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**Cc:** [Mary Gourley](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed RV Village Homeless Site Concerns  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 30, 2021 1:42:08 PM

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Dear Mayor Glass and Members of the Sebastopol City Council:

My name is Leah Smith, and I am the mother to a 1<sup>st</sup> grade student at Sebastopol Charter School (the "Charter School"). The Charter School recently received very limited advance notice of the City Council's special meeting to take action regarding approval of the proposed RV Village, which will provide shelter to unhoused individuals.

While I applaud the City for exploring options for providing additional shelter for currently unhoused persons, surely a proposed site approximately one quarter mile (not one-half mile, as the Agenda Item indicates) from an elementary school must require extraordinarily careful review and ample opportunity for public discussion. As the parent of a 6 year old, I am not at all confident that the Council has yet developed an appropriate plan for addressing possible safety risks for young children, particularly with the potential for RV Village to house registered sex offenders or other crimes against minors, as well as those persons who may become violent due to substance abuse or mental health issues. In your Agenda Item description, the site recommendation for RV Village at 845 Gravenstein Hwy N states that the site would "provide the RV dwellers a managed, supported, contained location, thereby addressing the substantial health and safety concerns of the RV dwellers themselves, local businesses, and the community at large." Community safety is listed as the last concern in that description, and there is no discussion regarding how the site contributes to the safety of the school-aged children approximately 1500 feet from the proposed site, or how the City plans to manage the site operations to ensure residents do not pose a danger to those children.

Although the agenda item (incorrectly) states that the school is one half mile from the proposed site, it also says that is the closest area frequented by children. However, the bike and walking path that is open to the public and leads directly to the proposed site is also used for many Charter School students and families to travel to school. At a time when we are increasingly encouraging families to use alternatives to car travel to get to school and teach our children about sustainable transportation choices, the RV Village is likely to dissuade families from feeling safe allowing their young children to walk or bike to school along this route.

Again, I do remain supportive of a program to provide dignity and shelter to unhoused individuals and understand that this is a very complicated issue where there is unlikely to be a "perfect" solution. However, the location of this program should be up for public consideration, where all stakeholders have an opportunity for a meaningful discussion of possible implications, particularly where public safety of minors is indicated. I strongly request that this process is not rushed, but carefully considered with ample opportunity for public comment, and that the City Council not approve the proposed site for the RV Village unless and until a plan for ensuring the safety of our elementary aged students can be appropriately developed *before* moving forward with this location.

Thank you.

Leah Smith