

From: Craig Boblitt [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 7:12 AM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: commons rebutal

Please review and distribute the attached document to the City Council

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Craig Boblitt

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9/14/2026

TO: Sebastopol city council and city manager

From: Craig Boblitt, concerned citizen and commercial property owner

I served on the Board of Directors for the Sebastopol Area Senior Center for about 9 years. During that time, I attempted to get the 3 major nonprofits (Center for the Arts, Senior Center & Community Center) to talk/work together. The idea of the commons rings true to my beliefs. Adding city hall and the Library COULD make sense if it resulted in SAVINGS & EFFICIENCY.

The current Commons proposal in front of you has many flaws, false data and wishful calculations. I intend to address the one I'm most familiar with – Office rentals and expecting profits to be used to support the “Commons”.

I'm concerned about the plan to depend on an additional 45,000 sq ft rent to provide income to defray costs for the city occupied space. My expertise comes from our personal experience. We currently own and manage a 7,200 sq ft office building in Sebastopol on the corner of Burnet and Petaluma Ave. In the past we've owned and managed, along with real estate professionals Jones Lange LaSalle, a 48,000 sq ft office building in Sacramento and a 10,000 sq ft office building in Phoenix AZ. Office rentals have become significantly more challenging because of remote work. Quotes in the PD article about the County Library purchasing a building in Petaluma show vacancy is 28% in Petaluma, 25% in Rohnert Park, 13% in Santa Rosa, 17%+ county wide. In Sebastopol the Colonial Manner building has 40% vacancy. Significant!! Purchasing 45,000 sq ft more than needed and depending on rental income to pay for the “Commons” 45,000 sq ft is foolish. We have 14 tenants in our building, all of which are on month-to-month leases. When we had the large building in Sacramento the best we could do was 3 yr leases with a decade at 50% + vacancy. In the committee's info they talk about triple net for the tenants – good luck. Tenants these days want a gross lease and in our case all utilities are included. This makes Sebastopol vulnerable to a HUGE DEFICIT rather than a source of funds. Cities are meant to take care of governmental and resident's needs, not manage real estate.

I cannot support the current Commons proposal at the O'Rielly property. I'm very concerned that Sebastopol will end up financially liable for millions of dollars it doesn't have. My efforts will be to protect/preserve the Senior Center and Community Center while looking for other alternatives.

I'd like to add that as treasurer for “Measure U” I URGE the council to use the additional sales tax revenue to restore support for the Senior Center and Community Center rather than spending on a proposal that has no hope of financial viability in its current form.