

To: Design Review Board/Tree Board  
Kari Svanstrom, and Alan Montes

From: Nick Stewart  
7772 Washington Ave, Sebastopol

12/16/2019 – Comments on the Proposed Woodmark Project

I have been an affordable housing advocate for over three decades, working for Burbank Housing, the Sonoma County Community Development Commission, and serving on the Board of the late Task Force for the Homeless. I certainly support the development of more deeply affordable housing in Sebastopol. However, my experience as an affordable housing developer has ingrained a deep respect for considering the context of new development, and the impact on the neighbors and neighborhood. A considerate developer will look for ways to address legitimate neighbor concerns in order to counter any of the irrational objections that often surface from NIMBYs (Not In My Back Yard).

Although the project appears to conform generally to the zoning designation, there are a variety of factors that must be considered in assessing whether the density and massing meet applicable Planning Department guidelines in the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Design Review Guidelines, and the Tree Ordinance (there is some ambiguity about the current design, since the site plan in the arborist's report is different from the full scale site plan in the application package). I believe City staff did an excellent job of identifying significant issues and the Design Review Board should require changes to the initial Woodmark design.

My comments below follow the structure of the Staff Report:

1. The Zoning Ordinance prohibits parking within the front setback, whereas the applicant proposes massed parking as the immediate visual image of the project from Bodega Ave. **The applicant should conform to the Zoning Ordinance parking requirements.**
2. The City Arborist states that "Many property line trees (with shared ownership) which currently provide screening and privacy will be significantly impacted by grading, construction and wall footings." Due to the proposed reduction in the rear setback from 30 feet to 10 feet, several trees that fall within the protection of Sebastopol's Tree Ordinance would be killed. These trees not only provide screening and visual and sonic insulation for the residential neighbors to the north and west, they are also significant resources for birds and other wildlife. **It is critical that the rear setback remain at 30 feet, respecting the continued health of these heritage trees.** It seems odd to me that the developer would propose to remove trees of this scale that reside on neighboring property, **in violation of the City's Site Planning guidelines in the Zoning Ordinance.**
3. Although traffic is an unavoidable byproduct of such development, it is important to the neighborhood to the north that ingress and egress from the project is designed to stay on Bodega Ave. Washington Avenue now serves as a "bypass" to congestion on Bodega Ave and it already disrupts the safety and tranquility of

our neighborhood. **The required traffic study must assess impacts on Washington Ave.**

4. **The design of the buildings appear to violate the Architecture/Massing guidelines in the Zoning Ordinance**, particularly with regard to their orientation to the street and neighboring properties.
5. The project design currently does not meet the Site Planning guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance for addressing the Neighborhood Context, ignoring that “significant natural site features such as natural ground forms, significant trees, significant view corridors should be identified and addressed,” and that “in areas where there are changes in land use or density, new development should be designed to provide a transition between current and planned future uses through the use of setbacks, site plan, building massing and height, landscaping.” **To the west and north in particular, the project should be redesigned to address these factors of neighborhood compatibility.**
6. **The grading plan seems quite drastic.** From the Staff Report, “staff has concerns about the amount of grading and modification of the natural topography, and its impacts on the natural elements of the site, including the trees as discussed above, and the relation of the development to adjoining properties.” A more modest grading plan should not adversely affect the density or cost of the project.
7. From the section on Noise and Privacy, staff notes that “the site currently has a number of mature trees at the property lines, if these can be preserved they will provide a large amount of screening to adjoining neighbors.” **Preservation of trees on the north property line should be required to ensure consistency with numerous provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.**
8. I applaud and support the staff recommendations regarding massing, and **I also “would like the DRB to review the overall massing and building articulation of the structures, and entries especially those facing the street and those visible from adjacent properties.”**

I believe the Woodmark development could be a wonderful addition to the City’s housing stock, but this proposal must be modified to address significant neighborhood concerns. Thanks to staff for a thorough and thoughtful analysis. I urge the DRB to follow staff’s recommendations.

Sincerely,

Nick Stewart

December 16, 2019

Kari Svanstrom  
Planning Director, City of Sebastopol  
120 Bodega Ave  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Dear Kari,

I would like to address my two main concerns with the proposal from Pacific West Communities for residential development of approximately 84 dwellings located at 7716/7760 Bodega Avenue.

