



City of Sebastopol
Incorporated 1902
Planning Department
7120 Bodega Avenue
Sebastopol, CA 95472

www.ci.sebastopol.ca.us

PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING OF: December 08, 2020

UNAPPROVED DRAFT MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
MINUTES OF December 08, 2020

PLANNING COMMISSION:

The notice of the meeting was posted on December 03, 2020.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Fernandez called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Kelley, Lindenbusch, Haug, and Oetinger (arrived at 7:15 p.m.)
Absent: Commissioners Douch & Wilson (excused)
Staff: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Chair Fernandez read an opening statement.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 10, 2020

Commissioner Lindenbusch made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted.

Vice Chair Fritz seconded the motion.

VOTE:

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Kelley, Lindenbusch, and Haug
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Commissioners Douch, Oetinger, and Wilson

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA: None.

5. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

Commissioner Lindenbusch expressed a conflict with item 6A as he works with Generation Housing and has been taking the lead on their RHNA advocacy. As such, he noted that he would be recusing himself from that discussion. Further, since he works broadly on housing advocacy including the affordability, diversity, and supply of housing here in Sonoma County, he recused himself from item 6B due to the likelihood of a potential conflict of interest, despite no action being taken.

Commissioner Lindenbusch thanked Director Svanstrom and City Attorney McLaughlin for their guidance on these conflicts.

The Commission advanced Agenda Item 7 on the agenda due to Commissioner Lindenbusch's conflicts with 6A and 6B.

7. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Svanstrom updated the Commission on the following:

- Past and upcoming Council items.
- Local election results.
- Selection of new Mayor, Una Glass, and Vice Mayor, Sarah Gurney.
- Authorization and issuance of an RFP for an online permitting system.
- Approval of a Sign Program for 231 Petaluma (the southerly building of the CVS complex).
- The Benedetti Car Wash item, which the Planning Commission recommended denial of is scheduled to go before Council on December 15.
- Also, on December 15, there will be a presentation from the County on the purchase of the Sebastopol Inn.
- Upcoming Planning Commission interviews.
- The Design Review Board application period will be extended to allow for additional applications, and interviews will be scheduled for the applications received.
- City sponsored parklets for outdoor dining, there are currently three and a fourth may be added.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Fernandez asked for questions of Director Svanstrom.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

For the Benedetti hearing with the Council, is a member of the Planning Commission going to be in attendance? We had a rotational liaison list at one point.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes. Chair Fernandez is the liaison for December, so he will be joining us for that. I do want to thank the Commission for engaging in that. I think it's critical when there are recommendations to the Council for them to have access to the Planning Commission in case they have questions.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

I emailed the City Council regarding funding for the parklets. It seems like the parklets need to be weatherized in order to fully function during the winter. I was wondering if there had been any discussion of that. It seems like a lot to ask small business owners at this time to construct parklets.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Commissioner Haug, your comment, which was forwarded on to the City Council was requesting some additional funding beyond what has already been funded. The City Council already authorized, at their earlier meetings and budget hearings, the purchase and installation of all the barricades which has been done, which is not an insignificant cost. The Core Project, which Vice Chair Fritz is in association with has donated money to each of the businesses that adopted the parklets to be able to use for furnishings. One of the business owners worked with Balletto wineries and they donated some of the wine barrels that are out there for use during this time. Councilmember Rich, prior to being on the Council as a member of the rotary volunteered the rotary to donate some time assistance with constructing various things and she is continuing in that role. Councilmember Rich coordinated Artstart to do the painting of the barricades for beautification. In terms of whether people want tents or heaters, we are leaving that up to the business owners who have adopted them. There are some logistics, for instance, tents cannot be enclosed more than 50% so there are limitations with that. We also want to make sure we are not creating trip hazards. They all do know that they can do tents, normally our Fire Chief does an inspection for that which, since they are City sponsored, he is not charging for his time to do that like he would if it was a private business. I have heard that there are some concerns about the heaters in terms of how they would get them in and out at night, ensuring security, etc. I do know that Commissioner Haug's email was forwarded to the Council, I do not know of any action that the Council has taken in response.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

In San Francisco, they have them all over, they seem to work well, and they are weatherized with roofs using corrugated plastic and what not. It just seems that if we are making the investment, we should go all the way and make sure the parklets are both attractive and inviting and also functional throughout the winter. That is my main point. For the Sebastopol Inn presentation by the County, I already submitted my comments. They are part of tonight's meeting as well as public comment. What is the best way for community members to submit comments regarding that, or to participate in that meeting?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Any comments should be submitted to the City Clerk. As with any Council item, if they are submitted by midday tomorrow, they will be included in the agenda reports. If they are submitted after that, they will still be forwarded on to each of the Council members. As I noted, end of day Thursday is the latest that the City Council packet is generally published and that will include the Zoom link and information, which will also be up on the City's website under the meeting section.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

Will Chair Fernandez also be the liaison for that as well since he will be there anyway for the Benedetti item?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes, he will be there due to the Benedetti item.

Luke Lindenbusch, Commissioner

Is there an update on where we are at with the Climate Action Subcommittee?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

The Council, at their December 1 meeting, reviewed committee assignments. The Council assigned Councilmember Rich to the Climate Action Subcommittee. That will be starting with a kickoff meeting soon. Associate Planner Montes is the staff liaison.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

My apologies to all of you for being late. Do we have a quorum tonight and did we approve minutes from the last meeting?

Evert Fernandez, Chair

We do have a quorum, and we did approve the minutes from the last meeting prior to you be here. We need four for a quorum and we have six.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

Did we approve the minutes?

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Yes.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

I actually had something that was substantial.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

T Chair would need to reopen that item for them to be reconsidered.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Well, if it is significant, perhaps we should have a motion to reopen the minutes?

Commissioner Oetinger made a motion to reopen the minutes.

Commissioner Haug seconded the motion.

VOTE:

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Kelley, Lindenbusch, Oetinger, and Haug

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Douch and Wilson

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Chair Fernandez can you please conclude your questions of staff during the Planning Director's report prior to reopening the minutes?

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I have a couple questions. Any information that we may discuss today regarding the Sebastopol Inn, because of the timing tomorrow will any of that information be able to be forwarded?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes. I am the person assisting with putting together that agenda report. I'll talk about this more under the housing item. Any items from this meeting, I will automatically incorporate into the list of questions and concerns that we have which will be in the agenda report. If any of the Commissioners want to follow up with any written materials

after the meeting, if you can please email that to me by noon tomorrow, that would be great. I should be able to incorporate them as well.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Regarding the parklets. I agree with Commissioner Haug that that is asking a lot of our businesses and so forth. I know the City is also strapped for funding, but I would encourage the City and the community to see if we can find resources for those businesses to be able to enclose that portion of it, heaters, and so forth. I am of the opinion that it is important to offer that, as opposed to having the businesses do it themselves on top of everything else that they are going through. With regards to the regular Planning Commission meeting of December 22, no decision has been made as to whether or not that meeting will be held, is that correct?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Thank you, Chair Fernandez. Yes, we will likely be cancelling the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting of December 22, but I do want to wait. We traditionally do not cancel it until the week before, when we will be putting out the packet, just to be sure that if there are any emergency items that need to come up, so we are not cancelling a meeting and then scheduling a special meeting. You and I consult on a regular basis and we can confirm that next week.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Yes. I just want to let everybody know about that.

