



City of Sebastopol Planning Department

Date: May 26, 2026
Agenda Item: 6C
To: Design Review/Tree Board
From: Tori Henkel, Permit Technician
Subject: Dark Skies Sebastopol Discussion and Possible Subcommittee Creation

Background/Discussion:

“Dark Skies Sebastopol” is a newly formed group of Sebastopol citizens. The group aims to preserve the darkness of Sebastopol skies for the health and well-being of wildlife and humans alike. Dark Skies Sebastopol hopes to support education about better alternatives to artificial light and, ultimately, help Sebastopol prioritize a Dark Skies Ordinance.

The City of Sebastopol General Plan contains a program to review and consider strengthening the city's lighting standards to incorporate the Dark Sky standards (Action COS 11g).

Dark Skies Sebastopol came to the regular April 28, 2026, Design Review/Tree Board meeting to introduce themselves and discuss their ideas.

General Plan Implementation Program:

Action COS 11g: Review and consider strengthening the exterior lighting standards contained in the Design Review Guidelines. The lighting standards in the Design Review Guidelines should incorporate principles and best practices endorsed by the International Dark Sky Association.

The updated standards should address:

- Nuisance prevention
- Shielding requirements
- Level of illumination
- Energy efficiency requirements
- Accent lighting

Options:

1. The Board forms a Subcommittee of two DRB members to work with Dark Skies Sebastopol to form new draft guidelines or a draft ordinance. Direction to initiate work on an Ordinance would require City Council approval.
 - a. Action:

- i. Nominate Board members for the Subcommittee
 - ii. Hold a motion for nominations
 - iii. Take a vote on each nomination
 - iv. Allow public comment
2. The Board provides guidance and priorities to Dark Skies Sebastopol to consider the city's existing guidelines and make recommendations for changes.