My first major concern is the number of units proposed by Pacific West Communities and the amount of additional traffic these units will add to our current road congestion. I live on Washington Ave and there are often times that I have difficulty getting onto Bodega Ave. If I need to travel to Santa Rosa, it usually is not reasonable to take Bodega Ave all the way out to Hwy 12. When traveling along Bodega Ave, there are many sections where a very limited number of cars can travel at one time. These sections often have major back-ups especially during peak hours. The primary areas of concern are between Washington & Dutton, High Street and 116 and 116 to Hwy 12. I often have to find alternative routes to Santa Rosa. The Pacific West Communities proposal could increase traffic with an additional 168 cars traveling along Bodega Ave. This will make it almost unbearable to travel this route. It will also make the alternative routes very congested.

I would hope that when the planning board conducts their traffic study it takes into account the other current development by City Ventures, located at 1009 and 1011 Gravenstein Highway North (behind O'Rielly's and Associates -105 units). The potential combined increase of cars from both of these projects will have a major negative impact on the traffic within the city and all routes in and out. These two developments could increase the number of the cars on the road by approximately 375 cars.

My other major concern is the trees adjacent to 7716/7760 Bodega Ave. Many of these trees are 70 year old heritage variety oaks of mixed native trees, which are irreplaceable. The roots of the trees extend into lots located at 7716/7760 Bodega Ave. Pacific West Communities current proposal is to excavate and to place a retaining wall which will most definitely sever the roots of all the adjacent trees and without a doubt cause them to become unsafe and die. There is also the potential risk that the death of those trees will put the houses located at 7710 & 7702 Washington Ave in danger. We are requesting that the variance approved by the planning department and Pacific West Communities for this proposal consider other landscape options which would avoid severing the roots of all adjacent trees.

I would like to reference a case from 1994 of Booska v. Patel, a California appellate court held that a neighbor does not have the right to cut encroaching roots and branches so that they end at his or her property line. You must take into account the health of the tree before you start cutting or chopping.

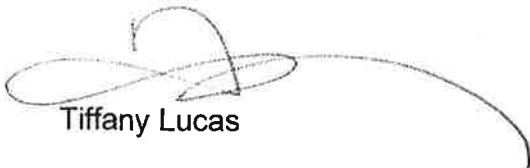
Based on this case and the California tree law, it is my understanding that owning property and the use of such land is a privilege to make use of the land for his own benefit, but this privilege is qualified by a due regard for the interests of others who may be affected by it. Property owner rights are bounded by principles of reasonableness, so as to cause no unreasonable risks of harm to others in the vicinity. The current variance request by Pacific Properties will cause risk and harm to the adjacent irreplaceable trees.

Each owner of adjoining land may trim on his own side trees and plants standing on the boundary line, provided it does so without unreasonable injury to the interest of his neighbor. It is also my understanding that the tree law in California does not allow a property owner the right to cut or remove roots or branches of a tree(s) encroaching into their property.

We are asking that the planning department only approve this proposal with a setback that will not cause risk or death to the irreplaceable trees adjacent to this project. Their proposal to remove 61 of the 76 trees identified in their plans does not seem to be in line with the Sebastopol tree ordinance.

I also noticed that my house located at 7710 Washington Ave was cited as a three-story house, which is incorrect. My house is only a two store dwelling. A tree on my property was also identified as 19" which is incorrect. It is actually a 20" heritage tree.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, featuring a large, stylized loop at the top and a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tiffany Lucas

**From:** Andrea Williamson <[andreawilliamsonmft@ymail.com](mailto:andreawilliamsonmft@ymail.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 17, 2019 8:33 PM

**To:** Kari Svanstrom <[ksvanstrom@cityofsebastopol.org](mailto:ksvanstrom@cityofsebastopol.org)>

**Subject:** Proposed Woodmark project comments

Dear Planning Director,

I am writing from my perspective as a fifth-generation Sebastopol area native. I have an abiding connection to the land that we are so lucky to live on. I also feel that my deep roots here require me to be a guardian of our heritage and the landscapes and culture that make our area special. This is why I'm writing to you (not a comfortable activity for me!)

I live at 7772 Washington Ave. and a lovely couple who joined our neighborhood last year informed me about the Woodmark project because it will have a major impact on our neighborhood. We all are pleased that it will be an affordable housing project because we want an equitable community.

However, because of the issues that they mentioned, I decided that I needed to do some research. I found a number of concerning issues that I would like you to consider. Of particular importance to me is the killing of dozens (64 is the number I have heard) of trees. Trees, in and of themselves, are viable and important members of our healthy community and they also provide cover, food, etc. for birds, insects, etc., also viable and important members of our community. My history of concern about trees in Sebastopol is evidenced by my being one of the originating writers of the Sebastopol Tree Ordinance in 1992 and the importance of guardianship of nature is just as relevant today. We must pay particular importance to our Heritage Trees. We are so fortunate to live with these individuals.

