One of the significant amenities Sebastopol offers residents is the Joe Rodota West County Trail; to interrupt this trail with intensive automotive traffic is an affront to the many daily users of the trail.
- **Water, wastewater capacity.** The application contemplates that water will be provided via on site wells, and that wastewater will be processed via an on-site septic system. The County should ensure that the development could be served in this fashion. Our City has limited infrastructure capacity and has not planned to serve substantial developments in unincorporated territory. In addition, the applicant should incorporate water conservation, rainwater harvesting, low-water use landscaping, low-water-use fixtures, and other measures to limit water impacts. The County should carefully review water and wastewater aspects to ensure that plans are adequate to minimize undesirable impacts to neighbors.
- **Storm water.** Improvements and drainage should be designed to minimize runoff and maximize groundwater recharge.
- **Emergency services.** Given the planned location, it is likely that in a number of situations, Sebastopol Police and Fire will be first responders to emergency situations at the school. If the school is to be approved, this likely impact should be mitigated.
- **Safe routes to school.** While the site does have the advantage of being immediately adjacent to the bike trail, pedestrian and bicycle amenities are otherwise limited, particularly in the unincorporated area. The school is a substantial development project that will increase the need for pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the area, and for the benefit of schoolchildren attending the school, it would be desirable for the school to make, or contribute to pedestrian, bicycle, or other circulation improvements to address project impacts. Actual improvements, or a fair share contribution for future pedestrian, bicycle, and other improvements that may be appropriate to consider include:
 - **Operation of the existing traffic signal at Highway 116/Mill Station Road.** This should be reviewed as to any needed timing or striping adjustments to accommodate the school use.
 - **Mill Station/Ragle Road.** Some traffic generated by the school will likely use this intersection. There appears to be a need for sign or other improvements for vehicles that are westbound on Mill Station Road. Traffic on this section of Mill Station Road travels at a fairly high rate of speed; separated bicycle and pedestrian routes should be installed.

- While it is primarily an existing need, the County should review potential impacts from the school project, as well as consider planning for pedestrian improvements on the County section of Ragle Road. If there were a sidewalk there, schoolchildren would likely use it. This section of roadway currently is extremely narrow and hazardous to users, especially pedestrians and bicyclists and significant improvement is needed.
- Improved pedestrian crossing at Danmar/Highway 116. Students and parents may seek to cross the highway at this location. A 'Street Smart' type crossing would be desirable. As this location is on the State Highway, Caltrans should be consulted.
- Highway 116 bike lanes. Lanes are likely to serve school attendees as well as the community generally. The City is developing plans for this improvement.
- Sidewalk improvements on Highway 116 north of Live Oak Avenue. This is a potential pedestrian route to school, however there is no sidewalk. There has been a long-standing need for installation of sidewalks at this challenging location.
- Covert Lane/116. The City has considered several intersection control improvements at this location in the past.
- Bodega Avenue and Ragle Road. School traffic from our southwesterly quadrant is likely to travel on Bodega and Ragle Road to get to Mill Station to enter/exit the school grounds, avoiding downtown congestion. The school's relocation will increase traffic at this difficult intersection and on Ragle Road, with its incomplete sidewalks and culverts. A potential improvement would be in-ground lights on an improved Bodega/Ragle crosswalk, or a stoplight, along with roadway and sidewalk improvements along Ragle Road.

We appreciate your considerations of these concerns. Please notify us if there are other opportunities to comment in the future.

Let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "PAT SLAYTER". The letters are stylized and connected, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Patrick Slayter, Mayor

cc:

Sebastopol Independent Charter Foundation

Supervisor Efred Carrillo

City Council

City Manager

Police Chief

Fire Chief

✓ Planning Director

Engineering Director