

# Felton Town Plan draft greeted by residents' concern, approval

By PAUL BEATTY

Sentinel Staff Writer

FELTON — Nearly everyone liked the Felton Town Plan "in general," but everyone who spoke during a County Planning Commission meeting at San Lorenzo Valley High School Wednesday night had something specific they didn't like about the plan.

After hearing two hours of such testimony, commissioners unanimously agreed to continue the hearing to May 19. The board decision

means the plan can't be approved by the county board of Supervisors until November when supervisors act on their second round of general plan amendments this year.

Primary assaults on specifics in the plan came from property owner Les Ley, a letter campaign by Ronald Coen, which included signatures of about half the business community and a concerted appeal by St. Peter and St. Paul's Orthodox Church of Ben Lomond.

The church's minister, Leo Arrowsmith, said his 534-member congregation was concerned that the plan would make it difficult — if not impossible — for them to build their planned-for church in Felton, on 10 acres adjacent to the Post Office.

The town plan, he noted, includes the 10 acres in one of the protected "viewsheds" of the town, which adds building restrictions. The site is also included in the neighborhood area of the Faye G. Belardi Memorial Library and that means the local

church will not be allowed to build a church that will "dominate" the historic library building.

Arrowsmith said his congregation's church would be only slightly taller than the tower on the church-turned-library at a height of about 40 feet.

"But," he said, "We need a church big enough for 750 to 1,000 people (as) we're bursting at the seams."

He also said the plan's "criteria should not decide the look of the church."

Arrowsmith's remarks were met with solid applause, as nearly half those in attendance — estimated at more than 100 — were members of his church, according to Santa Cruz attorney Kent Washburn, who is a member.

Also getting solid applause was Les Ley, who along with his brother and sister own acreage adjacent to Felton Faire Shopping Center at Mount Hermon and Graham Hill roads.

Ley said the plan "creates great problems," claiming it "downzones" his property next to Felton Faire to only 10 houses. He said it also affects his property south of the Felton Cov-

ered Bridge, which includes an old horse stable.

As Ley spoke, he reminded the audience of the last time he was in the limelight, back in the early 1970s when he sold property to the developers of Felton Faire.

Ley asked if there were any people present who remembered the days of "save the meadow."

There was strong opposition then to the Leys selling their property for development, which with the battle-cry "Save the Meadow" nearly blocked the sale at the county Board of Supervisors level.

It was a different age at Wednesday's meeting, and Ley got warm applause at the mention of wanting to develop his property.

Coen presented more than 40 letters from businessmen and residents who are concerned about the plan. They included letters from the San Lorenzo Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Felton Business Association and the Felton Fire Department.

Commissioner Myrna Britton asked Coen what specific concerns the businessmen had. He answered, "The issues vary all over the sandlot."