Another side of respect for Sebastopol's heritage concerns the apple orchard on the property. I think it's probably the last vestige in town of Sebastopol's history and surely the most visible one. Can some of those trees be saved? Perhaps the landscape plan can reflect the orchard.

My experience of Sebastopol is a belief in sustainability and respect for all. We realize now that humans cannot continue to put ourselves first with no consideration of our non-human neighbors. And we have the additional good fortune of trees being the most important source of cleaning our air and thus reducing carbons in the air. Sebastopol must continue to do all we can to help with the global warming crisis.

Additionally, while reading the materials, I noticed the difference between the developer's perspective and the city staff's recommendations. I felt the City's recommendations were well-considered and seemed much more in line with our town in several regards. The developer's plan problems seen to be firstly, the trees, and secondly a grading plan that seems drastic and doesn't appear to take note of the surroundings.

The development seems startlingly close to neighbor's homes. (3 stories within 10 feet of our neighbor's property line !?!) I feel this is nothing less than disrespectful to our neighbors. I have no problem with 3 stories but it would be completely out of place in our neighborhood if it would be visible over the fences of our neighbors. This is a town, not a city.

I also saw in the plan that there will be a block of parking facing directly onto Bodega Ave. Is this actually part of the design plan for Sebastopol? Every time we walk or drive or bicycle down Bodega we will need to see this block of cars?

As a neighbor on Washington Ave. I am extremely concerned about the impact of a large increase in additional traffic on Washington Ave. Traffic has already had a very negative impact on our neighborhood . Especially where I live, where Nelson Way comes into Washington Ave., drivers use this route regularly as a shortcut to avoid Bodega Avenue. There are many stretches on Washington Ave. with no sidewalks which increases the risk. I've always hoped that the City would do something to help this dangerous situation. I can't even tell you how many people currently go right through the stop sign or accelerate to go uphill on Washington putting people and their pets in regular danger and discomfort. I beg you to consider the stressful effect on our neighborhood of this additional traffic and to let us know how you will mitigate the additional traffic.

Thank you for your service to Sebastopol,

In appreciation,  
Andrea Williamson  
7772 Washington Ave.  
Sebastopol  
707-217-6898

**From:** Rena Morris <renamorr@pacbell.net>

**Sent:** Monday, December 16, 2019 10:25 AM

**To:** Alan Montes <Amontes@cityofsebastopol.org>

**Subject:** Fw: Public Hearing Wed., De. 18, 2019: Pacific West Communities FNC

Dear Kari Svanstrom

My Family Trust is the owner of 175 Nelson Way which abuts directly with the proposed development.

A little about myself and about how I and others will be impacted by the proposed dense development of the contiguous property.

I love Sebastopol. I was married there, lived there for several years, and in fact, my oldest daughter, Melissa, was born in Sebastopol in 1984. My husband and I moved to Southern California to continue our education. But it was our plan to return in our older years when we could. We bought a home located at 175 Nelson Way for around \$800,000 a few years ago for just that purpose. We resided there for a while in order to rehabilitate the property with a plan to move back there permanently once we retired.

Not being local now, I am unable to see much of the proposed development plan but based on what was forwarded to me by my neighbors, I have concluded that there will be a playground right outside our master bedroom and there would be three story buildings just proximate to my property to the south.

We invested there because we thought it would be a peaceful retreat and perfect for a quiet life. However the dense development of the neighboring property would be an impediment to that plan and I suspect has significantly reduced the value of my property, making it difficult to replace locally.

I have not seen many other aspects but I object to the noisy intrusion, not just of the playground but on the neighborhood. I understand a three-story development is proposed. The third story looming over the neighbors is of concern and the amount of density will materially change the neighborhood, negatively impacting the quality of life for the exiting homeowners.

Please take my comments to heart and keep me informed.

Thank you,  
Rena & Robert Morris

**From:** patty hiller <pattyhiller@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 13, 2019 4:08 PM  
**To:** Alan Montes <Amontes@cityofsebastopol.org>  
**Subject:**

To Whom It May Concern,

Like many others, I realize the need for more housing here in Sebastopol. And like others I hope the developers will respect the land and not go chopping down trees willy-nilly. I live at Burbank Heights and my concern is the traffic on Bodega. If you have ever tried to get out of Burbank during rush hour, you know what I mean. I hope some provision will be made for the increased traffic and I sincerely hope some of the units will be affordable housing.

