

Public Comment Letter to Sebastopol City Council

Dear Mayor Zollman and Sebastopol City Council Members:

My name is Susan Kay Gilbert and I'm a resident of San Rafael. One of my associates Beth Gallock and her husband Brad Engstrand have been residents of the Woodmark affordable housing complex for 10 months. I was horrified to learn that after applying to and qualifying for their housing there and living within full compliance of the original stated terms (she was told that the management company was unable to fill the units with farmworkers, thus they were opening applications to the general public,) she and her husband are now being evicted due to no fault of their own.

That the Pacific Companies and its non-profit partner, the Central Valley Coalition for Affordable Housing received a \$1,000,000 loan from the USDA to kick-start their program, but never fulfilled their promise to rent solely to farmworkers, nor did they apply for the appropriate waivers to rent to non-farmworkers before they rented to the general public represents a fraudulent transaction, the consequences of which for the current tenants is profoundly devastating.

In Beth's case, because she is low income, she and her husband haven't the ability to find a viable housing alternative and the rental company should be held liable for this bait-and-switch—A miscarriage of justice at best and outright fraud at worst. Minimally, the Woodmark must allow the current tenants to stay and I would further suggest that the developer return the loan and reconfigure the requirements to apply and live at Woodmark, welcoming all comers who may qualify as low-income.

It is immoral to consider de-housing low income seniors, many of whom are disabled, single mothers with children and other residents who will simply be forced to re-join the homeless population, if justice is not served. Please consider the grave and fraudulent actions of both the developers and the apartment management company, Aperto, when making your recommendations. I know you will acknowledge the injustice and aspire to take the moral high ground.

Best,

Susan Kay Gilbert
San Rafael, CA