

## Sebastopol City Council Meeting – July 2, 2013 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council Members were present.

Mayor Kyes announced that he was moving the presentation by Health Action to the front as the Council had not yet completed the 3:00 pm meeting dealing with the appeal of the project at 961 Gravenstein Highway South yet. Evidently two hours is not enough time for this City Council to comprehend the obvious and deny the appeal. More on that below.

So the [Health Action](#) speaker was reduced to speed speaking to get through everything that she wanted to say about their vision for the health of Sonoma County and Sebastopol in particular. There are some serious issues here about teenage marijuana use, nutrition and many other things. It is a shame that this Council remains unable to finish it's business in a timely manner.

### **Discussion and Action:**

#### *961 Gravenstein Highway South*

And it still remains in that embarrassing position as it couldn't work up the courage to deny the appeal at this session either. The Council voted 5:0 to kick the can further down the road to July 23<sup>rd</sup>. On that day, a sub committee of council members Slater and Eder will report to the Council at large with recommendations for changes to the project. The sub committee will take input from any member of the public so as to give everyone west of the Mississippi a chance to scuttle this development.

#### *What They Said*

##### **Jacob:**

Is the project required to have solar panels?

Will the roof pitch affect the efficiency of any solar cells?

Didn't want to compromise the low income housing ratio.

There is a flaw in the process for development. (Ya think?)

Noted some similarities to the CVS/Chase issues.

The project is smaller than required and the developer has been generous in relation to zoning.

Wanted to send it back to committee.

**Gurney:**

Wanted to redesign the project because of it's "Disneyland effect."

Wanted to "put an opening" in the middle.

Wanted to move the elevator.

Wondered if there was anything in the City guidelines that discourages it's "repetitive" design?

Didn't think the decks should count as open space even though by law they do.

Was thinking back to CVS/Chase tonight. (She was not alone!)

Wanted to send it back to committee.

**Slater:**

Wanted a "successful out come" (whatever that means).

Wanted the gables moved around.

Had four pages of "suggestions." Mercifully, we didn't have to hear them tonight!

Wanted to send it back to committee

**Kyes:**

Wondered if the architect would like to change the lot lines (She did not like).

**Eder:**

Wanted some sort of corridor down the middle that would break the building in two.

The Design Review Board didn't know they could make changes to the tentative map all those months ago. Because of that he wanted to now grant the appeal to stop it the project.

Wanted to send it back to committee.

Statements from staff made it very clear that only gross negligence or overstepping authority could be grounds to uphold the appeal to now stop the project.

That was completely ignored by your City Council and, as alluded to above, they sent it to a committee for changes anyway.

The Rule of Law is an endangered species in this town. The spotted salamander is in better shape!

### **Discussion and Action:**

#### [Sonoma Clean Power](#)

The Council voted 4:1 in favor with Eder in the minority. There are a lot of unanswered questions about this and if you are looking for the answers here you will be disappointed. On the surface it sounds good but there is definitely a full court press by supporters to do this quickly. It could work and the City *seems* to be insulated from any liability but council member Eder's reticence is not without merit.

#### *The basics are:*

Sonoma Clean power, not PG&E, will buy "green electricity" in bulk and supply it.

PG&E will distribute it, maintain it, meter it and bill for it.

Users can opt out and continue to do business with The Great Satan aka PG&E.

Rates should "eventually" drop.

Profits will go to the county instead of PG&E stockholders.

To the obvious disappointment of Mayor Kyes, PG&E will control the type of metering- as in Smart Meters.

Tuesday July 2<sup>nd</sup> the Press Democrat reported the City of [Santa Rosa declined](#) to join. One can't help to wonder if the specter of having to work with the Sebastopol City Council wasn't part of that decision.

Elapsed Time=5.0 hours (7.0 if you count the 3:00pm meeting!)

John Necker