

Scotts valley

NESS DEVELOPERS DEVELOPER

Seran praises city attitude

SCOTTS VALLEY -- Developer William Seran said he plans "to give Scotts Valley a residential development the whole city can look upon with pride" on the 18½ acre meadow he recently purchased from Dr. Ansten Ness.

The Whispering Pines drive property was formally rezoned to 'medium density' (7-14.5 units per acre) by the city council July 13 after nearly four months of public hearings before the planning commission and council on whether that density should be allowed there.

During the lengthy proceedings on Dr. Ness' request for rezoning, Seran indicated in his outlined plans that he would build 193 condominium homes in cluster arrangements on the site, which would mean a density of 10.7 units per acre.

At a council hearing June 29, Seran said the project would cover five or more years and he intended to be bound by the density he indicated in his plans.

The Valley Press contacted Mr. Seran regarding his plans; the following is an account of this reporter's interview with him last Wednesday at a restaurant near the summit on Highway 17.

Patently awaiting my late arrival, Mr. Seran opened the conversation by asking my reactions to the name 'hillscape' for his proposed development.

After telling him I thought it sounded like a take-off on the Aptos Seascapes development, he briefly described the project as composed of "193 deluxe condominiums, with 1000 to 1200 square feet for each 2 bedroom, 2 bath unit, retailing between 37 and 41 thousand dollars each."

"We definitely are not appealing to those who are looking towards a second home situation," he said.

Wanting to get off factual matters and into a philosophical discussion of developments, I asked what his feelings were towards developers who came to the planning commission with the development concept, deprecating other existing or proposed developments.

"Listen," he said, "your job is to report the facts. Besides, what anyone else does is their business, and nothing is any good at all unless it works."

"I plan to work closely with the people of Scotts Valley--the administrative people--and put a development there that all the people can look at with pride. That can only be done if it is beneficial to the community," Mr. Seran said.

"There is a rapid acceleration in demand for first class developments in Santa Cruz County, and particularly in Scotts Valley," he said, "we're not catering to those persons who can barely get in our development; the market we're aiming for is those people who can afford it."

"There is a whole new trend in lifestyles," he said, "as people are becoming much more conscious of ecology and the great outdoors. No longer content with an 8 to 5 existence, people want to live in a beautiful environment, now--they no longer want to live in the asphalt jungle of Santa Clara County."

I asked him if that meant the development would primarily appeal to the people in San Jose, to which he replied, "We envision people buying our homes from all over the state--Scotts Valley is charismatic and will probably become one of the most desirable places to live in California in the next 2-3 years; Scotts Valley will become an absolute gem."

"My gut feeling for the area is that it has a solid, forward thinking city administration," he said.

"Since many of the developers presently appearing before the city planning commission had been asked what environmental impact their development would have upon the area, what do you feel the impact of your project will be on the City?" I asked.

"Let me simply say this," Mr. Seran said, "by working with present city administration, the project will be an overwhelming success--and a big plus factor for Scotts Valley."



William Seran

In regard to previous development experience, Mr. Seran said he had been involved in several residential projects in Los Gatos, apartment and commercial developments around the San Francisco Bay area, and two years ago completed the 144 unit Castillo Del Aurora residential development in Livermore.

"The Ness development will make the Livermore development look small by comparison," he said.

Mr. Seran said he had been in real estate business for ten years, and was formerly with Pan American Airways in charge of their accommodations facilities on Wake Island in the Pacific. He said he was 44 years old, had been raised in Fresno, was divorced, and was presently living in Los Gatos.

"I think it is noteworthy" he said, to list the people involved in the Ness development: Phillips Patton of Santa Cruz, who will handle the legal work; Frank Laulainen (of Los Gatos), who will plan and design the project; Dicman Construction Company (of Mountain View), who will build the homes; Ken Finch (Scotts Valley Realty), who handled the land sale; and Bob Baldwin (of Santa Cruz), who will do the engineering. Additionally, we are negotiating with Cliff Short (of Felton) to do some redwood carving and sculpting work for the project," he said.

Mr. Seran said the project was syndicated with a consortium of land investors in Campbell, the Adriana Investment Company, where he maintains his offices.

Speaking more generally, he said, "The only thing going on anywhere is change, and 90 percent of the people do not like change, primarily because it requires effort."

"Moreover, the older you get, the harder it is to change," he said, "so no matter what you do you always have opposition; if you are going to improve things, you will always have opposition."

I said his comments sounded very similar to those of Alvin Toffler in *Future Shock*, and he replied the thought Toffler was quite accurate.

"My personal philosophy is that a numbers man, a super sterile man who wants things perfect, who thinks in terms of how much money he is going to make and looks out only for himself, this type of person is going to be the most alienated of all," he said.

"I believe in self-determination, but on the higher level of pan-determination, where you make the game so everybody wins," Mr. Seran

said, "I think you have to get joy out of seeing somebody else succeed, and if you don't -- you're sick."

Asked about civic organizations or social activities in which he was involved, he said he just plainly didn't have time. He indicated he was serving as the real estate broker on a 16 story apartment complex at the yacht harbor in Santa Cruz, and was considering a commercial development on 10½ acres of property along Mt. Hermon road owned by former Scotts Valley Mayor Bill Graham, in addition to his other development interests.

Mr. Seran said he wanted to get a good start on the Ness project before the winter's rains began, although he said it would be 45-60 days before he would be ready to submit plans for the development to the planning commission in a planned unit development (PUD) application.

He said he first got interested in the Ness property 8 months ago, although he had always been interested in Scotts Valley.

"Scotts Valley is the doorway to the San Lorenzo Valley and its wilderness wonderland," he said, "and the next best thing to actually living there in Felton, Boulder Creek and the natural habitat, is to live in Scotts Valley."

William Seran said he planned to eventually move to Scotts Valley from his home in Los Gatos. I, for one, hope I'll be able to call this new neighbor, Bill, when he does move to our area--which is to say it all depends on what he and I do between now and then.

City police report

SCOTTS VALLEY -- The tevalle Mobile Home Pa reported 6 axles, 12 wheels following incidents were reported to the city police department last week: 12 tires that had been used to transport his home to tevalle were stolen while he been vacationing from Ap

—Herbert Coleman, 552 Bean Creek road (Space 213) Mon-

