

**From:** Brian Carroll <[bc165@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bc165@sbcglobal.net)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 2, 2020 10:00 AM  
**To:** Wixon, Mike <[MWixon@srcity.org](mailto:MWixon@srcity.org)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Woodgate Glen PUD Security Fence Installation

July 1, 2020

Dear Mr. Wixon,

We are long-time residents at 306 Harvest Lane. Our front door faces the Irwin Creek swale, and after 25 years of living here we are very familiar with the activities that occur along the path and along the rear of the property.

We strongly support the decision to install an 8' high ornamental steel security fence and gate along the southerly/westerly boundary of the Woodgate Glen PUD adjacent to the Irwin Creek swale.

In our 25 years of living at this residence we have personally encountered multiple incidents regarding security of property and safety.

The most egregious incident occurred in June of 2019 when two thieves broke into our garage by violently ripping the arm of the automatic door opener through the 2x4 garage door frame, then cutting the 1/2" cable that was securing a bicycle to the wall with bolt cutters and riding off on the bike. Fortunately, replacement of this very expensive bike was covered by our homeowners insurance, however, it was abundantly clear that this was a planned robbery. The thieves knew that this was a high-end bike, that we had an automatic garage door that would require two strong men to overcome, and that they would need bolt cutters to free the bike from the wall. This was not a random opportunity crime, it was well planned and thought out.

**We are convinced that easy access to Woodgate Glen from the back of the property at the swale played a part in this theft. A strong, secure fence along the swale would restrict access from the rear of the property, thus eliminating non-resident activity while increasing personal safety and protection of personal property for residents.**

Because our bedroom faces the swale we have heard and witnessed all sorts of non-resident activity in the middle of the night. Oftentimes it is transients on bicycles or foot, sometimes with carts and dogs. Other times it is residents from the adjacent apartment complex or other nearby neighborhoods who use the road as their personal throughfare. Sometimes they are loud and wake us up. Other times they go scavenging through the recycling bins. They have absolutely no regard for the "No Trespassing" signs that are posted around the perimeter of the property. It is not uncommon to encounter transients who are loitering or camping overnight along the swale, leaving garbage, dog dirt and who knows what else in their wake.

Along with other residents we enjoy walking along the path in the evening. Although we have not experienced any threatening encounters on our walks, it is no comfort knowing that the trees along the swale are home to transients and others who are often smoking, drinking and probably doing drugs under the protection of the trees and bushes.

We are concerned about our protection and safety. Installing a security fence and gate along the Irwin Creek swale would greatly reduce the amount of uncontrolled trespassing,

significantly increase the protection of personal property, and allow for a peaceful, undisturbed quality of life for the residents of Woodgate Glen.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns.

Sincerely yours,

Brian Carroll

Erin Marschall-Carroll

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Mike Wixon, Contract Planner  
 City of Santa Rosa  
 Planning Commission  
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July 5, 2020

Dear Santa Rosa City Planning Commission:

Yesterday I walked the entire length of the proposed 8ft. iron fence and read again the proposal to install this fence along the Irwin Creek area of the Woodgate Glen Condominiums. Nothing has changed. In fact, my walk along the proposed fence line only enforced my resolve that this fence would be a very expensive, but ultimately useless project.

The bottom of my front step is exactly 30 feet from the top of the creek. This is legally, where the proposed 8ft. iron fence should be installed. Unless Woodgate Glen is able to move my townhouse, the fence would violate this well-established building code. (Please note that the Leisure Mobile Home Park on Occidental Road was built in 2003. The fence around the mobile home park was in compliance, despite its installation right along the creek, because the law regarding the creek setback went into effect in September 2004. The Woodgate Glen townhouse complex was built in 1986, and there was no attempt to install a fence along the creek during the 18 years prior to the 2004 ordinance. Suddenly, 16 years after the 2004 ordinance went into the Woodgate Glen townhouse complex is demanding that the city of Santa Rosa grant a "major variance" so this illegal fence can be installed.) I moved into Woodgate Glen in November 2004. One day I saw someone walking her dog along the frontage road and began a conversation about the people observed walking across the Irwin Creek. I commented that there should be a chain link fence instead of the flimsy posts with loose chains in place now. The woman informed me that she was on the current HOA Board of Directors and could tell me exactly why it was impossible to install such a fence. "The area around the creeks are protected greenways. This means that the area must never have fences built which will prevent the animals living along the creek from entering or leaving; and the natural habitat must be preserved. There are laws now to preserve and to protect the creeks, so that nothing should be built to destroy them. The fences with loose chains do not interfere with the natural habitat and provide some protection from people crossing the creek."