Sincerely yours,  
Patty Hiller



**From:** Catherine G Murray <catherinegmurray@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Friday, December 13, 2019 2:52 PM

**To:** Alan Montes <Amontes@cityofsebastopol.org>

**Subject:** Bodega Ave Housing Project

I am writing with several concerns that I wish to have addressed at the upcoming meeting. I own property nearby on Bodega Ave.

1. There are a growing number of older residents in Sebastopol who need affordable housing without stairs. If these buildings (or some of them) had an exterior elevator, they would be much more accessible to older people who would not qualify for official handicap accessible units. Elders with limited incomes make up a significant percentage of lower income households who would be looking to live somewhere like this development.
2. The combined impact of this development and the other near O'Reilly will put even greater pressure on both traffic and water. Will the traffic and water studies consider the other development in their analysis?
3. Please address why the current residents of Sebastopol are being asked to pay higher water rates when it seems likely that the cost of increased operations and 'planned capital projects' are a result of this development and the one near O'Reilly? Please show proof we are not paying to enable this development to have water and sewer.
4. Why is this development proposed in Sebastopol when Santa Rosa is actively and aggressively courting developers and finding it hard to get developers to commit to building there, in a location without the traffic and water issues?

I look forward to hearing answers to these questions and concerns.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Murray

**From:** Tamaki Kimbro <tamakiann03@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2019 1:22 PM  
**To:** Alan Montes <Amontes@cityofsebastopol.org>  
**Subject:** Proposed development at 7716/7760 Bodega Ave

Dear Ms. Svanstrom and Members of the Design Review Board/Tree Board,

I am writing regarding the proposed development by Pacific West Communities at 7716/7760 Bodega Ave. I live at 7606 Washington Avenue and my backyard is adjacent to this site. I am very concerned that the plans submitted will have a major negative impact on my family and neighbors. My primary concern is that we have several magnificent oak trees in our backyard where my children and other kids from the neighborhood play. With the submitted plans, including a minimal setback from the property line and extensive excavation for a retaining wall, I have no doubt that these trees will be damaged and eventually killed. I am also concerned that they could become a safety hazard to those in my backyard if they are severely damaged and weakened.

Based on the Sebastopol Tree Ordinance, two of the trees on my property and several trees on my neighbor's property need to be protected. Given the size of the oaks closest to the property line, I feel the required setback for any excavation should be at least 30-35 ft. to avoid injury to their root system.

In addition, I am concerned that adding 84 units to this area will have a large impact on traffic congestion at the intersection of Washington Ave and Bodega Ave. The traffic is already very heavy during rush hour and at pick-up and drop-off times for Parkside Elementary.

My family is so happy living in Sebastopol and we feel fortunate to be part of such a great community. I am sure you would agree it is much nicer to live in a town with more trees and less traffic. Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns.

Sincerely,

Tamaki Myers  
[tamakiann03@gmail.com](mailto:tamakiann03@gmail.com)  
7606 Washington Ave  
Sebastopol, CA

