

Subject: City Council Meeting 1 February, 2022

Item: Ives Park Calder Creek Naturalization Project Recommendations of Planning Commission

Dear City Council,

This project is an outstanding initiative to beautify our town and make Ives Park a greater community asset. As the technical consultants who have worked on many such creek restoration projects have informed us, the current channelized creek is high maintenance and dangerous, creating a significant liability for the City. That is why it has the ugly chain link fence to keep kids out—even though they climb over it anyway.

**Optimum Restoration Option.** The first recommendation of the Planning Commission says the Stable Planform Creek option is the most environmentally sound. This alignment gives the creek its most natural condition and is the option the Council should choose. Several comments say removal of the ball field to give the creek maximum meanders and sinuosity would be contrary to the wellbeing of our children. One goes so far as to say that it would dissolve the 1940 agreement with the donor who gave the land to the city on the condition it be “*used for a playground and recreational area for children*”. These assertions are totally false. The analysis clearly states that the Planform option in fact creates the MOST lawn area for family free play, expands playground area, and creates the largest community event space.

Calder Creek runs through my property. I can assure you it is a force of nature that runs 365 days a year. It’s not as if moving the ball field would run the Little League out of town. The fact is Sebastopol has *five times as many baseball fields per capita as any of the surrounding communities!* We have **twelve other ball fields**, and the lights at the Ives Park field could well be moved to one of the other multiple fields the Little League already uses. And contrary to what one of the Planning Commissioner said, the ball park lights and noise are **not** regarded by all park neighbors as “joyful”. I’ve spoken with most of them and learned many find the light pollution and crowd noise during ball season to be an intrusion.

**Willow St.-Jewell Ave. Speedway.** A critical issue the Council needs to address concerns pedestrian safety. There is *No Entrance to Ives Park from Jewell Avenue south of Willow Street*. Instead we have a **lethal blind corner** where Willow sweeps around the park into Jewell. I walk this corner every day and have almost been killed by cars racing around it at 40 and 50 MPH.

Every option presented in the City Council Agenda (including the Master Plan) appears to straighten out Willow to “T” into Jewell and expand the park by incorporating the lonely triangle where northbound Jewell has a Stop Sign. This would eliminate the Speedway, reduce the danger and the City’s liability, and enable safe access to the park. The present Park plan redesign is the ideal opportunity for the City to resolve this problem. This is a “no-brainer” action that should be adopted by the Council without hesitation.

Thank you for the opportunity to present these concern,  
William Greenwood

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