Hearing no further questions, Chair Fernandez concluded this item and returned to rereview and action on the draft minutes as requested by Commissioner Oetinger.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

I was concerned that on page 12, when we were forming the Ives Park Subcommittee, the minutes should reflect that both Chair Fernandez and Commissioner Oetinger expressed interest in working on the subcommittee. I think there were some more comments with Commissioner Lindenbusch who offered to yield his position. It is not clear at all in the minutes who was on the subcommittee which also begs the question, should we have voted to approve a subcommittee and the volunteers for that to formalize it in some way? I am just saying this because I feel awkward now because it does not indicate that I am on the subcommittee. That is my comment, the minutes should be reflected to say that both of us volunteered, Chair Fernandez and me. Some comments should be made about who was on the committee? I do not see that. I think it needs to be formalized as a separate issue, at some point.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

One of the things that we can do is put a formal agenda item forth I know there was a kickoff meeting of the subcommittee to take a look at some things. I can work with the Chair to create an official item to revisit that if you would like.

Luke Lindenbusch, Commissioner

I believe that on an ad hoc committee like that, doesn't the Chair just appoint those individuals, or do we need an initial approval by the Commission for that?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

In this meeting there was consensus to that. Yes, for an ad hoc committee, a couple people to go look at something, that is fine.

Luke Lindenbusch, Commissioner

I did not want to delay acting on that by waiting for a future meeting, especially since the regular meeting of December 22 is likely being cancelled. If we can list the understanding of Commissioner Oetinger, Commissioner Haug, and myself serving on the subcommittee?

Luke Lindenbusch, Commissioner

I attended the first meeting. I think the minutes reflected that Chair Fernandez was going to act in more of an alternate position.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Yes, that would be my preference. Since you are participating, that is great, thank you for doing that. Commissioner Lindenbusch, in your understanding, who is on that subcommittee?

Luke Lindenbusch, Commissioner

Commissioners Oetinger, Haug and Lindenbusch.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Okay.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Right, with Chair Fernandez as the alternate. That is my understanding as well. It sounds like we may have missed Commissioner Oetinger in the minutes.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

I think the minutes should include a list of the people who were appointed.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

We will get those added.

Commissioner Lindenbusch made a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

Commissioner Oetinger seconded the motion.

VOTE:

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Kelley, Lindenbusch, Oetinger, and Haug

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Douch and Wilson

Commissioner Lindenbusch recused himself from Item 6A.

6. DISCUSSION:

A. UPDATE ON BAY AREA REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION (RHNA)

Director Svanstrom presented the staff report.

Chair Fernandez asked for questions of Director Svanstrom from the Commission.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

In terms of our current round of meeting 120 units, you mentioned that we are doing well in certain areas, I am just wondering what the overall picture is of those 120 units, what is the breakdown? Where are we doing well, and where are we not doing so well?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

We are about halfway through the cycle. We are actually almost there on the moderate level units. Part of that is that accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units are counted towards your RHNA production. Sebastopol has done a good job of promoting them as infill development of attainable housing. We are almost there on that. We have a few very low-income units from the Park Village work that we are doing that we will be able to count next year. Right now, we do not have in our count a lot of very low income or the low income. That said, it is likely that the Sebastopol Inn units will, and this is something I need to find more about what exactly the County is proposing, because there is a high likelihood, we can count those units as very low-income housing units. Additionally, in the planning world we have what is called pipeline projects, where people have come forward and proposed potential projects, but they are not yet approved and not yet constructed. The Huntley Square project, which has been to the Commission a couple times, is ten units. That is what I would consider as pipeline. I can try to do some projections with that, most of you also know that there is a project on Bodega Avenue that is 100% affordable housing at very low income. If those projects do progress through and get built, I anticipate by the end of our cycle we will probably meet all of the targets, except for potentially the market rate. We did issue permits for the 16 townhomes that are market rate on the Dan Davis site which is now known as the Barlow Crossing Townhomes. That is a good chunk of the market rate yields. I believe it is 40 something market rate units required as part of that 120.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

When is the cycle over?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

It ends in 2023. We still have quite a bit of time, and a lot can happen in that time. A lot of communities have seen it go the other way this year with COVID, where they had projects that are now experiencing financial difficulties and not being built. We are lucky that the Barlow Crossing Townhomes has been pretty smooth sailing along the way at this point.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

I am remembering that we've been in this situation before. When ABAG came out with numbers quite a number of years ago, I cannot exactly remember when, we applied to have that number reduced based on infrastructure capacity, I think regarding sewer and water, plus with our track record for housing, I am not quite sure what the argument was, but I believe that that process does exist. Would we have to rewrite our General Plan to accommodate those numbers? I think it is more than just rezoning because everything is connected in a General Plan. I am wondering if that is something that the City might consider, having built all this housing, when we look at the next phase, we will have accomplished quite a bit. Is that something that you and the City might be interested in looking at?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

That is a good question. It is certainly something I worked very closely with in making preliminary comments while the options were being designed. I did talk about the Growth Management Ordinance and I know the City of Sonoma also made similar comments. We

were in a conversation with our regional rep from ABAG, she is the rep for Sonoma, Napa, and Solano, and she said the more agriculturally based communities, the further out communities, not the heart of the Bay Area are being allocated a lot of units. That is basically what Sonoma's Director, and I were saying, that we have Growth Management Ordinances, and they are based on infrastructure capacity. The County also has similar concerns because the County's number is far, far larger than they are likely able to accommodate due to the infrastructure of limitations. Our General Plan looks at our Sphere of Influence as well. Our Sphere of Influence, particularly on the south side of town, does not have the infrastructure in place. Infrastructure requirements are major, such as a sewer lift station and sewer infrastructure all the way up to our one line of sewer infrastructure that goes across Highway 12, all of which would need to be pumped against gravity. That is in the General Plan. The year 2050 is further out than our General Plan. We did talk a lot with them about their projection for 2050 versus what is possible in the 8-year cycle. A lot of those plans are based on infrastructure and things that do not exist yet. I believe they have taken some of that into account. Whether or not we actually would have enough locations that are zoned for 420 units, I think we actually will, just based on our housing and the zoning that was done, because we have a lot of infill opportunities at various locations. We did adjust the zoning in the commercial locations to allow for mixed use development with residential on the second floor.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

I would also like to point out that our urban growth boundary allows for expansion specifically for affordable housing and we have already identified those areas near where infrastructure exists. I think that is another way to accomplish a housing certification without actually having to expand the urban growth boundary.

Linda Kelley, Planning Commissioner

Yes, thank you.

