

I read an article in the Sebastopol Times about Habitat for Humanity Housing. I support Habitat for Humanity Affordable Housing. I think it's great. Yet, I was deeply concerned about a statement made by Mayor Zollman. I have high regard for Mayor Zollman and I am also very frustrated by his statement. First off, it confuses and conflates the Affordable Habitat Housing and Permanent Supportive Homekey Housing like Elderberry Commons. These are two completely different types of housing. Habitat for Humanity Home Owners have jobs, they are working people who also work on building the homes they occupy. They are fully functioning, tax paying citizens. For a family of four, they have incomes of \$54 to \$86,000 per year. To qualify for a Habitat For Humanity house applicants must show proof of income, time within their field, minimum credit scores and put 500 hours of sweat equity toward the construction of their home.

In contrast, Permanent Supportive Housing is for chronically homeless people that have are difficult to house, do not need to be employed, provide zero sweat equity and can be active drug users. Permanent Supportive Housing requires onsite management and other support structures because people living in Permanent Supportive Housing typically have addiction and mental health issues.

People living at Elderberry Commons have very little in common, if anything, with someone living in a Habitat for Humanity home in terms of their economic or employment history. Conflating the two does a disservice to the distinction and to the hard work Habitat For Humanity Homeowners put

into their home ownership and is misleading. Habitat for Humanity Homeowners pay property tax.

You can read about Habitat for Humanity here:

<https://www.habitatsoco.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Program-Interest-Form.English.10.17.2019.pdf>

The second issue with Mayor Zollman's statement is that neither one of these things is a partnership with the County. Habitat for Humanity is its own nonprofit organization that is national.

Elderberry Commons is part of the State of California Homekey Program. Elderberry Commons does not pay property taxes yet its residents use all of Sebastopol's infrastructure, police and fire – so that is a net loss for the residents of Sebastopol. In addition, the hotel conversion represents permanent loss of TOT, sales tax and tourist accommodations.

The County does not reimburse Sebastopol residents for the loss of property tax nor does it reimburse Sebastopol for increase of services by the Elderberry Commons residents.

As you drive through West County, passing miles and miles of million-dollar estates, vanity vineyards, hobby farms, Teslas and BMWs, all those folks are paying property tax to the County but Sebastopol gets none of it from the County to support affordable housing projects which pay little or no property tax like Woodmark or permanent supportive housing like Elderberry Commons.

In fact, Sebastopol only gets 14 cents of every property tax dollar while the County gets 22 cents or 63% more than Sebastopol. Yet, Sebastopol has the majority of affordable housing in West County (if not all) and all of the Permanent Supportive Housing.

If we were in partnership with the County, wouldn't Sebastopol be reimbursed for the lost revenue from the County's forced transition of a working hotel to Permanent Supportive Homeless housing? Wouldn't Sebastopol receive a higher share of the the property tax to reimburse for the loss of property tax from affordable housing project that pay no or little property tax like Woodmark, Burbank Heights, Burbank Apartments on Gravenstein Highway and other affordable housing projects located within the City of Sebastopol and nowhere else in West County or district 5?