

October 3, 2021

MEMORANDUM

TO: Larkspur City Council

FROM: Joan Lubamersky, 80 Frances Avenue, Larkspur
SUBJ: October 6 Council Agenda item 8.3, sidewalks, parking and parklets

The staff report indicates that workshops have been conducted concerning outdoor dining. I am generally not available on Wednesday evenings, and I am not aware of these conversations. I hope to join your meeting by the time this item is considered and to learn more.

The issues are inter-related. For example, a decision to widen a sidewalk may require elimination of a parklet.

I would like to share my thoughts on Item 8.3.

- The title of the agenda item does not fully inform the public of the multiple subjects to be covered. It does not include reference to parklets and loss of parking. Those are important aspects of a proposed widening of sidewalks.
- I hope that noticing and outreach have been very extensive. You are considering making major changes to the heart of our town. The pandemic has absorbed the energy and attention a member of the public might otherwise devote to keeping abreast of local issues. It's vital they be informed.
- I do not know the history of the settlement of complaints relating to the ADA (paragraph three, page 3). The staff report offers options concerning widening sidewalks but no advice as to what kind of widening is advised to meet the conclusions of the settlement.
- The background information includes concerns about the impact parklets have on the aesthetic of historic downtown. I believe support of downtown business is vital to the aesthetic of downtown. I was a member of the Council when we had multiple closed businesses downtown. Those vacant storefronts negatively impacted the spirit and aesthetics of the neighborhood. That said, I hope the appearance of some of the parklets can be improved.
- Parklets enhance the liveliness of downtown in addition to supporting small businesses. I suggest the June 20, 2022 date be referred to as a "Reconsideration Date" rather than the "Termination Date," to send the message that the parklets may continue. The pandemic has taught us that government must be nimble and ready to adjust to changed circumstances if there are changed circumstances due to matters such as COVID.
- I don't believe businesses should be charged, at this time, for occupying city streets. Ordinances and bureaucracy would need to be developed to do that. The Council and staff time would be better spent on other matters now.
- Losing parking spaces on Magnolia would be a detriment to business.

These are complicated matters. I appreciate the effort the Council and city staff devote to our town.