

**Garcia, Kami**

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**From:** Andy Shrader [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 24, 2022 12:01 PM  
**To:** -- City Clerk; Barrett, Teresa; Pocekay, Dennis; McDonnell, Kevin; King, Dave; Healy, Mike; Barnacle, Brian; Fischer, D'Lynda  
**Subject:** Fairgrounds & Live Oak Charter School item tonight

---Warning: Use caution before clicking any attachments. THIS EMAIL IS FROM OUTSIDE OUR EMAIL SYSTEM.---  
Dear City Council,

I write today about the status of Live Oak Charter School and the future of the Fairgrounds.

My wife was hired by a company in San Rafael a year ago, while we still lived in Southern California. Since she was able to work remotely before relocating, we took our time examining the various communities around the area to see what would be best for our two children, who are 6 and 8, including Berkeley, San Rafael, Novato, and Sebastopol. The most serious consideration for us was finding another Waldorf or Waldorf-inspired school based within a tight-knit community. It wasn't even close. Petaluma was far and away the best choice, we were quite pleased when both kids were accepted into Live Oak Charter School, and we are thrilled with the community we have found there in a very short time frame. Parents work hard funding and volunteering to improve and maintain the school so that it operates well for our children.

In lockstep with the Petaluma City Council's climate emergency efforts, we see the Waldorf school model as modeled at Live Oak as the best way to prepare our children for the climate challenges ahead, through strong community-building and hands-on training that includes growing food and raising chickens. That said, we have been quite concerned at the lack of attention the current managers of the Fairgrounds pay to Live Oak. There is an entire building we cannot use due to mold issues that have not been addressed, which is a waste of city resources. And that is the tip of the iceberg, which includes facility deterioration and deferred maintenance that will soon reach a point of no return.

As a recent transplant from concretized Los Angeles, I also want to urge you to fight hard to protect the all-too-rare open space at the fairgrounds. Given all the needs for low income housing and the rest, it is easy to say, let's build here. But then your open space is gone forever as is the higher quality of life it supports. I believe the migrating birds I often see landing in the open fields would agree if they could testify.

As you act tonight, It is important to safeguard the future of the Sonoma-Marin Fair, continued to protect the very rare open space that exists here, and, most important for Live Oak Charter School, it is vital to emphasize a more direct management by the City of the property, so that Live Oak can continue to prosper and more properly guide its own path forward. Live Oak is a vital part of your thriving community and is actually inspiring people to move to and put down roots in Petaluma. As a parent of children who will be enrolled and engaged in the school and in the larger Petaluma community for the next decade, I urge you to take the necessary steps to protect this incredible community resource.

Respectfully yours,

Andy Shrader