

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 11 - PorchFest
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 3:01:40 PM

Hello Council Members,

I'm writing to you to express my enthusiastic support for PorchFest! Living on [REDACTED] Street, in the block holding the event last year, put me in the thick of it. My wife and I went out early to check it out expecting to make a circuit of the stages and then go home for the rest of the afternoon. We stayed out for the entire event! I only went home to get a snack and use the bathroom. I think it was one of the best events I ever have gone to in my 23 years living in Sebastopol! There was so much joy on display!

You all know that I'm an advocate for creating a vibrant community in Sebastopol. While many of my efforts are focused on downtown, this was a great example of how to build a resilient community beyond events downtown. I've know about PorchFest for a long time and how it started in Ithaca, NY and has spread around the country. I always hoped someone would organize something similar here, but it wasn't going to be me! When I first heard about it last year, I was super excited! And I think the inaugural event was just excellent! Better than I imagined. Everyone was so well behaved and respectful. I didn't see a single piece of trash after the event. It was a day of music and fun and love.

We ran into so many people we haven't seen since our daughter was in elementary school. It was a GREAT way to (re)connect with people in our community. I have heard some concerns that the event attracts people from outside the community. Community is more than just my immediate neighbors. There are layers of community in our lives. There is the community of my immediate neighbors, the community of Sebastopol, the community of West County, the community of Sonoma County, the community of my daughters school families, of her extra-curricular families, etc. And events like this bring those layers of community together.

And those layers are what make us resilient. And they allow us to see and understand the 'other.' And make us realize we are all on this beautiful planet together. It may sound naïve, but I think a lot of the problems in the world could be resolved if every community did things like this. This is why I advocate for the planning and urban design ideas that I advocate for. Closer knit, walkable communities are more resilient because they 'force' us into community. This is why I love where I live. And events like PorchFest help make our community strong.

One thing I would like to suggest in the future is to have a number of PorchFest events throughout the year. What if each neighborhood took a turn at PorchFest throughout the summer? We could have PorchFest High Street, PorchFest Florence, PorchFest Pleasant Hill, PorchFest Swain Woods, etc. Again, not something for me to organize, but I think it would be a lot of fun! And the fact it is centered around musical artists is so Sebastopol. It is a great opportunity for the musicians in our community to share their talents with our larger communities!

Please approved the Special Event permit before you on Tuesday and allow this event to continue to build our community resiliency.

Regards,
Paul Fritz



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