

# The East Santa Cruz Story

You know, friends, it's a funny thing how a newspaper can present accurate facts and figures about a case and yet miss the story behind it all. I do not say this to be critical, but rather to point out what an elusive thing the "real story" can be. Take for example the stories you have been reading concerning the city's preliminary general plan, and the controversies wrapped around it.

On the surface this would appear to be a controversy between two adverse groups, namely the City Planning Commission and the East Santa Cruz Businessmen's Association. And yet this is difficult to visualize since both groups are dedicated to the same purpose—"making Santa Cruz a better place for all of us to live."

Accepting that statement as the truth, what then is the reason for the differences of opinion that exist?

To begin with, the city planning department prepared and presented the original preliminary plan pertaining to zoning. This plan depicted the East Santa Cruz commercial area as cut down to the small triangle bound by Branciforte, Soquel and Water. Seeing this, and assuming that the plan portrayed the thinking of our city government, the businessmen in East Santa Cruz became alarmed.

To rectify what appeared to be a serious mistake in planning, the Association sought out the chairman of the planning commission for an explanation, and the Manager of the Chamber of Commerce to help defense against what appeared to be a hostile move.

A meeting was held immediately thereafter between city officials and members of the East Santa Cruz Businessmen's Association, at which time it was mutually agreed that the original plan was not realistic and did not deserve further consideration.

At this same meeting, the members of the East Santa Cruz Planning Committee presented to the city officials a plan for East Santa Cruz that they had developed in committee meetings and which had been endorsed by the membership of their Association for presentation to the City Planning Commission. It is the endeavor of the Association to have the plan for East Santa Cruz included in the city preliminary general plan. It is the opinion of the Association that this plan corrects existing inadequacies in zoning and plans adequately for the future growth of the area.

Here in essence is the plan submitted by the Association



## **Here in essence is the plan submitted by the Association:—**

1. The deepening of existing commercial zoning along Water Street and Soquel Avenue from its present depth of 100 and 125 feet to approximately 250 feet.

(A) The purpose here being to make existing commercial property more usable, so that parking and commercial buildings may be allowed to develop.

2. The changing of the area immediately behind the commercial zone from low density housing to high density.

(A) The purposes here being to increase the number of people within walking distance of the stores—particularly senior citizens who may not drive, and to bring the city additional revenue without the extension of expensive utilities and streets.

THE ASSOCIATION REALIZES THAT THESE CHANGES ARE TO APPEAR ON THE "MASTER PLAN" ONLY AND WILL NOT AFFECT THE ACTUAL, EXISTING ZONING.

The city has now presented a third preliminary general plan to be used in the hearings. This plan is literally

the same as the existing zoning plan of the city under law. This plan was presented at the last meeting of the Association held December 5th and was not accepted.

The Association feels that for the City Planning Commission to accept the present zoning plan as the city's "Master Plan For The Future" is in reality not planning at all.

# **EAST SANTA CRUZ BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

Jim Fearnough, Chairman Planning Committee