

From: Kate Haug [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 1, 2026 9:21 AM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Cc: Neysa Hinton <NHinton@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Jill McLewis <jmclewis@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Phill Carter <pcarter@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Sandra Maurer <smaurer@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Stephen Zollman <szollman@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Mary Gourley <mgourley@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Public Comment 9/1

Dear Council,

Please find my public comment regarding the Commons. While exciting, the City does not have the funding nor the administrative capacity for such a major development and leasing project. It would require an incredible amount of staff time, construction oversight and commercial financing and leasing expertise, which the City does not have. I do think the City should support the Senior Center and other nonprofits moving to the O'Reilly. Perhaps they can get funding from philanthropy, grants and the County as the Senior Center and Gravenstein Health are both countywide non profits?

The library can move its administrative offices to the Senior Center, which would free up floor space for patrons in the Main Building.

It would be great to get the O'Reilly rented and into use. The City simply does not have the money nor the staffing resources to be part of that move.

Best,
Kate Haug

Dear City Staff and Council,

In reading the discussions regarding the Commons Project, I am struck by the assumption that the City has an obligation to the Senior Center. The Senior Center is a wonderful organization and provides incredible services to Sebastopol and West County. It is its own nonprofit with healthy balance sheets and rents a building from the City of Sebastopol. Other than the fact that the City rents to the Senior Center, there is zero legal obligation or commitment.

The City of Sebastopol does not have the funding to move forward with the Commons Project. The Senior Center and other nonprofits might have the ability to move forward. They have the ability to generate funds through grants and philanthropy. The presentation at the O'Reilly building revealed that the Senior Center serves many people in both West County, Sebastopol Adjacent and Sebastopol. Its membership is diverse and wide-ranging and by no means Sebastopol centric.

My suggestion would be to support the Senior Center, Gravenstein Health, Cooperfields and other nonprofits to move forward with relocating to the O'Reilly building. They can move and start leasing the facility. There is no reason why these other entities cannot move forward without the City.

The City is not in a position to administer a huge project which will require thousands of hours of management, legal fees, financing documents, lease agreements, HOA agreements and other major administrative functions. Being a commercial landlord in a multi-use building that will be regulated by ADA and other compliance issues is a huge task requiring an experienced staff. The City simply does not have the human resources to manage such a project.

The City still has its debts to the Enterprise Funds to pay off. After the City has paid back the \$5,500,000 it owes Ratepayers and becomes financially stable, it can look to see if it can relocate or join forces with the Senior Center at the O'Reilly building.

The Commons Project while bold is not feasible for the City of Sebastopol at this time. The City does not have the staff nor the money to complete such a project. In addition, the City has debt to the Enterprise Funds and is also facing huge debt in terms of road repair.

The Commons does not generate money for the City. It is a resource drain.

The Senior Center should move to the O'Reilly Building. As the Senior Center has many West County patrons, the Senior Center should look to the County for funding and support.

The City should allow the library to move its offices into the current Senior Center building. This would free up floor space in the library, giving more space for patron services. The City can remain in City Hall until it has the finances to move. This would be the most economically sound and solve the space issue at the library and the space issue for the Senior Center.

The other partners in the Commons Project should move forward with the O'Reilly Building. The library should move its administrative function to the Senior Center and City Hall should stay put.

Thank you,

Kate Haug