Linda Kelley, Planning Commissioner

My question is about the projected planning period, starting in 2023. Where did they come up with so many numbers with Sonoma County, I know it is broken down, the State orders it, and they have a certain number of projected units that they predict will be needed, and then it goes to ABAG and then all of that, but it is just amazing how much it jumped when we know that people are leaving California in droves. Is that built in at all?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Is Sonoma County getting an unfair proportion of it? I can send out the allocation to various counties, it is slightly more for Sonoma County, and I believe Solano County, as well. Some of the concerns and comments that I know the County has submitted, and I have submitted as well, because I think as one of the rural towns in Sonoma County, it certainly impacts us as well. Sonoma County under state law definition as it applies to our urban growth boundary, is actually defined as a rural county, one of those requirements is that you have, I believe it is 50% of your land in agriculture, or more, which we do, and that you have a population of less than 500,000, which the County does. That is something that we talked about a lot, and I think it continues to be a concern--putting housing in rural areas, is that really just encouraging sprawl as opposed to focusing where there are already a lot of jobs and jobs/housing imbalances, and existing transit infrastructure? Sebastopol has done a lot to encourage bicycle and pedestrian networks, and support transit with the local shuttles and things that we have, but the reality is we do not have the type of connection to transit, our bus headways going into Santa Rosa and down to Rohnert Park, that does not meet the metrics for a definition of high-quality

transit. I used to commute down to South San Francisco for a year of that I did that on transit, and it took two hours each way.

I think the large number that the state is distributing, maybe they did not give out a big enough number last time and they are trying to make up for that somewhat? Maybe they are looking at the overall mood? Everyone's numbers are going up a pretty great degree. In terms of factoring in the comment about people leaving California, I know a couple of rounds ago there was an economic downturn, and they did end up revising some of the projections based on that. They are not looking at doing that this time. We have asked the question, with COVID and the economic downtown, there is likely to be less housing production. One of the things that was a potential in some of their discussions was with COVID and a lot of the telecommuting was whether or not they should increase the numbers of folks not in the heart of the Bay Area because people were able to work remotely. As far as I am aware, that did not happen either. While it is great if people can telecommute, that does not apply generally to low wage jobs, so you are disenfranchising people from that perspective. Secondly, even people who are telecommuting a couple days a week, they end up going into the office and potentially wind up having a much longer commute which would impact vehicle miles traveled, things like that can be pretty negative. We definitely commented on that as well, and that would have actually increased numbers for Sonoma, Napa, and Solano counties.

Linda Kelley, Planning Commissioner

Thank you very much. It is just amazing to fathom how the unincorporated areas of Sonoma County will meet those numbers with the least infrastructure.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

To get to Commissioner Oetinger's question about our sphere of influence, right now, because the land is in the County, those numbers for any production are assumed annexations. Even in southwest Santa Rosa where areas are not annexed yet, but are likely to be, those are currently included in the County numbers. There will be some opportunity for them to potentially reduce the 'county' number if an area is annexed and developed and assign those to the appropriate city. Commissioner Kelley, I agree with you, the number for unincorporated Sonoma county is huge compared to what the rural county landscape is.

Linda Kelley, Planning Commissioner

It is all still boggling the mind how we can meet all of this. I know the stated goals are to create housing on the transportation corridors where there are more jobs, and they go and do this. It is so contradictory. Just stay strong and advocate a little more common sense in how they are breaking this down.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

I think this might be a question that cannot be answered at this time, but I was recently looking at the income limits for very low-income housing, low-income housing, moderate housing, and I was just wondering what percentage of people in Sonoma County would actually qualify for one of those three types of housing? It seems like many people would qualify for it given the fact that very low-income housing, I believe, is \$40,000 a year or under.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Pulled up the chart of income limits for members to view.

Each year these are updated based on median income and the cost of housing. Median income is 100%. This is the area of median income for households have this number across the board. By definition, basically half the people are making that. Commissioner Haug, are you asking if a lot of people would actually qualify for the very low or the low income?

Kate Haug, Commissioner

I feel like many people, like schoolteachers, for instance, might qualify for low-income housing.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes, I think that's actually part of the reason that the allocation number is broken down into the different income categories that keeps really expensive places, or places that want to be exclusive, from only developing above moderate market rate housing, and it does require them to produce a broad spectrum of housing in the community.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

If a certain percentage of the population qualifies for income assistant housing, do the ABAG numbers reflect that in terms of the percentage of housing type distribution?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes, that is the point of ABAGs numbers, they are looking at all the different levels. It does not mean that everything is subsidized. As I noted earlier, the moderate income, which is 80% of AMI, a lot of those are being fulfilled through second units, accessory dwelling units, and other forms of housing that are more affordable. Accessory dwelling units in the City of Sebastopol, I do not think we have any that are actually deed restricted to be affordable, they are just affordable by design as Vice Chair Fritz has called them in the past.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

If they are not subsidized, does not housing usually revert to whatever the local market will bear in terms of price per square foot? If it is not subsidized, it could be a smaller unit, but it would still be unaffordable, right? I always think about San Francisco, or a studio apartment in Pacific Heights costs more than houses in Sebastopol.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Right, for a place like San Francisco, and I am sorry if I am not answering your question directly, a jurisdiction cannot just count something as a low-income unit because as a small unit, you actually have to have a rent study, or some methodology of showing that. Yes, the smaller unit will rent for something that is, and obviously San Francisco has its own county median income, and I can guarantee you it is much higher than what Sonoma's is. It is difficult for cities because we do not produce housing for the most part. Sometimes, like with Park Village, we have some units there, specifically two apartments that we are in the process of remodeling and the two RV pads that we are adding. I believe those will count as additional housing units as well. We have control over that. When you do a Housing Element, under state law you do have to show what income level of housing is likely to be produced on the various sites that you are putting forth. One of the things that we do as we are reviewing housing is to make sure that sites designated in the Housing Element for certain income levels, that we have enough appropriate sites to fulfill the housing need, we actually go through and list the sites. We have a number of vacant single-family parcels, we assume those are going to be above-moderate income, they are privately owned and will probably be developed by a private individual who is going to live in a single-family home, things like that. If it is categorized and you have a

certain type and number of units assigned to it, you have to make certain findings to be able to approve housing. That is, if it is designated as low income, that it is likely to be appropriate for low income and meeting those targets in your Housing Element. You can do something other than low income, but you have to show that you still have enough housing inventory, enough sites available that could be developed with that, to be able to approve it as something other than that. Similarly, if you approve it for less than the number of units you think you are going to get on that site, for instance the Davis Townhomes, was estimated in the Housing Element at 30 units, the owner only wanted to do 18 units on it. That was fine because we actually have a lot more sites in our inventory. It is somewhere in the range of 200 units that can be developed. We have enough in our inventory from the current Housing Element that we could approve it on a lower level that was more appropriate given the floodplain.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

