

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] [Mary Gourley](#); [Lawrence McLaughlin](#)  
**Subject:** Letter Regarding Agenda Item #7 Amending Chapter 9.28 of the Municipal Code  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 29, 2023 12:18:46 PM

---

Dear City Council Members:

Please find attached my letter regarding the above agenda item for the City Council meeting on September 5. I am also embedding it in this email for ease of reference.

Thank you for all that you do for our wonderful City of Sebastopol!

Pam Gentry

**Pamela Gentry**

August 29, 2023

Sebastopol City Council  
7120 Bodega Ave.  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Dear City Council Members:

I am writing this to let you know my views concerning the proposed amended Rent Stabilization Ordinance, Agenda Item #7, for your September 5 meeting. As you know, the current rules allow mobile home space rents to be increased annually up to 100% of the Bay Area Consumer Price Index with a maximum of 6%. Because inflation has been fairly low until recently, this formula seemed reasonable. However, given the recent inflation levels, this rent increase is no longer tenable for low-income seniors at Fircrest Mobile Home Park.

The amended RSO proposed by City Attorney, Larry McLoughlin, states “the space rent payable for use or occupancy of any mobile home space shall not be increased, in any twelve (12) month period, more than seventy-five percent (75%) of the percent change in the Consumer Price Index or four percent (4%), whichever may be less.” I appreciate this proposed adjustment to set annual space rent increases at 75% percentage of CPI rather than 100% of CPI as in the current RSO. In our original petition, the residents requested that annual increases be set at 50% of CPI. We have since compromised upward and are now requesting it be set at 70%.

The current RSO does not allow increases in rent when mobile home ownership changes, i.e. we currently have “Vacancy Control”. The amended RSO being presented for consideration on September 5 allows for rent increases up to 10% “when an in-place transfer of a mobile home occurs.” I think it is a mistake to allow for

“Vacancy **Decontrol**” in the amended RSO for the following reasons: 1) It would decrease the value of our homes due to this extra rent increase in addition to the annual rent increases; 2) It would cause our Park to become less and less “affordable” over time; 3) It would create even larger disparities in rents within the Park than already exist, having nothing to do with the size or location of any given space.

I have lived at Fircrest Mobile Home Park since 2014. When I moved here, my space rent was \$570 per month. Currently, it is \$750 (an increase of \$180). According to my calculations, this amounts to a 32% rent increase over the course of my tenancy. Because of my concern that I could eventually be priced out of this park, I applied for affordable housing at Burbank Heights in 2016 and have been on their waitlist ever since (7 ½ years!). Unfortunately, that waitlist has been closed for years and I’m concerned that some of my neighbors may not have other affordable options as the rents here continue to climb.

I hope you will grant us our request to amend Sebastopol’s Rent Stabilization Ordinance to allow for annual space rent increases of 70% of the Bay Area CPI with a cap of 4% and to retain our current Vacancy Control. In doing so, you will help to maintain Fircrest Mobile Home Park as one of the few affordable housing options in Sebastopol.

Sincerely,

Pam Gentry, Resident  
Fircrest Senior Mobile Home Park