My observation has been that people tend to congregate either on the other side of Irwin Creek or in the creek itself. (I do not see people congregating within Woodgate Glen in my direct area of Irwin Creek.) My bedroom window looks out on the creek and I can easily see bottles, cans, bags and other garbage accumulating from the people who sit on the other side of the creek. Because of the pandemic, people are more often using the area beside the Spiritual Center parking lot, inside the chain link fence. In the past, the trail on the other side of Irwin Creek was maintained by a conservation group, and the Spiritual Center had biannual clean up days to pick up the garbage in the creek area. The current pandemic has changed that and I have not seen anyone actively cleaning up the garbage in Irwin Creek. I have never, ever seen a cleanup brigade organized by Woodgate Glen to maintain the creek since I moved here in November 2004. The last attempt to install the 8ft iron fence resulted in massive

destruction of the Irwin Creek area plants by the landscape gardening crew hired by Woodgate Glen. Please note that the proposed 8 ft. iron fence would not prevent the Irwin Creek from further damage or decrease the amount of garbage. In fact, the proposed fence would have exactly the opposite effect. I walked to the very end of the current fence and examined the 8ft iron fence now in place near to the Stony Point shopping area. This fence is massive. The bottom of the fence goes into the ground and the spaces between the slats are so close together that no animal, other than perhaps a mouse or a rat, would be able to go through the fence. This is a very rigid fence, with approx. 5 ft. long sections between the posts. This fence cannot conform to curves in the land, unlike a chain link fence, but requires a very straight area of land in order to be installed. The current code limits fences to a maximum of six feet, so this fence already violates yet another city code. (Three codes are violated by installing this fence: the 30 ft. set-back from the creek; the blockage of the greenway, and the maximum fence height ordinance.) The expression, "out of sight, out of mind" would apply to this proposed fence. Once it is installed, no one will have access to the creek from the Woodgate Glen side, other than city of Santa Rosa workers. There will be three gates for pedestrians and a single gate for vehicles between the condominiums and the apartments. My guess is that people will either walk all the way to Third St. or drive to reach places outside Woodgate Glen. I have not heard or read that Woodgate Glen HOA will be issuing gate keys to all 240 homeowners in order to use these gates. So, whatever happens on the other side of the fence will be ignored. Garbage will continue to accumulate, unabated. People will still use the creek, but only from the other side; which is primarily their access currently. If something happens inside the creek, or even on the Woodgate Glen side of the creek, the fence will prevent timely intervention.

I noticed many areas along the Irwin Creek area which are not conducive to a rigid fence. Just after the road between Woodgate Glen and Woodgate Oaks there is an area which is dense with trees and ivy. The sidewalk is only inches from a small but deep culvert, then immediately after this area is a large, square metal cover, which I assume is for access to the storm drains. A large field lies between the condominiums and the apartments which ends in two large culvert tunnels and, at the very end, is the fence for the Leisure Mobile Home Park on one side and the chain link fence of the elementary school on the other. Several very large, old shady trees grow along this sidewalk, both on the side nearest the apartments. Is the proposed fence supposed to end at the elementary school chain link fence? If this is the plan it will block off access to the large culverts. This whole area is problematic for putting in a rigid fence, since there are culverts to be breached, access to storm drains to be considered and probably a disputed area with regards to the apartment property lines. But this is the area which actually is not along the Irwin Creek. However, if this is also the area which gives the most direct access between the Woodgate Oaks, Woodgate Glen and Occidental Road. No one needs to cross the creek if they just walk across this field. (The Harvest Lane area of Woodgate Glen has its own set of problems due to the proximity to the apartments. Perhaps a fence is really only needed in this area, along with motion sensitive lighting at night. There could be a vehicle gate installed along the road between the apartments and the condos which might extend all the way to the fences at the end of the field. This might be more effective than a fence blocking off Irwin Creek.) Maybe there be another plan made for this area only, since the situation is not the same in all sections of Woodgate Glen.