I understand the metrics of it. I just wonder how it applies in the real world as price per square foot fluctuates over time. I am an advocate, obviously, for affordable family housing, which I think at a certain point will have to be subsidized because it is larger units. But yes, that answers my question. In terms of, "moderate income level housing," it could easily slide to be upper income or lower income depending on the economic context of the area. The goal to me seems like you are building a multiplicity of housing types in the hope that it will mesh with the local economic circumstances.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I do not know if you are familiar with the details of the Housing Element from the last time it was developed. I do want to emphasize, yes, there is a lot of numbers and analysis that goes into it. The RHNA target number is only one element of the Housing Element. Then we go through and do an analysis of our existing housing stock, we are looking at new units being created, being a variety of income levels. The reality is that existing housing stock also has its own life cycle. Something might start out as a brand-new home and it is going to cost more but it has a life cycle and at some points those can modify as well. It can also go the other way. A lot of what Marin County was experiencing when I was working there was that people were buying World War II bungalows that were really affordable housing and then tearing them down and maxing out their square feet and what they can do on the site and then they were multimillion dollar homes in the end. One of the concerns that we had there as a city was that we were losing that more affordable housing stock and that transition from a more affordable unit to a very high-end unit which is not accounted for at all in the RHNA numbers. Protecting existing affordable housing is something that we have had a lot of discussion about. I know this Commission has also had questions and comments about that over time, more as it relates to vacation rentals and transition to short-term rentals instead of longer-term housing. The Housing Element looks at all sorts of factors, it looks at your population, the existing housing stock, all of that as you are doing a housing element and planning for future housing.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I noticed on the report there were areas identified for housing that were actually environmentally sensitive areas or inappropriate locations. I know that they were going to try to correct that, has that been addressed?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I have submitted comments. One of the things that we did as part of the process that ABAG has, is they asked us for all of our current zoning information. They looked at it and they added that into their software modeling and projection along with a lot of other factors. They did end up providing each of the cities in the county, after a number of

discussions, their models of where they were looking at housing, and allowed us to make comments and potential corrections to that. I know that my comments for Sebastopol, yes, there were some sites that were environmentally sensitive, frankly, they had a couple of sites in the county, not the city, that ABAG has as Priority Conservation Areas in the Laguna areas, both to the north and east of town, and south on 116. I also focused on some of the areas that had environmental overlays. They did not have a huge number of those that were designated for housing. But they did have the floodplain, and that is something that, having seen how devastating it can be to people, I have commented pretty strongly on both for where they had allocated housing in floodplains in the modeling. I submitted a comment as the Planning Director on the EIR for the floodplain issues because they have to do an EIR/CEQA report on it. To me, it was interesting because they included areas of sea level rise along the Bay, which is future flooding, but they did not include riverine flooding at all, so the areas along the Russian River and Laguna were not included in their assumptions. That is one part that I feel strongly they should be doing. As someone said the other day, talking about flooding, I have never seen a base flood elevation go down. Flood levels just do not go down. Let us think more proactively and be smart planners.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I assume they adjust for open space designations and that stuff?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes, and they did commit to correcting if they had things designated in open space areas.

Chair Fernandez asked members of the public if they wished to comment on this item.

Hearing none, Director Svanstrom commented that no written comment had been received by staff either.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Thank you for that thorough report. I know it's a lot of a lot of work and mathematics, I went through the site and tried to make sense of it, it's not an easy thing to understand. I am glad that hopefully we will have some good representation from our area and the county and thank you for representing Sebastopol and for your work on that.

B. HOUSING ISSUES/AFFORDABLE HOUSING DISCUSSION (OPEN DISCUSSION) – No written report

Director Svanstrom introduced Item 6B and provided guidance on Commission feedback.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

I guess I am a little confused. Are we supposed to be talking about the Sebastopol Inn right now?

Evert Fernandez, Chair

That is an item that can be discussed now. Basically, it is open ended so if you have comments on that, or comments on other projects coming up, or things in general, those can be addressed at this point.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

Well, my thoughts about the Sebastopol Inn are largely expressed in the public comment that I submitted to this body which have been posted on the City's website. I also submitted my public comment to the City Council. I believe the County should re-engage

our normal protocols. I believe the County should develop conditions of use for the inn through community input, the Planning Commission, and City Council. I know that the grant allows the County and Supervisor Hopkins to circumvent normal procedure, but I do not think that we should encourage that. I am not sure why an elected official would want to not follow local rules. I do not think that we should encourage that in our local politics. I think the County should abide by the rules that all the other applicants we have had heard, such as Benedetti's have had to follow. I think it shows a disrespect to our local landowners, small businesses, and residents for Supervisor Hopkins to actively disengage from our local protocols and to apply for something that we had no community input in. The Sebastopol Inn, as I mentioned, Project Homekey was a completely voluntary self-selecting application. There is no reason why the Supervisor could not have gotten community input prior to applying for it from my perspective. It seems that the owners of the Hotel Azure and Sebastopol Inn, it is the same owners for both properties. They had more insight into what was transpiring than this body, our local government, or the general public. At this point, to rebuild trust and transparency, the normal permitting process should be reengaged. The County should not go rogue just because it can. That is what bullies do. In addition, it sets a bad precedent and undermines faith in our democratic process and ideals. I also believe, as this property was purchased using COVID funds from the federal government, I would like to see it developed as very low-income housing for people who work in our community, at The Barlow in restaurants, shops, our schools, people who work as home health aides are facing housing insecurity because of loss of hours, temporary loss of employment, or due to the shutdowns are caring for family members during the pandemic. As we just saw, the threshold for low-income housing is that anyone making less than \$40,000 per year, and I think we should use this County-owned property to provide housing stability for our working poor before they face homelessness. In addition, if we used it for our local workforce, it would also meet many of our goals in terms of green practices, having housing located near jobs, and accessible through local public transportation. Those are my comments in regard to the Sebastopol Inn conversation.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Director Svanstrom, can you provide clarification on the County's jurisdiction here, I know you do not have a lot of information.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

When a County buys a property and owns it, it is just like if the state bought it, they are not subject to local zoning requirements. Of course, as Commissioner Haug mentioned, that does not mean that they cannot engage in that. For example, the Sebastopol Center for the Arts, which is the County-owned Veterans building, they do all their own building permits, use permits, and sign permits. They even went through the County's procedures, not the City's, for their electronic sign. I know we had some complaints about the brightness of that sign. We reached out to them to see if they could, as good neighbors or community partners, work to resolve those complaints. In this case, the tenant, Sebastopol Center for the Arts, was happy to adjust those to try to help with that issue. I am sure the City Attorney can expand on this further at next Tuesday's meeting, which really is the focus for the Sebastopol Inn as a topic at that meeting. However, legally they do not need to do that. Through Project Homekey, my understanding is that through the state granting of the funds under the emergency COVID orders, is also not required to go through the City for those types of processes as an emergency action. One question is, if this is a long-term project, how are we going to coordinate long-term to make sure that it is successful, both housing and for the City of Sebastopol?

