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To: [Mary Gourley](#)
Cc: [Dante Del Prete](#); [Fernandez, Evert](#); [Bill Braga](#); [Lawrence McLaughlin](#); [Ana Kwong](#); [Kathy Oetinger](#)
Subject: 10/27 Public Comment: Sebastopol Inn and Sebastopol's Increase in Homeless Population
Date: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 6:53:29 AM

10/27/21

Dear Council Members,

Last year around this very same time, the conversion of the Sebastopol Inn was pushed through by Barbie Robinson and Supervisor Lynda Hopkins. It was rushed with little public input.

Barbie Robinson has moved to Texas while the residents of Sebastopol are stuck with a permanent revenue loss. I think many people mistakenly believed that if Sebastopol lost its only downtown hotel and all the revenue that was associated with it, that there would no longer be an illegal RV encampment on Morris Street.

Since then, we can all see that we still have an illegal RV encampment on Morris Street with all of its associated crime and public health and safety violations, we have more homeless people within City limits (in a previous email I noted that I saw a transient shooting up at Ives' Park in broad daylight less than 100 yards from the children's playground) and the City is spending more resources than ever on transients, including a \$72,000 homeless outreach coordinator.

Is this what we can expect from this development as well? More homeless people, more encampments, more tax money going toward homeless services even though the City is in a budget deficit for this year and every year following?

There is absolutely zero in this proposal to prevent further encampments and more transients from setting up in Sebastopol.

In addition, there is absolutely no reason why Sebastopol should provide any more homeless resources than we are already providing. Last year, the Sebastopol Inn was converted to a 31 room hotel at a cost of \$360,000 per room for transient housing. Park Village has at least 15 spots for homeless individuals. There is Safe Parking at the Sebastopol Community Church. We have more homeless resources than Rohnert Park.

This site is a prime location for community recreation next to a little league field, a cultural center, a playground and public trails. Why should residents of Sebastopol give up this site for transients when we have already given up revenue and already have an abundance of homeless services and shelter?

The Council seems to be motivated by personal interests instead of the long-term viability of the City and its residents; I can see no other reason why Council would even consider this given the amount of time and resources already spent and committed to transients.

One budget increase I would support would be an increase of pay for Council Members from \$300 per month to \$60,000 per year. At this point, only affluent people can run for Council which seems to create an echo chamber in decision making.

I hope at some point Council will decide to raise Council pay so we can get more diversity on Council with elected officials who might be economically less privileged than current Council members and more in touch with the needs of working people who rely on public space and public services.

Clearly, this Council has very little concern for working people and working families who need safe access to public space, well-maintained sidewalks, access to bike lanes, a functioning fire department and well developed parks.

I hope we will see more diversity of voice and economic status on future Councils.

Best,
Kate Haug