I walked all the way along the fence which goes along the Harvest Lane area of the elementary school. Once again, nothing has changed since I walked through here in December 2019. It is possible to walk along the chain link fence all the way to Third Street and the gate near Harvest Lane. There are still

enormous bushes on the Woodgate Glen side of the fence which are large enough to camp or hide under, if need be. The day I walked through someone had left a bicycle leaning against one of the bushes and there were a few items of garbage left on the ground. Why go to the trouble of building an 8ft iron fence when anyone can easily walk in from Third Street? I can't imagine that anyone would be desperate to get into Woodgate Glen. But why bother with an 8ft iron fence, when you can climb over the chain link fence at the elementary school, walk to the end and climb over again into Woodgate Glen. People are still going to come through Woodgate Glen if they are trying to make a shortcut to Occidental Road. If the point is to prevent drug dealing and drug use from spilling over from Woodgate Oaks into Woodgate Glen the fence is just a Band-Aid solution. The fence will actually provide better cover for people coming from the apartments and will just move the dealers into the creek and bushes where no one can see them or intervene. Woodgate Glen was never established to be a "gated community". There really is no way to effectively prevent people from entering the complex, unless Woodgate Glen wants to put guards at the entrance roads. Neighborhood Watch groups were established to have residents take back their communities by patrolling them. Maybe Harvest Lane should consider having residents patrolling their neighborhood.

There are several other things to consider before trying to install an 8 ft iron fence. 1) The cost of this fence will be \$100,000. This will cause an increase in our HOA fee from \$410/ mth to \$445/ mth if the cost is split evenly among the 240 homeowners. The pandemic has impacted many people financially and this HOA fee increase might be devastating to many homeowners. It will certainly strain my limited budget. 2) The wildfires made everyone aware of how vulnerable we are to previously unimaginable hazards. Any disaster which required people to have to leave the area suddenly on foot would be hampered by the 8ft fence. In my area, at the end of Gate Way, there is only one fire hydrant to service approximately 22 family units. Fire engines entering Woodgate Glen block the roads in which they are parked. The proposed fence will be on a frontage road with a very sharp curve, which will prevent an emergency vehicle from using it. The 8ft iron fence would increase the chances of people being trapped during a natural disaster. The traffic around Woodgate Glen during the wildfires was so impacted that many people were unable to evacuate. Imagine a disaster in which the only way out is on foot. Then imagine being trapped in Woodgate Glen by an 8ft iron fence. 3) Installing the fence will require destroying the area around Irwin Creek. In order to effectively put in the 8ft iron fence many trees and plants will need to be removed. Part of the beauty of Sonoma County is its many creeks which attract birds and wildlife. Preservation of Sonoma County's creeks, means also preserving the natural flora. The 30 ft. setback ordinance was enacted in 2004 to help maintain Sonoma County's natural beauty. This county spent approximately \$90,000 just to restore and preserve its creeks. Installing an 8ft iron fence right on the edge of Irwin Creek will reverse all the work that has been done to preserve the Irwin Creek's natural beauty. This fence will do the opposite of its original intention. It will cause more harm than good. There are other more viable solutions to Woodgate Glen's problems than an expensive, useless, eyesore. I hope that the City of Santa Rosa Planning Commission will agree with me and will vote against the proposed 8ft iron fence along the Irwin Creek area of Woodgate Glen.

Sincerely:

Jennifer Cook



## Wixon, Mike

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**From:** DeAmbra Foreman <deambra@garretthardware.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 7, 2020 2:46 PM  
**To:** Wixon, Mike  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Woodgate Glen security fence

Hello, I am writing to you about the proposed security fence for the Woodgate Glen community. Our unit is right on the service road that runs along Irwin creek. We bought our unit in the beginning of 2013. Since that time, the crime rate in our community has risen dramatically on a yearly basis. I have decided to limit my examples to what are the most concerning for me.

Often my husband and I will come across a hypodermic needle on or near the service road. The last needle was spotted by my 13 year old daughter.

Four years ago a bicycle was taken from our garage.

Two years ago our car window was smashed and our car was ransacked.

A few years ago I was walking my dogs on the path and was targeted by a man who followed me home. Once I was inside he pressed his face up against my living room window to see inside. I yelled that I was calling the police and he ran off crossing the creek onto the other side.

Last August our daughter (12 years old at the time) and a friend went to Olivers for some chips. On the way home they were approached by a transient man from the creek bush. He apparently had mental issues and was screaming obscenities and chased them for a short way. Once home my crying daughter revealed that she had wet her pants in fear.

I fully support the installation of the fence and believe that if it had been up it would have prevented most if not all of these occurrences. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

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**DEAMBRA FOREMAN**

GARDEN DEPARTMENT  
PET DEPARTMENT  
MANAGER

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