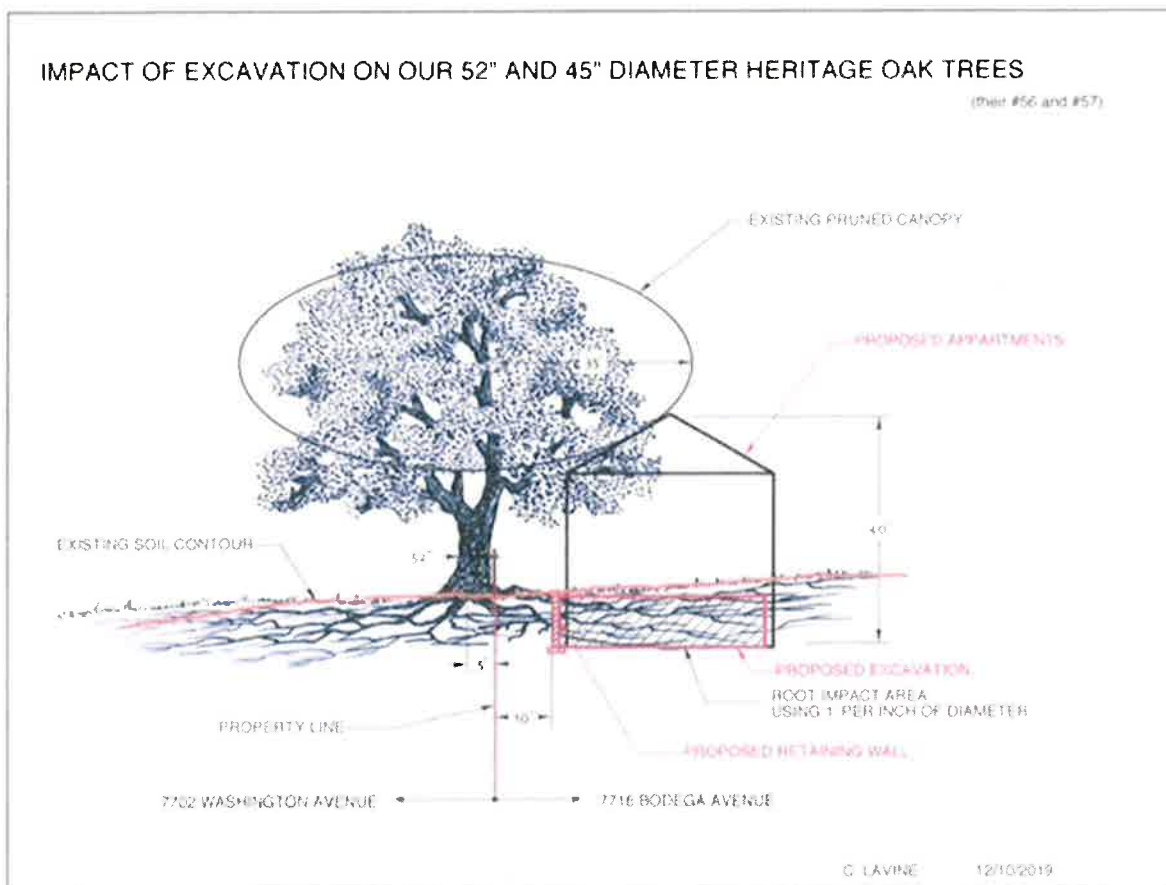
**From:** Charles Lavine <[clavine@mailc.net](mailto:clavine@mailc.net)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2019 2:15 PM  
**To:** Kari Svanstrom <[ksvanstrom@cityofsebastopol.org](mailto:ksvanstrom@cityofsebastopol.org)>  
**Subject:** Woodmark Excavation Tree Impact

Hi Kari,

Attached are a letter that Marcia wrote detailing some of our concerns about the proposed Woodmark development and a drawing showing the impact of their proposed excavation on the roots of our heritage oaks. As noted in the letter, please distribute these documents to the relevant City Departments and review boards.

Thanks very much,

Charles Lavine



December 10, 2019

Kari Svanstrom  
Planning Director, City of Sebastopol  
7120 Bodega Ave.  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Dear Kari,

I am writing you today in regard to Pacific Properties proposed Woodmark Apartment development located at 7760 & 7716 Bodega Hwy. Please also forward this letter to the members of the Design Review Board/Tree Board this week in order for them to be fully apprised of the issues before their public meeting on Dec.18 and, when timely, to the Sebastopol Planning Commission.

My husband and I live on one of the three properties that abut the rear property line of this project. Actually, two of the Phase II buildings border our property. Five of our heritage oaks are shown in all of their architect's plans and topographic maps. Their horticulturalist report for the project by John Meserve includes all of the trees on the proposed site & adjoining properties and states for our trees # 53 - #57 that: 'Removal is required due significant development impacts'.

These trees are not trivial nor is our concern frivolous. We live in an oak woodland. Two of the heritage Quercus Kelloggii-black oaks have trunk dia. of 52" & 45" and are at least 60' high. For tree health last summer we had all of our trees assessed and pruned by a certified arborist, Fred Frey – Vintage Tree Care and the canopy reduced where appropriate.

We have measured the pruned overhanging canopies of our three largest Oaks adjacent to the rear fence line. They are:

Tree #54 – 36' – White Oak (misidentified by their arborist as a Black Oak)

Tree #56 – 34' – Black Oak

Tree #57 – 35' – Black Oak

Pacific Properties has asked for a 10' rear set back variance and wants to excavate the rear property and build a retaining wall with a height ranging from 8' to 16'. The retaining wall will also require at least 4' – 6' wide footings which will effectively cut all of the tree roots 8' from the fence line. There is no question the trees will die.