Linda Kelley, Planning Commissioner

I understand the County purchasing the property. It sounds like the City has already picked the provider. I am a little concerned about long-term. Who will administer the program on the Sebastopol Inn property down the line? I certainly would have preferred a commitment to our local homeless, but a lot of them do not want to be in any program, they are fine being Sebastopol residents that live outdoors. I guess we will see over time how it goes. I am a little concerned about how we will accommodate the number of cars that may be involved. Some of the residents will have cars, and some may have a couple of cars. One of my concerns was, are there adequate cooking facilities within each of the units? We will see over time how it turns out. Yes, it will be interesting. I do not think we have a lot to say.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Thank you. Just as a reminder, I am taking notes and these comments and questions will be incorporated into the agenda report.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

I have some comments just looking to the future and relating a little bit to the ABAG discussion we had earlier. Originally, when this town began thinking about growth management, the things we were thinking about was building housing that was relative to the income levels of the people in the county. Everyone laughed at us because it would require that 50% of what we built was in those affordable categories. Now, it seems like we are moving in that direction. I wonder if the City might be interested in considering a growth management ordinance that was based on affordability wage levels in our county, that would be about 50% affordable and for carryovers from year to year, market rates would not carry over, but the affordability components would so that you could not continue building market, which apparently, we are not doing now. I think it is something that is suggested in the document I read that you gave us as a staff report although I do not have it in front of me. If that is what the whole Bay Area is thinking of doing, I am in support of all cities moving in that direction to make sure that we get that affordable component because I think it is important in an economic balance for the community to have housing at all levels and I think we need to address all those levels now. A second point I would like to make is that for our town, we increased the housing building heights to four stories in our downtown because everything there is adjacent to services and the area is walkable. I think the same is true of the area north on Healdsburg Avenue right now because of the shopping center and the housing that is there. It is a little late because of the O'Reilly property having proponents working on it, but I think that looking at that area as its own downtown community, we could consider going to four stories in that area. It would be tricky because it is adjacent to rural areas, it would be what they call a hard edge and there might be some larger setbacks. I think that is something we could look at. Another thing that I have been thinking about for years, and years, and years is we talk about the jobs/housing balance, but there are two components to that. Using computers and the information we have now, I think it would be easier to look at the metrics to consider the balance between the jobs, wages, and housing affordability within an area to make sure that those are more aligned. Another component of that, which is my real issue because it is tied directly to reducing our carbon footprint, and maybe our own city could do this, is to look at the employers in our region, in our area, maybe just the town itself, but maybe people outside the town want to participate in this program, but it would be to have employers identify where their point of business is, where their employees live, how often they travel to work, how they travel to work whether it is by bus, walking, bicycle, or transit of some sort, and to try to come up with an average miles per employee ranking for the various businesses and then encourage them with incentives or penalties for reducing the miles per employee. It would have to

look at various different situations, some people fly, or used to fly to their places of business on occasion. I think we would really be looking at, in a practical sense, how we can encourage our local employers to hire local people and I think that would be fitting for the way that Sebastopol is working so hard to reduce this carbon footprint and reduce the quality of life of its people. That is something that I hope that the City and the Planning Commission will look at, as a project that might be funded through many sources, not only housing, but environmental concerns, it could be so many.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

A few different thoughts about this general affordable housing conversation. One thing that has bothered me since we did our zoning ordinance update, as we were going through that process, I was very much an advocate for creating a new zoning district which would allow duplexes, triplexes and I think even fourplexes, and we did, we created this R5 zoning district that allows that, and we have assigned it to exactly nine lots in town. Of those nine lots, seven of them have a duplex on them. That means that we have two lots in town, they are both on Fannen Avenue, that are identified as R5. There is one additional lot on Fannen that has a duplex on it. The other six lots are on Stefononi Court, which is a little dead-end cul-de-sac off Robinson Road. All six of those already have duplexes on them. When I first proposed this zoning district, my hope was that it would be throughout the entire city. Cities are starting to do this more and more. Minneapolis is the most famous example; they basically have no exclusively single-family zoning districts in all of Minneapolis. The state of Oregon has passed this for communities above 10,000 people. I think it is something we should seriously consider. I do not think it is going to be a panacea to housing issues, but I think it gives some other opportunity and I do not think every single property is all of the sudden going to develop into a fourplex or even a duplex, but if we had a handful of properties in town convert, that is a handful of more affordable units and I think we need everything that we can get, and I really hope that we can. I am not sure what the process is, because I know the Planning Commission had identified more properties in town with this zoning designation and once it went through the City Council review process, we only ended up with these nine parcels. I think that is a shame. I think there are plenty of examples of these buildings in town that are great, and you would not portray them or think of them as high-density housing, they would fit in any community. One example is a building at the corner of North High Street and Wilton Avenue, it's an old farmhouse, probably built in the 1800's. It is three units, it looks like a house, but it is three units, and I am sure the rents, relative to other rents in Sebastopol are probably pretty affordable. That building would fit anywhere in town, and there is no reason it could not be anywhere. That particular site is zoned high density, so it is allowed where it is, but I think that we need to think of allowing that use throughout the community. Just looking at the amount of land in Sebastopol that is zoned for residential, either single-family or multi-family, 81% of the land zoned for housing in Sebastopol is zoned for single-family, only 19% of the land zoned for housing in Sebastopol is zoned for multifamily, and I think that is a huge imbalance. Single-family housing is the most expensive type of housing there is. It actually has a bit of racist history. The creation of single-family zoning was a way to keep the poor, and in the early 20th century the poor was code for colored people or other minorities, and that was a way that cities got around that. A lot of cities had outright racist housing, like black people cannot buy housing in this neighborhood, and even though the Supreme Court overturned that, cities kept doing that, and the way they started to get around that was to say that they would not allow apartments or duplexes because that is where poor people live. I think there is a lot around this issue that we should be considering as a community. I think there is a lot of opportunity that we could have to create more variety of housing, a more diverse housing stock. I think that that would encourage or provide opportunities for people who are working in lower wage jobs, we just do not have the housing, so people do have to travel

from farther away to work in a lot of our service jobs and I think that is a problem. As Commissioner Oetinger was just saying, it is a greenhouse gas issue. It is an equity issue. There are a lot of reasons why we should diversify our housing stock and because of the way our zoning code is written, there are a lot of reasons why we cannot do that.

