

Diane [REDACTED] h.D.

Dear City Council Members:

We moved to Fircrest Mobile Home Park (FMHP) earlier this year, delighted to find affordable housing and a supportive community within which we both could retire.

It was a difficult decision to sell our home in Novato and start paying rent, but the decision was based on the fact that, although higher than the other mobile home park we were looking at in Marin (Marin Valley), we knew we needed to lower our overhead so that we could retire with reasonable financial security. We were surprised and worried to hear the concern from every resident we have met here at FMHP regarding their recent steep rent increase. (FYI: We were told that Marin Valley Mobile Home Park is owned by the City of Novato, who purposely keep the rent low in order to satisfy the City's quota for affordable housing).

As a 74-year-old working senior, Diane will soon retire on a fixed income. Chris is retired on his modest Social Security as his sole income. We're concerned that we will eventually be priced out of our home, especially if inflation continues as it has in the past year or two. We don't know where else we could afford to live in Sonoma County. We would like to stay close to our daughter and son-in-law, who live in Petaluma - especially as we age and have greater needs for help with our care.

Please help retain the affordability of Fircrest Mobile Home Park by amending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance to limit annual rent increases to no more than 70% of the Bay Area Consumer Price Index with a cap of 4%. Several other jurisdictions in the County have already made this type of adjustment.

Currently, FMHP Owners cannot raise rent when a mobile home is sold. Please keep it that way. There are not many affordable options for seniors on fixed incomes in Sebastopol. Allowing rents to go up significantly with each change in ownership will eventually cause Fircrest Mobile Home Park to become unaffordable.

We urge you to amend the current RSO to allow annual space rent increases of 70% of the Bay Area CPI up to a maximum of 4% whichever is less. We also urge you to keep in place the Vacancy Control we have had in our current ordinance since 1994.

Sincerely,

Diane & Chris Harnish

FMHP Residents