

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Mary Gourley](#)  
**Subject:** Council Promised 1 year; Now It's 3 - The SAVS RV SITE - Public Comment 10/4/22  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 04, 2022 3:20:33 PM

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Dear Council Members,

### **SAVS - No Exit**

I have been writing letters in regards to the exit strategy for the residents of the SAVS RV site for over six months. When the site was being discussed, I asked similar questions on how the SAVS program was going to transition people into permanent housing, jobs, mental health care and drug treatment. I asked why, if SAVS had been working with people on Morris Street for a year, had no one moved into permanent housing.

### **Council Promised Site Would Close - December 2022**

When the site was implemented, the Council, on numerous occasions, said, in public meetings, the site would only last through December 2022.

Below are just a few quotes from Council Meetings taken from the minutes of meetings Nov 30-Dec 7th, 2021:

**Mayor Glass:** The goal of a site like this is to provide *transition* for people to get their lives together. There are some people that may want to live in RVs permanently. But *this is not a permanent site*. What we need to work on as a county, permanent locations for RV villages and this is not that prospective site. We may, *if we get this site going, we will immediately be looking for new permanent sites*. Around West county.

**Council Member Hinton:** I just wanted to remind the public *it's a one-year program*.

**Council Member Rich:** We wanted to make sure everyone understands *this is in fact a temporary one year urgent use*.

Funding for the site, a mix of left over COVID funds and County bridge funding, only extended through that time period.

Does Council have to keep their word when it is given in public on multiple occasions? Does the Council have an obligation to uphold their promise when it is made at a Council meeting?

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Unhoused has been extremely vague and opaque in their reports. For instance, they simply had "site relocation for the RV Village" drop off their agenda at the last meeting.

### **Rich U-Turns - Now 2 More Years?**

Now, we find out that Council Member Rich wants a one to two year extension for the RV Site. Agenda Item 6b.

<https://www.ci.sebastopol.ca.us/getattachment/Meeting-Event/City-Council/2022/City-Council-Meeting-October-4,-2022/Agenda-Item-Number-6-b-St-Vincent-de-Paul-SVdP-Resolution-Of-Support-845-Grav-N-Site.pdf.aspx>

Is this the type of community transparency and honest communication we want from our City Council?

### **SAVS Understaffed, Under Resourced**

From item 6a, we learn that the SAVS facility is understaffed and does not have appropriate staffing for the mental health and addiction issues of occupants.

In addition, a violent occupant was asked to leave the facility and SAVS has a restraining order against this person. This leaves the public wondering if the person is still in our community with their mental health needs unattended and their violent tendencies unaddressed.

<https://www.ci.sebastopol.ca.us/getattachment/Meeting-Event/City-Council/2022/City-Council-Meeting-October-4,-2022/Agenda-Item-Number-6-a-Informational-Report-from-SAVS-For-Horizon-Shine-RV-Village.pdf.aspx>

"Not one, but two, of our core case managers have had serious health issues that kept them off work for many days."

"In the middle of some major revamping, our village manager resigned without notice."

"There are villagers with addiction problems, and we've tried many paths to treatment for this serious illness. Recently, we tried again to connect with Narcotics Anonymous. They told us that they are getting requests from other encampments and are currently stretched thin. We're happy to see more homeless people and homeless advocates looking for this kind of help. We only wish there were more addicts in recovery willing to do this difficult and important work."

"Two villagers moved out in this quarter. One gentleman was asked to leave due to violent behavior and the Sonoma County Superior Court imposed a restraining order to prevent him from harassing our staff. The second villager was accused of theft when a visitor's valuable item disappeared. He was asked to leave. This incident is under investigation and a decision on whether to invite him to return is under review."

I am grateful to Adrienne Lauby for her honesty. I think her report underscores the

fact that many homeless individuals are suffering from untreated addiction and mental health issues. It also underscores the need for the funding for mental health and addiction treatment. The County has spent over \$92,000,000 in the last 2 years and has not increased mental health beds or addiction treatment to even begin addressing the needs of our current homeless population. Our mental health beds are at numbers lower than a decade ago.

Thus the funding for these sites are probably not the \$680,000 allotted for the 10 month period of the SAVS village but the \$3,400,000 annual budget of the Sebastopol Inn.

**Questions for Council Member Rich:**

1. Where is the funding for the site coming from so that it could operate for 2 more years?;
2. If SAVS does not have the current staffing resources to address the mental health and addiction needs of the site's occupants, does that impact the community and neighborhoods immediately around the site? Are there more drug dealers, petty crime and unstable individuals within close range of a public trail and a K-8 school that might negatively impact our students, families, visitors, walkers and bicyclists? Does this impact our community businesses?;
3. Each occupant of the RV Village will have received 10 months free rent, free food, free utilities. Are they required to become sober, get jobs or any in way move toward self sufficiency?;
4. Will drug use still be permitted on the site if Council grants this extension?;
5. Were all the terms of the Original Agreement met and do they continue to be met?;
6. What is the neighborhood input on this site?;
7. What do community businesses have to say about the site?;
8. Is this site legal?:

9.

Can anyone put RVs onto a piece of commercial land and let people live in them within the City Limits or is this only something that Council can do?.

Best,

Kate Haug