Another one that bugged me from the zoning code update that I would hope we can reconsider is the issue of the CO (office commercial) zone, which is mostly South Main Street, Petaluma Avenue, and Healdsburg Avenue. The CO zoning district does allow multifamily housing but only with a use permit. Use permits are really discouraging for developers. If you can have housing by right, developers are much more interested in looking at your community. If a use permit is required, especially in a community like Sebastopol, which has a bit of a reputation for being difficult to build housing in, they will go someplace else. In those districts in particular, there already are a lot of properties that are 100% residential, and there is absolutely no reason that we need to force a mixed-use project into those stretches of the community. That was one thing that we talked about during the zoning code update, and I lost on that one. That is something I am hoping the Commission can revisit at some point as the makeup of the Commission has changed since then and maybe other members share those views. Even though it is just a use permit, and from a developer's standpoint, that is not a guarantee, any public hearing makes it more difficult and expensive to do so they tend to not want to do those types of things. As an example, there is an apartment building on the corner of Calder and Main Street, it is an early 20th century building, there are 60 units in it and it totally fits in with the neighborhood, it is on a 9,800 square foot lot, those six units, that comes to 26 units per acre which sounds super dense, but that building is charming. Again, those are more affordable units. That property has three onsite parking spaces for those six units, and a boat is parked in one of them full time, so there are basically two onsite parking spaces. It is completely noncompliant with anything related to parking lot design. The two adjacent single-family homes do not have any offsite parking. The house on Calder to the west, and the house on Main to the south have no offsite parking, they have no garage, no driveway. Somehow, the 9 units on that corner with three onsite parking spaces, one occupied by a boat, people are able to park and it is not a big deal. My contrary example to that is at the corner of Healdsburg and Murphy, there is a building, it has been under development for about 3 years now, I am not sure why it is taking so long, it has been going on forever. That lot is about 12,000 square feet and it complies with our new zoning code. It has a commercial space, which I am not sure how viable that commercial space is going to be, but it has a commercial space on the ground floor as a single-family house, there is either one or two apartments above the commercial space, so that property has three units. It is 3,000 square feet bigger than the one on Calder, but it has a big parking lot in the back that meets the parking requirements. This seems to be an imbalance. We are also concerned about the parking, and this is offering commercial space, and we are afraid of density. If you compare those two properties that are almost the exact same situation in terms of their being on major streets, on a corner lot, they are about the same size, they could not be developed differently. It is a missed opportunity. We could have had at least six units at that property at the corner of Healdsburg and Murphy instead of the two or three that we got. Our zoning code makes a difference, I think, and there is a lot of opportunity, we have to make housing easier to do here. I do not think any one of these things are going to fix all of the housing issues. I think Commissioner Oetinger had some good ideas. I think there are a lot of different things that we need to throw at this problem. It is not any one thing that is going to fix it, but the more options we give people and give developers to come to our community and build housing, I think it can happen. This goes back to the RHNA conversation too. Allowing duplexes throughout town could really help our RHNA numbers. I know people think that 420 units is crazy, but we have a housing crisis, we are so in the hole in terms of the housing we have been producing in

the state that 420 units is not a lot. I think if it is done right, it does not have that horrible impact that we all fear. Those are my general comments.

For Sebastopol Inn, I do have some general questions. Is there a duration involved in this grant? What is the permanence of this? I know there is a lot of fear and concern about this project. I have done a lot of affordable housing projects in my career as an architect and I think there is always a lot of fear of affordable housing, homeless shelters, and homeless housing. I think some of that is justified, but a lot of it comes down to management. If things are managed properly, and there is a lot of oversight and assistance for the residents, they just become a part of the community and you do not even really think about it. That is an important piece of it. I also had a question about the cooking facilities. If this is going to be some type of permanent housing, are people going to have opportunities to cook? How is that going to work? I know there are fair housing laws and things, but I would hope that Sebastopol's homeless residents would get some priority to live there, that would be great. We obviously have a homeless population here. It would be great to be able to prioritize members of our own community if that is possible. I have concern about losing a hotel. No, it is not a huge hotel, but we do not have a lot of hotel rooms and Sebastopol is a tourist destination. Hotels are an important source of revenue as well. I do have some concerns, not just about the loss of TOT tax, but also the money that tourists spend in town. Hotel Sebastopol seems to be lingering, unfortunately, that is not going to be coming online any time soon. That is a totally different rate and visitor than Sebastopol has been attracting.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Thank you, some good comments there. I will tail into that part as far as starting with the affordable housing portion, try to think outside the box, and trying to look at low hanging fruit as an example. In other words, look at the structures that are already here. For example, an individual, an architect or someone in construction, they own a piece of property, they can envision how to put an accessory dwelling unit, or to add onto a building. For someone who does not have those skills, it is not something that comes easy. I think some people do not either want to engage in that financially, it is a lot of work, and those types of things. One thing that I was thinking, and that I was glad to see the City of Santa Rosa doing, is they are holding workshops where they are providing information for accessory dwelling units, or people wanting to add onto their homes. They have some dedicated staff for that. What I envision is, as an example, someone coming to this workshop, you have got a variety of different professionals there including City staff that can answer questions such as explaining what might be possible on a specific property, and possibly even have some already pre-drawn sets of plans for different areas that can be offered. Again, trying to streamline the process, because I think there are people out there that, if they had the opportunity, if it were easy enough, they could add additional units.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I know that the City used to own a house, I think it was off of Covert Lane. I think the City needs to look at opportunities to either set aside funds to apply for grants, that perhaps the City can purchase buildings, a fourplex, a three plex, that they can set aside and have that continue to be low income, to have that restriction on it. I know that the City is not really in the position to be landlords, but again, as Healdsburg has done, buying apartment buildings and such, it allows the City to control that, more so than having someone come in and remodel it, and then it becomes a high-priced building.

We could also identify properties that seems to make sense, like Vice Chair Fritz did. For example, there is a house just north of El Coronel restaurant that is basically abandoned.

Who owns it? Has anyone ever looked into trying to make it easy for someone to develop something there? There is that opportunity to identify properties throughout the city. This may not be something that City staff has the time to do, but perhaps a group of professionals, architects, construction individuals, and other can volunteer to walk a neighborhood, look at plans, and come up with ideas for what could be possible. It could be something that gets sent to the homeowner to let them know, to encourage development. I think those are things that could happen fairly quickly and that could result in additional living units.

The opportunity to assist people, our own citizens that are either already working from home, or that would like to work from home, and to help them to afford their housing or their living needs by increasing their education level, their skill level for better jobs. How can we, as a community, help individuals to increase their skill level to increase their income to then be able to transition into stay-at-home workers? The reality is that service workers cannot work from home. Those are the individuals that are mostly affected by COVID. They do not have the skills or the ability, but think about individuals that stay home, they are not traveling, there is less of a footprint, they are allowed more time to volunteer for schools, to be with their family members, to help a parent, and also to support local business because they are around for lunch as opposed to having commuted out of the area or getting home really late. They may be less likely to go out and support local businesses for dinner in that case. There are multiple benefits to that, and I think that is something to be considered.

Regarding Sebastopol Inn. I believe the last count was 120-130 homeless individuals that are tied to Sebastopol in one way or another. I absolutely think that there should be a preference, there should be some way to identify who is a Sebastopol homeless resident, approach them with professional services, and see if they can be helped. See if we can provide some housing opportunities for them. The more housing spaces that we have for homeless individuals, the better we can also control to give those individuals an option. You cannot move someone from a space if there is nowhere else to go, but if you have an option for them, and they choose not to do that, it gives us more options for that. We want to definitely keep in mind that it is not about not in my neighborhood when it comes to this project. I want to be very clear because that is what it looks like sometimes, Sebastopol is causing an issue, they are pushing back. That is not what it is about. It is about protecting and servicing our citizens, our family members, our kids, we need to keep that in mind as well. We do not want to cause hindrances for other people, or businesses to close. Those are the things we are trying to look out for while trying to provide for the homeless.