I've included an elevation drawing which I think more clearly shows the reality of Pacific Properties proposed design and the hazards it presents to our and neighboring heritage trees where the proposed set backs are 5' and 10'.

We will not agree to Pacific Properties removing or damaging our trees. We do understand Sebastopol's Tree Protection Guidelines and have a good understanding of CA law concerning landowner rights to protecting their trees and that obviously the roots as well as the canopy are protected. We truly appreciate that Sebastopol has an outstanding tree ordinance and is very concerned with the environment.

As a side note we see on Pacific Properties arborists report:

1. Of the 76 identified trees on or adjacent to the site, 65 are to be removed.
2. All trees on adjoining properties will need to be removed (even when arborist states otherwise) because they will be negatively impacted (killed) by the requested setbacks of 5' and 10'.

We strongly support affordable housing but not this developer's plan which knowingly packs too many units into too small a space.

Even though the proposed buildings adjoining our property are in Phase II, Pacific Properties has stated that the hard scape, excavation, retaining walls etc. will be done prior to building Phase I of the project. It's not the three years of serious disturbance and heavy machinery but a constant threat that our trees at any time could break apart and die. It is not overly dramatic that if either of these things happen our house will likely be destroyed and an even more ominous thought that it takes us with it.

Thank you in advance for answering my questions, forwarding my letter to the Design Review Board, and helping us understand the process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marcia Lavine".

Marcia Lavine

Encl.

**From:** Renee Kramer <Reneek777@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 18, 2019 11:22 AM  
**To:** Alan Montes <Amontes@cityofsebastopol.org>  
**Cc:** Kari Svanstrom <ksvanstrom@cityofsebastopol.org>; Rebecca Mansour <rmansour@cityofsebastopol.org>  
**Subject:** Tree/Design Review Board Meeting Notification related to The Woodmark Apartments

Dear Ms. Svanstrom, Mr. Montes, Ms. Mansour and Members of the Design Review/Tree Board,

I am writing concerning the proposed Woodmark Apartments development by Pacific West Communities at 7716/7760 Bodega Avenue in Sebastopol. I live at 7720 Bodega Avenue #10 and my building is in the back of the complex called Bears Meadow. My unit is adjacent to the furthest back part of the apple orchard; my backyard is next to it as well, facing the Washington Avenue backyards. I have lived in Sebastopol for 37 years and in this townhouse for the past 20 years. I bought this end unit because of the apple orchard and the trees and greenery surrounding it. I was attracted to Sebastopol for its trees and foliage in the City limits and walking distance to downtown. My back yard is quite small but I can often get a glimpse of the sunset to the west through the orchard.

I am very apprehensive that the proposal for this development as it is being presented may jeopardize the existing trees on the neighboring properties and the stability of my building as well. My property is built at the top of the hill that they are planning to shave down. Excavating the ground 16 feet down, and leveling the hill would most certainly open the path to soil erosion of this hill and the degradation of the foundation of this building. There is no doubt that many trees would be affected and people and buildings could be destroyed by falling limbs. What contingency plan will the developer have in place in the event that people, trees and buildings are destroyed due to their disturbance of the ground and "landscaping" of the natural terrain? Will they set up a fund to reimburse us in the event this happens? Will the City of Sebastopol be responsible as well? The Sebastopol Tree Ordinance requires protection of many of the neighboring trees and a larger setback from the property line would be needed in order to protect the trees' root systems and avoid injury. Both for the trees and the building on my property, a setback of 30-40 feet might be more reasonable.

Then there's the issue of the traffic in Sebastopol and particularly on Bodega Avenue. The traffic now backs up daily beginning at 4:00 P.M. going East to get into town. It backs up to Robinson Road which is across the street from the current Bears Meadow driveway which we share with the property in question. Woodmark is proposing to use this as the main driveway for another 84 units. Bears Meadow is on 2.2 acres and has 27 units on the property. Pacific West Communities is proposing 84 units on 2.2 acres plus 1.36 acres from the 7760 Bodega Avenue orchard. The amount of traffic added to Bodega Avenue from 84 units would make it almost unbearable to get to and through the Main Street intersection. In the mornings it takes more time to get through that intersection than it takes to get all the way to Santa Rosa, which is 6-7 miles. The congestion on Bodega Avenue forces people to go on all the side residential streets to get around that Main Street intersection and to even get out of their driveways. I suggest a traffic remedy be in place before attempting to add 84 more units of 2-3 cars each to this mess.

