

From: Michelle Kelly [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 1, 2026 2:59 PM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Public Comment Re: News Racks

The City currently has a Side Walk Encroachment Permitting policy in place which has not been enforced.

<https://www.cityofsebastopol.gov/encroachment-permits/>

So instead of enforcing the current policy, a new policy has been put forth.

From staff report:

“first reading of an ordinance adding Chapter 5.66, "Newsrack Regulations," to the Sebastopol Municipal Code. The ordinance regulates the location, placement, number, and maintenance of newsracks on public rights-of-way in order to **eliminate blight, protect public safety and accessibility, and preserve the appearance and functionality of sidewalks, particularly in downtown Sebastopol**. This item returns the ordinance for second reading and adoption. If adopted, the ordinance will become effective thirty (30) days after adoption.

By the wording of this policy the “blight” (description of racks) seems to disproportionately affect the businesses “downtown”, and particular attention must be paid to those blocks. Having spoken to some of the business owners (outside the downtown parameters) with the highest concentration of racks, they do not agree. They want the same level of appearance and functionality as downtown. So remove “particularly downtown”, and support all business equally.

Also what is the justification for 6 month period for removal after no response, why not a shorter period?

MK