My understanding is that about \$80,000 is going to be lost from TOT which does not include the money those people go out and spend at our local businesses. That is a hard number, that is difficult to replace. I think that the County should consider that as part of their expenses, to provide some of that funding to the City for the revenue that is being lost, how that can be done. Where does the buck stop? How are we as citizens protected? I think that initially, there should be a quarterly review. Initially there should be a committee, in my opinion, of representatives from the County, City staff, and perhaps the business community to address the impacts, things to consider, there are flood risks, fire risks, evacuation issues, and parking and how it will be monitored. I think we should at least have those reviews. I agree that the way it was brought about was unfortunate, but that is behind us. We need to look forward and ask how we can work to help mitigate the impacts, to help our citizens, our business communities, and the homeless. Priority should be given to Sebastopol's homeless. There was a lot of questions, they were talking about putting a fence around the area. The County has certain rules about smoking, if you have

got individuals there initially that are elderly, they are not going to just stop smoking, they have to find a place to go smoke in that area. There will be items such as curfew issues and so forth. If there are not kitchenettes in every one of those rooms, how are they going to be provided food for those spaces? Just like we have a committee for Park Village that review these types of things, I think that whether the ad hoc committee initial committee continues in that role, but there should be a group that does that. Somebody should be looking over that. If we just wait for once a year, and then we complain to the County, it may not help, but if we are engaged, we can bring these things up as they arise and perhaps, they can be addressed. Everything needs to be in writing. The Supervisors can say, and mean, that they are going to take care of us, that they are not going to allow this, we are going to do this, things will change, Supervisors will change, if you do not have things in writing, they do not have to honor anything from that standpoint. We do not have a whole lot of leverage here. My emphasis is to a way of cooperation, how can we cooperate, let us build some goodwill and respect for our community, even though they do not have to. We should approach it from that standpoint because we do not really have many choices. We should also get some funding to perhaps help some of the nearby businesses if they need to move or convert because their business plans were set to be in that particular space, because of the hotel. By eliminating that hotel, essentially, you have eliminated a whole group of income families and individuals that will not be able to afford the new hotel or any other space around. That is an impact. There may also be an impact that more houses will be rented or used for vacation rentals because there will be a need for that whether above board or below board and that can take away from our housing stock.

I think those are the items that I have, but let us work in cooperation, let us figure out a way to do this fairly. How can we proceed? What can they provide for us? They are getting money from the state, to provide at least \$80,000 to the City does not seem like a whole lot of funding. I think it is a lot more than that. I think we just need to be aware, again, support the project, it is coming anyway, but we need to protect and account for our citizens, our families, and our kids. Now and in the future. Other than that, I think it is great.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

I want to say I completely support you in terms of seeking reimbursement for the loss of TOT, sales tax, and property tax revenue because I do feel that as I pay property taxes in the City of Sebastopol, and basically because our City budget is so low, it is only \$10 million dollars, which comes out to about \$1,300 per person, per year, any loss of revenue for us as a city will also mean a loss of service. I have been working on the parks subcommittee and we have a very minimal budget for our parks department. \$80,000 would actually go quite far given the numbers I have been looking at for the parks budget. I support that and I feel the County should definitely reimburse us for that. If there are any other additional businesses that close due to this hotel conversion, I think we should be reimbursed for that as well, because I believe it will be very difficult to fill that vacancy if businesses decide to leave because of the environmental uncertainty. To start a new business in that space, it is very hard for small businesses in California to run because it is expensive. It is expensive to live here and there is not enough workforce housing. If you are running a cafe or a store, it is hard to find employees. I feel that the City should be completely reimbursed for that because we are basically looking at lower standards of city services who are paying the same amount of taxes. The hotel purchase and renovation is around \$10 million dollars. The state is reimbursing probably between \$4 million and \$6 million dollars. I am sure you can get clarity on that. Then, it will cost between \$2,000 and \$3,000 per month per resident to operate the hotel which comes out to around \$36,000 annually per resident of the hotel. As far as I understand, the state will reimburse

for 2 years, after that the burden will fall on the County. I do believe, as you indicate, that the County does have money, obviously, and that the citizens of Sebastopol should not see a reduction in city services due to a project for which they were volunteered and had no real input on. That is what I would like to say.

Chair Fernandez asked if the Commission wished to take a brief break. The Commission elected to proceed without a break.

Chair Fernandez asked members of the public if they wished to speak on this item and opened for public comment.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I will note that we did receive one written public comment to the Planning Commission, which was from Commissioner Haug, and her comment was posted on the City's website and was sent to members of the Commission. The City Council has received public comments on the Sebastopol Inn and the City Clerk will be including those in the agenda packet for that item for next Tuesday.

Diana Rich, Councilmember

Thank you, it is a pleasure to be here. Thank you, members of the Planning Commission, for doing all of the hard work that you do. For those who are attending to participate and to share their perspectives also, as a new member of the City Council here in Sebastopol, I was very eager to listen in and hear what the comments were. I just want all of you to know that I have been listening very carefully and have been taking notes. I will also pay attention to the notes that Director Svanstrom will be forwarding, I really appreciate the genuine concern for business interests, for resident interests, and what I hear coming through in terms of compassion, but a balance for that concern and that compassion also needs to be extended to our community, our homeless, our residents, and our businesses. I particularly appreciate the specific and very concrete suggestions that I have heard here from Commissioner Haug and also from others, including Chair Fernandez. It is clear that there has been a deep thought process by many people in the room here, not just in emoting about it, they are recognizing what can we do moving forward in order to hopefully be more comfortable with the outcome that we will be facing here in Sebastopol, and I encourage anyone to email me with any comments or questions. I do have an official email address, it is drich@cityofsebastopol.org, but everyone knows how to find me anyway. Thank you for all your comments. I promise I will bring them forward in my role as a member of the City Council.

Neysa Hinton, Councilmember

I have been listening to the meeting since the beginning and I just want everybody to feel assured that while we have no technical jurisdiction, we have been working hard behind the scenes to try to mitigate the impacts to our community on this issue and have been doing our research. We have to submit comments by tomorrow so I held my comments to listen in tonight, and hopefully will include comments from this meeting in the comments I submit for the County, and then we will be taking it on next Tuesday night. I just wanted to reassure the public that we are working on it, and while we have no jurisdiction, we are hopeful that this will both serve our vulnerable community of homeless as well as have a balanced effect on our whole community, because at the end of the day that is what we really need. Thank you so much.