I have been very happy living in Sebastopol and have considered myself lucky to live in such a nice town where I can walk and feel safe. I do hope we all agree that the quality of life here should be maintained and trees and less traffic are part of that quality. I am not opposed to low income housing but feel this development as proposed jeopardizes that quality.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns.

Sincerely,

Renee Kramer  
[Reneek777@comcast.net](mailto:Reneek777@comcast.net)  
7720 Bodega Avenue #10  
Sebastopol, CA

**From:** Broderick Elton <broderickelton@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Wednesday, December 18, 2019 1:29 PM

**To:** Alan Montes <Amontes@cityofsebastopol.org>

**Subject:** Cannot attend tonight's meeting- Major concerns about the purposed development

Hello Alan,

I appreciate you taking time to show the plans to my partner and I, related to the purposed development.

The following are the main points of concern relating to the negative impact this development brings due to its extremely high density. If the number can reach 83 units of mixed 3 & 2 bedrooms which realistically can number 200+ people. In reality this 200+ number is only with 1 person per room and often times multiple people may occupy a room (a family of 5 easily occupy a 3 bedroom)

Traffic specific:

- Volume of vehicle associated (hundreds of cars added to a small parcel of land)
- Lack of ability to turn eastbound safely on Bodega Ave- causing traffic to then turn westbound and then drive through the residential streets, such as Nelson Way; to avoid the already long line of traffic heading eastbound on Bodega Ave.
- The curve in Bodega Ave effects safe pullouts for vehicle traffic associated with the purposed development.
- School proximity with concern of additional increased traffic on Washington Ave. and nearby streets.
- elderly as well as those young enough to be walked in baby strollers are common as are dog walkers who often enjoy the quiet and safer streets of residential Sebastopol. This traffic increase will impact all the side streets, which are already being used as shortcuts to avoid the current traffic back up created by the intersection of Hwy 12 & 116 and already developing neighborhoods.
- Traffic survey needed to recognize these area specific dangers (blind curve, school, hwy, nearest traffic signals, pedestrians-etc)

Trees & birds/ animals & other adverse environmental effects

- all the habitats lost by cutting down the trees and reshaping the land.

Land management (water focus)

- The purposed retaining walls and effect of soil displacement and drainage effects on the surrounding properties.
- The impact by so much surface space created with possibly inorganic materials blanket the area prohibiting the historic and natural seeping of rain into the earth and into our water table.
- This mass covered surface is dynamic & could Possibly lead to flooding surrounding areas when the purposed development sheds water. This water that would have contributed to the water

table may be lost to storm drains or adversely impacting the structural integrity of surrounding properties.

- What is the impact on soil erosion especially facing heavier and more pronounced rains sandwiched between droughts.
- There appears to be relatively little green space which exacerbates water issues described above.

#### Parking

- Allotment of parking spaces within the development is not sufficient for the reality of current day living. People often own multiple vehicles within a single residence and visitors bring their vehicles. There is no street parking available in front and will bleed over onto residential side streets.
- Local events take place often at Ives Park and overflow parking reaches into this area. The ability for community members to attend fairs and festivals that make this town so wonderful will have no where to park when all nearby street parking is used by a apartment development with insufficient parking for its tenants.

#### Aesthetics

- The building designs do not fit into the character of Sebastopol.
- The materials and configuration is reminiscent of prison and bland government buildings.
- 3 story multiple units stacked on top of each other makes lower ceilings and the feeling of little space based on reality of less living space for occupants.

#### Absentee landlords?

- How does this business venture help Sebastopol?
- Who really benefits from this sudden and densely populated apartments serve?
- At what long term cost to the current community?
- Does this business have local vested interest in the well being of our community?
- Capitalizing on a "good deal" and turning a small farm property into a sardine packed "below market rate" housing venture isn't in keeping with the areas ethos.
- Is this a form of subsidized housing? (Like section 8)
- What are the programs and Incentives to outgrow the subsidized living arrangement? (For section 8 housing residents are given a place to live that require to pay only 30% of their monthly income as rent.... if a person can change their circumstances and make more money then they no longer qualify for the subsidy. - which could inherently keep people in the subsidized loop, also prohibiting new people from accessing what should be a finite program/s with oversight accountability for sustainable ongoing assistance.
- Less than 13% of subsidized housing exists outside of metropolitan areas- the reasoning is often the support services that go hand in hand with those in need are not as robust in small communities as they are in cities.
- How does the volume of community services currently available compare to the possible new strain created by such rapid change in population? And needs of the population?

