

Every time I see this ordinance I am suspicious of the motivation. I do not see the reason for it. Do we have reason to believe that outside agitators will overrun Yountville and block traffic?

What it does do is put residents on notice that their freedom of speech is not free and must be arbitrarily approved by the powers that be. What if there is reason to protest or express something about the very people who hold that power?

When there is a reason to protest or express some community idea, it will be a deterrent to have to plan ahead at least 5 days and wait around for some approval before calling others to action. It effectively kills the ability to gather, to discuss, and to invite others to participate. And the idea of charging a fee to assemble is antithetical to what this community started out to be: open, welcoming, and tolerant.

This ordinance feels very much like the things that are being passed around the country that curtail rights and freedoms. Wrapped up in all the talk about keeping people safe, it takes away more than it protects.

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