Oliver Marks

Our total 2019 County homeless expenditure was 136 million in the county with no reduction in the number of our 3,000 street dwellers who are sadly now growing fast in a

major economic depression. In 2020, the state governor provided the county over 20 million to buy Santa Rosa's Hotel Azure and the Sebastopol Inn at Gravenstein Station for permanent conversion of the 31 hotel rooms into living spaces for the homeless at \$360,000 a room. Sebastopol has been forced to sacrifice our only downtown hotel, jobs, and tax revenues in an opaque and autocratic purchasing imposition on our small community. Last year, Supervisor Hopkins and Supervisor Zane were effusive about the benefits of tiny homes on County land and infrastructure which cost around \$8,000 for each heated and air-conditioned unit. Today the County could very quickly provide over 2,000 tiny homes on our land for the price of the two hotels, but instead we are railroaded into providing 31 tiny rooms for tiny amounts of people. Meanwhile, Sonoma Applied Village Services is struggling to crowdfund \$200,000 for local homeless tiny home and RV space while the County is blowing the budget on grandiose schemes for a few people. The 2020 grand jury report findings specifically state homeless services need to be spread out across the entire county. There are now multiple urgent planning concerns that will need answering before any conversion or occupancy of the Sebastopol Inn assuming County and CDC ownership. By the assessment standards of our County, we have many hard working, low-income local citizens who need accommodation and who qualify for housing. Will they be considered as tenants to the rooms? The County currently squanders huge amounts on outsource nonprofit services partners. Who will be managing the Sebastopol Inn, what security measures will be put in place at transfer ownership, what sobriety rules will be put in place for occupants, what is the maximum occupancy of the 31 rooms? Our HUD continuum of care board oversight changed a lot this week, yesterday. What will this mean for the County and the CDC? What are the long-term funding prospects and commitments? Will the County compensate for lost TOT revenues and where from? What implications will this have on local concerns? You have struggled through onerous planning compliance on a previous understanding. Sebastopol focuses on nurturing tourism revenue generation. We can be sure Piazza Hospitality, we watched them closely to see if Sebastopol is genuine in honoring this commitment to developing jobs for our community with their ambitious hotel project. In a normal democratic world, all of these questions would have been satisfied prior to any decision to purchase and convert the hotel. Sebastopol City Council and citizens are forced into a reactive subordinate role to these new owners. Let us all make sure they have to adhere to the same tight regulations and planning codes as everybody else. Thank you.

Jill

As a citizen of Sebastopol and a business owner in Gravenstein Station, I just want to tell you that I am frustrated, and I feel very defeated. Coffee Catz is up for sale as well as Katmandu restaurant in Gravenstein Station. We have a real estate agent looking for a new location for us in another city in Sonoma county. Our decision to move is still up in the air, but we just cannot see how it is appealing to have a business in an area that already has so many issues with homeless individuals, loitering, sleeping on our doorstep, going through the trash, et cetera. Just last night, a gentleman was sleeping on the tables at Coffee Catz while I left our business at 9 p.m. I love Sebastopol and I have shown it, I have shown it by being a volunteer and a leader on a variety of nonprofit boards, we own a home in downtown Sebastopol. After the town hall meeting a few months ago, I then realized that the leaders in the county and Sebastopol as a whole do not really value local businesses all that much, and certainly not as much as I ever thought they would. In that, it was time for me and us as a business to start looking for a place that does. I think that what I am hearing and seeing from people is that there is a really, really gross, I do not even know the word, I just do not think anyone actually recognizes or understands the impact of losing this hotel is going to have on us businesses. We chose that location because it is across from The Barlow and it has a hotel, we have numerous customers from that hotel. Taking that hotel away takes away the traffic. If Coffee Catz closes, that

pretty much guarantees there is no traffic there. We are in that location because it is central, it is easy for people from Santa Rosa and other county locations to reach us. We just cannot see how it is appealing to remain in that place if we already had issues and now, we are going to have homeless housing there. It does not seem to me from any of the leaders that anyone truly recognizes, I just wanted you all to understand that this is a really, really tough thing for all of us to swallow. The customers that come to the hotel, I can tell you that, prior to the pandemic, we would ask everyone where they came from, and how they found us. We have numerous customers that we still ship to across the US because they stayed at that hotel and visited us. Now we are going to lose all of that business. If other businesses close, it pretty much guarantees that we will move out of Sebastopol because I just cannot see staying here and I live here, I love this place. But business wise, it makes sense to go elsewhere, where people truly appreciate the businesses and understand the importance of them in the city. Thank you.

Michael Carnacchi

After it was finalized, that they were getting the funding, I reached out to Supervisor Rabbitt and I said to him that by virtue of the County making that purchase of that property that they actually expanded their territory into our sovereign jurisdiction without consulting our Planning Director, without consulting our General Plan, without consulting our Zoning code, and without being transparent in their plans and negotiations. I said to him, for me personally, and this was when I was a councilmember, to me, that is an insult to our integrity as a sovereign jurisdiction. I said that there is one way that would be a gesture of goodwill that would make up for that, and that would be for him, and the County to give us the Veterans building and the property that it sits on. In essence, the County would gain some territory, and they would give some territory to us. Supervisor Rabbitt, his first concern was for the veterans and how that would work. Then he said, he thought a bit about it, and he said, well, it is interesting of all the veteran's properties that the County owns, the Sebastopol property is a unique situation, because it is already being leased to the Art Center. He said, it is possible that we could make that transfer and that he would be in favor of it. Subsequent to that, I reached out to Supervisor Hopkins and I hit a roadblock. She said absolutely not, at least coming through one of her representatives. I do have a conversation scheduled with her tomorrow. I do not know that it will go very far, but I think that any monies that we ask for from the County to cover our costs, it should be in addition, we should ask for, as a matter of goodwill, that they give us the Veterans Building. I just want to put that out there. I do not know if that is a possibility, but I think that with ownership of that building, then we can revitalize that part of downtown, and then any bond issue, maybe to purchase the property where the former dry cleaners were, and we could really revitalize that area of the downtown. Those are my comments.

Debby Meagher

I have owned Coffee Catz for 28 years. I have my business up for sale because my daughter has a son that is 9 years old so she is not being able to manage my staff, and I do not have any staff because they got more money than they could make at Coffee Catz, so it has been a really rough year. I just want to say that my people have been calling me about purchasing Coffee Catz, but then they do not do it because they hear about the plans for Sebastopol Inn and then they say no. I am stuck in an endless loop of that. I would like to sell it because I am 70 years old, and I have been there forever, but now I cannot. There are just too many things against me right now. I support Sebastopol, completely, and I just do not know what to do about this. It is too much to handle. I feel that they should come in and help me out here somehow because I cannot sell my business and I cannot get out of my lease. Nobody is going to work with me. I am just so

frustrated about this. I feel there has got to be something that somebody can do for me. Thank you.

A member of the public

No, I do not really have a comment. I appreciated Commissioner Haug's statements very much. It is causing a lot of concern among my tenants at the Ford building, which is right adjacent to the west. Yes, it is concerning, that is why I am tuned in. I appreciate your hard work on the whole problem. I am just going to wait and see, I guess. Thank you, that is about all I have.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Fernandez closed public comment.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I would just like to remind the folks who commented about the Sebastopol Inn in particular, next Tuesday, starting at 6 p.m., the City Council is having an agenda item with the County on this. A lot of the questions that the Commission and public raised tonight, we will be gathering and giving to the County, so they have an opportunity at that meeting to help address some of those. Anyone is welcome to participate, the Zoom information and reports for that will be available at the end of this week.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Yes, I think it is important that they hear from as many citizens, businesses, and individuals with their concerns, I think it helps. Thank you, Director Svanstrom, for getting everybody's comments on there. We will let the commissioners know about the December 22 meeting as soon as we know about that.

8. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Fernandez adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting will take place on Tuesday, December 22, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Kari Svanstrom
Planning Director