Per the below website



<https://affordablehousingonline.com/housing-search/California/Sebastopol>

There are 4 low income housing apartment communities offering 405 affordable apartments for rent in Sebastopol, California. Sebastopol features 276 low income apartments with rental assistance where households typically pay no more than 30% of their income towards rent. Additionally, there are 129 other low income apartments that don't provide direct rental assistance but remain affordable to low income households in Sebastopol.

With the above information related to statistics (unknown reliability of these numbers - please confirm)

With a total population of only 7,583 people.

With currently 405 units (not people) total low income apartments the purposed development of 83 units containing 3 and 2 bedrooms would represent a comparatively large impact and addition to what is already in place for subsidized housing.

Thank you for taking time to reflect on the above as I could not attend this important meeting.

Best,

Broderick Elton

December 16, 2019

Kari Svanstrom  
Planning Director, City of Sebastopol  
7120 Bodega Ave.  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Dear Kari,

The developer's request for variances (or are they concessions) to the side and backyard setbacks should not be approved. Since the density for multiple housing unit development in Sebastopol was established many years ago and the assignment to these properties was made then; much has changed. Numerous rules have been enacted. These include a larger number of designated parking spaces, handicapped accessibility, open space requirements, etc. It is also the case that the developer is pushing the R7 zoning requirements to the limit. Density ranges are 43 to 89 units on this acreage. Their proposal calls for 84. For developers to obtain the generous governmental benefits that are available, all of these requirements necessitate squeezing the space for the actual housing and pushing the parking and other needs into the perimeter setbacks. I can't imagine that the intent of the Sebastopol Zoning Board is to allow this to happen since the setbacks are there for a purpose: to protect the neighbors and the neighborhood and also significantly, in this case, protect Heritage and native trees from such intrusions.

The need for a much larger setback than 10' in the rear lot has already been addressed in Marcia Lavine's letter of 12/10/19. An additional concern is that Pacific Properties stated desire to be a good neighbor is countered by the report from their arborist that all of the neighbors' trees that abut the project must be destroyed. Knowing that they continue to plan for a 10' rear and 5' side setback.

Although removal of heritage oaks on our property is a tremendous concern, there are other issues that relate to the Woodmark development that need to be raised. You may also see on their website that there numerous photos of completed projects which all show virtually no trees; in sharp contrast to the elaborately planted drawings of their Woodmark project. Of course the proposed landscaping with trees in 15 gallon pots is a minimal gesture to conform with City regulations and will take many years to show any real impact.

It's difficult to determine due to the paucity of elevation marks on their drawings but it appears that the lot's highest point (NW corner) is at 185 ft and the street level is at 150 ft. The plan calls for numerous retaining walls starting at the back at about 16' high getting lower as one moves away from that corner. We know from this that substantial grading is part of the plan. From website photos of their projects, it appears that their MO is to clear the site of all trees, level it out as best they can and then place their 'standard' structures on the site as needed. Unfortunately they have not, to my knowledge, provided a set of 3-D renderings of their proposal. Here are a few images from their Healdsburg project to illustrate those points.



Some of the comments from the meeting of November 21<sup>st</sup> are also troubling. The plans shown at that meeting have changed substantially particularly in the back of the lot. The back buildings (north) are now sandwiched between a parking lot and a high (15') retaining wall. Does 'low income housing' need to suffer from such uninspired architectural and landscape design?

Another concern is the transformation of the acreage from a permeable to a non-permeable surface and the sewer drainage required to service that runoff. It appears that about 70% of the site area will produce runoff that will end up on or under Bodega Avenue. Is the City ready to deal with that during a flash flooding rainfall?

Traffic is a constant problem that development at this density will only further exacerbate. As all the residents on the west side of town know, if you are trying to travel east on Bodega Avenue the traffic light at Main Street is a filter that only lets about 5 eastbound cars through every cycle. That's the number of cars waiting from the traffic light to City Hall. If cars are backed up all the way to Robinson Rd., as they frequently are, that's a lot of cycles. The evacuations during the wild fires also showed near impossible traffic flow. It took us over three hours to get from our house to the edge of town on 116. I hope that the City will conduct a thorough assessment of the impact of traffic resulting from all of the ongoing and proposed housing development.

Please know that I am not against development or low income housing development in particular. In fact my wife and I have financially supported non-profit, local housing for several years. What I don't support is the apparent design of this project to push to the limits the boundaries, the density and the disrespect for the neighboring trees.

Thank you so much for noting my concerns,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles F. Lavine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'C'.

Charles F. Lavine  
7702 Washington Avenue