

Sebastopol City Council Meeting October 20, 2015 – Synopsis and Commentary

Council Members Eder and Jacob were absent.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- There was a complaint about some of the crosswalk light buttons not working. (City maintenance was already on it and the parts are on the way.)
- A complaint was also heard about the drains at the Barlow being in the wrong place.
- And there was another complaint about Rotten Robbie.*
- The Sebastopol World Friends announced a November 7th dinner featuring Japanese and Ukrainian food. Now that sounds interesting! [You can find more information here.](#)

Consent Calendar: (Approved without comment, 3:0)

- The Council approved the second reading to change city code to require retrofitting toilets and showerheads on new construction to reduce wastewater.
- [The third time was the charm!](#) After a long struggle to craft a formula business ban that was restrictive enough for them, the Council succeeded tonight. The stated purpose of all this work is “to protect the unique character of Sebastopol, maintain diversity in its businesses, and ensure that the city's businesses serve the needs of the community.”

Presentations:

- The Sonoma County Department of Health Services presented some ideas about working with local cities to reduce the use of tobacco by youths. [Read The Press Democrat April 4th article by Angela Hart here.](#)

Regular Agenda Items:

- The Council approved a resolution supporting legislation to reduce gun violence. They will send that resolution to President Obama and others urging stricter background checks, a ban on assault weapons and clips, [and other steps.](#)
- The Council is already thinking about **tightening up its new formula business ban** by adopting another layer of complexity in the form of a community impact report (CIR). The CIR has the advantage of slowing business applications for a whole different set of reasons. This is getting very complicated. Couldn't we just **form a citizens group** to [discourage anyone](#) who wants to start a business here with more square feet than that of a confessional?
- The Council considered a way-finding sign program that will standardize, improve and/or replace the signs in town. Hopefully, this will help someone who is not local feel a little less like a rat in a maze when driving through town and encourage them to actually **stop. Council Member Glass**, while approving of the idea, gave it qualified support, as long it had no **impact on the current budget**. Others agreed. Staff will work with a consultant and bring it back for discussion.

Closed Session:

- This concerns existing litigation with the [Sebastopol Alliance for Neighborhood Empowerment](#).*

A Parting Shot:

There is a new place for coffee and croissants at 796 Gravenstein Avenue. It has a **drive up window**. According to my information, you **can't actually order** at the window but you can call ahead and pick

up your order there. Well, that sounds like an **acceptable compromise** in a city that so opposed drive-up windows it passed an urgency ordinance to stop the one at CVS. **Wouldn't it be nice if that concession** could be made at the new CVS location? The sick and infirm could call ahead and pick up their medicine, in lieu of a croissant, at a drive-up window. So instead of having to stand in line, possibly in pain and/or spreading the flu, they could wait in their car. If the medication must be taken with food, they can drive over for a quick cup of coffee and a croissant. It's a win win! See the [Sonoma West Times and News](#) December 27th article by David Abbott.

Elapsed Time 2:15 (6:00pm–8:15pm)

Next Council meeting is November 3rd at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street @ 6:00pm.

John Necker