

Dear Council Members and City Staff,

With great concern, I read the recent post in the Sebastopol Times regarding Elderberry Commons, the drug use, prostitution and extraordinary amount of police calls. Obviously, this is terrible for the nearby businesses, our City budget and our community at large.

The financial consequences are obvious – each police call represents a dollar amount that is paid for by the Citizen of Sebastopol. Each police call, which as of June 3, 2025 there have been 161(!), takes police away from their normal duties.

Each disturbance means a downward pull on our local economy and our mutual safety.

The businesses in the area never signed up to be next to a drug and prostitution colony. It is obviously a huge problem for businesses to next to such a place.

The larger issue is our community of children and teenagers. Elderberry Commons poses a risk to our youth communities there are drugs being consumed, illegal behavior and possible sex trafficking.

Why is this in the middle of our town and next to a public trail?

I argued against Elderberry Commons and Gravenstein Commons as they do not conform to normal zoning and permitting processing that are associated with housing drug addicts and people suffering from mental health issues. Drug consumption sites need to be permitted as such. Mental health care facilities need to be permitted as such, with appropriate staffing, health and safety regulations and regular inspections.

Drug rehab facilities need to be permitted as such, with appropriate staffing, health and safety regulations and regular inspections.

None of these professional requirements or permits have been met. These are facilities are not staff properly nor are the inhabitants given any rules of conduct which support a safe and stable community environment for nearby businesses, residents and users of the public trail.

The Council needs to address the serious impacts these facilities are and will have on Sebastopol's community. There needs to be immediate contact with the County to get additional funding for more police officers and there needs to be immediate re-evaluation of the qualifications for occupancy.

Active drug users and people who need to be in psychiatric facilities should not be occupants of this tax subsidized housing. The housing is located in the middle of a small town, next to a public trail in a community that has many students and young people. The increased circulation of drugs, criminal activity and prostitution poses a danger to our student population and young people. This is not acceptable.

Please act now as stewards of Sebastopol.