From: Shawn-Paul O'Dell & Joyce Grabarczyk [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2026 3:37 PM
To: Public Comment Received For City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Mary Gourley <mgourley@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: agenda item #7 8100 Valentine Ave. project comments and concerns.

Oct. 20, 2026

8100 Valentine Ave. project comments and concerns.

I have come to understand how the state has limited the city's decisions about new housing developments and the power developers have. As a homeowner I have to follow all of California Building and Safety codes and it is the city's responsibility to enforce these codes and standards, but developers have been excused by the state from these same standards. It is sad that the state has decided that housing is more important than standards that have been put in place to keep people safe, both physically and mentally. I understand that even if the city just said no the state would just say go and do it. The one exception is "Health and Safety," the city can deny or require changes to be made.

I have many concerns, most fall under Health and Safety such as the trees, lot sizes, privacy, and mental health for residents and neighbors, noise during and after the project, sewer system, fire and egress, traffic and parking, lack of a commons space and a play structure,

Trees are an important part of our community, they reduce carbon and clean the air, they give us shade, provide privacy, provide nesting space for birds, and beautify the skyline. The trees on this property are of a mature age and have a strong and wide root structure. The oaks and redwoods are at least 50 years old. Any trees that are lost would be replaced with trees that are small sapling. This is not equal. In the proposal it states that the developer will try to save the trees, and not that they will. During the developers presentation to the planning committee he admitted that more than what was on their proposal would probably need to come out due to construction issues. It says any trees lost will be replaced with a 24" pot I believe. This is a small young tree that will not produce shade, privacy, or be able to have much of a carbon offset. If only the stated trees are removed the foundations of the homes are so near the root structures of the other trees that they will still die in the next few years creating a health and safety issue. Not only the trees on this property but the trees adjacent to the property will be affected due to the developer's exemptions that allow them to build closer to property lines than in the standard code. This could damage or kill the neighbors' trees causing a Health and Safety issue if any of these trees should fall causing damage to building and possibly death to humans. This also could open the city to liability for knowingly allowing this development to be built the way it is currently designed.

A standard lot size is 5000sq ft. with standardized setbacks from property lines. With the passing of AB1033 this allowed homeowners easier access to building an ADU on their property while still requiring standard set back from property lines, height requirements and such. Because the developer is putting

in 3 affordable houses they can now get exceptions to these standards creating lot sizes as small as half a regular lot size (2501 sq ft). The standard Maximum Residential Density to add an ADU is a minimum of 3630 sq ft. lot size, not all of the properties meets these standards and have exemptions. These homes will be on lots less than half the standard minimum size limits. These buildings have exceptions to the property line, are closer than the standard minimums, and are taller than the homes adjacent with windows facing down into the neighbors' homes and yards. This along with the removal of the trees will reduce people's privacy, feelings of safety and affect their mental health. Just the sight of such a large complex in a traditional single family neighborhood will affect the neighborhoods mental well-being.

I live on Valentine Ave but can hear the large fans from Pacific Market on some nights through my bedroom window. The addition of 39 new heating and cooling units even with new technologies will create a new and ongoing noise disturbance and disruption to the neighborhood affecting the atmosphere of this once quiet and calm place. The size of this project will create several years of noise and disruptions to the neighborhood from early in the morning up to 8 pm at night along with Saturdays we were told in the planning meeting. A smaller project would lead to less of an ongoing noise disturbance for the neighborhood

I have heard the city saying that the sewer system will be fine it had the roots cleaned out of them. I find that interesting because under former public works leadership I heard them talk about how bad the system was and how it parts of it needed to be replaced because it was failing and that their patches would only last so long. This summer a section of sidewalk near this development had to be replaced after it started sinking in as the soil under it had started caving into the broken sewer line under it. If roots are in the pipes it means that the pipes have breaks in them currently. What would happen if the system failed? Would the city put all the residents up in hotels while you fixed this known issue? The report also shows that it was only evaluated during the dry season and not during the wet season or even during an El Nino year such as the upcoming one. This should be a major health and safety concern for the city even without this project, let alone adding 39 more homes onto the current stressed system.

From a firefighters point of view I understand that the plans might meet the current code at its minimums, but remember these are minimums and not always the preferred or safest way. These buildings are so close together to try and keep fire from spreading building to building will be difficult as well as dangerous for fire personal to try and contain in cases of emergency. The way they are set up will be a challenge for both fire and ems to access these homes. Goldridge signed off on these plans because they met the minimums, but also it was stated that they would have preferred a U shaped driveway opposed to the current hammerhead style. After looking at the secondary egress I have concerns about who will maintain its readiness in case of fire or evacuation. Homeowner's property lines go right down the middle of this driveway and how long will it be until plants, chairs, toys and such fill up that space? What guarantees are there that this will be maintained and by who? It will not be the developer after they are built. In the documentation it states that the homeowner is responsible for the upkeep of each back yard. When questioned, the developer admits that the yards will be around 5x10 ft in size. This is about the size of an apartment balcony. Many apartments have outlawed BBQ and fire pits due to safety concerns and proximity to the building. I have the same concerns for this complex for the same reason. What happens to air quality if you now had up to 39 new BBQ going on a summer's day? Is this a

mini A&M BBQ now? I have concerns for access and egress during an emergency and the potential for fire spread due to the current design.

Traffic and parking are already a daily issue on Valentine and Pleasant Hill Ave. Many families have 2-3 vehicles and trailers. The parking is minimal and distant from people's homes. It feels more like an apartment building parking vs. a homeowner's parking lot. The parking spots also have exceptions to size. With limited amount and size of parking spots means the potential for street parking to continue to get worse. Valentine already is a busy road and I estimate a minimum of 60 to 100+ new cars it just make it busier, louder, harder to navigate, and less safe. What will be the developer's responsibility to Valentine Ave and the streets around as far as road quality at the end of the project after having moved heavy equipment down on them for several years?

As I have continued to look over the plans I realized that it has a designated open space, but I did not see any plans for that space. This development is supposed to be for families but there is only minimum room outside of each building to enjoy let alone if you had company over. Will the open space have table and BBQ pits there? What about a play structure like most new complexes for kids to play on? Will there be canopies for shade since there will not be any mature trees? Libby Park is down the street but it is regularly full with families and activities already.

To be clear I am not saying having a housing development is unsafe, I am saying this proposed housing development has many unsafe aspects to it as it is currently designed. I feel that the city council should vote no on this proposal the way it stands.

Thank you,

Shawn-Paul O'Dell

Local resident