

Jennifer Emmons Koelemeijer [REDACTED]

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Hello! I respectfully request that my remarks be read out loud by a member of staff during the public comments period of the Informational Item on Merging the Planning Commission as I am unable to attend.

Good evening,

I would first like to thank the council for their service and recognize the time and energy they commit toward making our town a better place to live. Thank you.

As a business owner, my primary concerns are related to speed and efficiency. If we want businesses to choose Sebastopol, we need to support growth by reducing the time and paperwork involved in business permits and simple improvements, like signage. We also need to ensure that the process runs efficiently, so that design review happens BEFORE the planning commission review in order to avoid foreseeable delays. Making the process more efficient and less time consuming is critical to making Sebastopol a welcoming place for small businesses to thrive and will encourage businesses to make Sebastopol their home.

As a Planning Commission member, my primary concerns are efficiency, public access and Commission representation.

Efficiency can be achieved either by; reducing the number of monthly meetings to one per board per month and changing the order of meetings such that Design Review happens before Planning Commission OR by combining the commissions. Either of these will address the need to streamline the process.

However, it is also critical that we ensure that the public has a voice in these discussions and deliberations. Combining the Boards could result in reducing the opportunities the public has to provide feedback and comment.

Lastly, it is important to ensure that the composition of the Commission reflects the community and population who call this town home. We need wise counsel from experienced leaders, but we also need a younger generation's vision for what Sebastopol could become. We need to ensure that regular citizens and business owners are represented as well as experts in architecture and landscaping. A resident, a business owner and a resident of the nearby School Districts would provide important perspectives on how those who live here want this town to evolve. I ask that these constituents be represented if the Commission is combined.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Jennifer Koelemeijer

Owner, Gather