

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Mary Gourley](#)
Subject: Public Comment 4-18-23 RE: SAVS Most Troubling Quarterly Report Yet
Date: Monday, April 17, 2023 6:24:56 PM

Dear City Council,

This quarterly SAVS report on the RV Village is the most troubling yet. We've already seen increased litter, vandalism, and shoplifting in the area surrounding the encampment since its opening in February 2022. We'd heard of behavioral health and addiction issues on the inside but, as detailed in this report, it seems there has been an uptick in disturbing incidents - including the need for increased police involvement to secure the site.

These incidents make SAVS claim that a private investigator didn't find any local objectors or critics of the site all the more unbelievable. Take the next door neighbor who has written the city council multiple times with complaints, or the Redwood Marketplace which had to hire full time security guards to stop campers, loiterers, and shoplifters from harassing its tenants, or our neighborhood group with dozens of community members who filed a lawsuit and gave dire testimony in our appeal to prevent the site's extension. Some but not all of our experiences were documented and submitted via this online document during the appeal process last year:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YvfWN8bIIJifDr-ow_Zenn_28znY49c9C10gZmAzGFI/edit

Surprisingly, and alarmingly, the incidents described in this SAVS quarterly report are even more troubling than anything we've documented prior. For all the evidence we've presented that the site is operating illegally, it's this quarterly report itself that makes the strongest argument yet that the site is in clear violation of the city of Sebastopol's own code for temporary uses, because a temporary use must not disturb the **"health, safety, peace, comfort and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood."**

Moreover, the report raises several serious questions such as: Why is staffing in constant turnover? Why are professional security guard contracts expiring when there have been violent incidents? Why are people who are experiencing substance and/or mental health issues not being housed in a safe, institutional setting, rather than in the middle of our neighborhood? When dangerous offenders are evicted, as has been reported several times now, where do they go? Back into the streets in the surrounding areas? Why does this report fail to address these major question marks that directly impact the neighbors?

The report continues to describe the site as if it were its own autonomous zone, where a drug deal happening out front has nothing to do with the nature of the encampment. But the fact is that the nature of the encampment has everything to do with the recent impacts on the character and safety of our neighborhood. Instead of allowing SAVS to deflect blame for these impacts, the city should require SAVS to take these matters seriously while also creating a buffer between the site and the neighborhood. Instead of relying on Redwood Marketplace's security guards for enforcement, the city should have police resources at or near the site at all times until its closure.

Lastly, if SAVS is looking to impress the community, they won't do so by spending money on

a private investigator to create a promotional piece about the encampment that denies our lived experience of it. The neighbors look forward to seeing SAVS expend resources and time on the search for a new location for the site, where our schools, businesses, and homes are not exposed to the ongoing risks documented in this quarterly report. We would appreciate updates on the city and/or SAVS search efforts for the new location in quarterly reports going forward.

Thank you,

Zachary Imbrogno
Friends of Northwest Sebastopol