

705 Watsonville -

Annexation

# Another snag in Franich annexation

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## Appeal means LAFCO must reconsider vote

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The annexation of Tony Franich's 72 acres to the city of Watsonville has been appealed by a couple who live nearby.

The appeal, by Duane and Pattie Crawford, means the Local Agency Formation Commission must reconsider its Feb. 10 vote for approval of the annexation.

That approval meant Franich will be able to develop housing and a school on the East Lake Avenue site, but he must still get specific development plans approved.

The Crawfords live in the Pajaro Village retirement community, across East Lake Drive from the Franich site. They were involved in a petition drive several years

ago that gathered more than 1,500 signatures of people opposed to the Franich annexation.

The Crawfords say development of the Franich site "will impede traffic by adding 2,000-plus autos and buses to the surrounding residential streets.

"We feel a smaller development on 36 acres would better serve the greater community's needs and give ample room for low-cost housing, an elementary school and a city park," the Crawfords wrote.

The Crawfords ask that an independent consultant be hired to study the impact that development of the Franich site would have on traffic.

Pat McCormick, executive director of LAFCO, said the appeal was

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expected. There are no fees for filing it, and no requirement that LAFCO make any new justification of its vote.

McCormick said other appeals could also be considered by LAFCO; the deadline for filing is March 10.

There is no reason to expect that LAFCO would change its vote — the current membership has steadfastly held to a 3-2 swing in favor of annexation. Ray Belgard, Mick Routh and Gina Koshland have voted for it, and Gary Patton and Bob Garcia against it.

LAFCO is scheduled to consider the appeal April 14, the last meeting for Routh, a Capitola city councilman. His term expires, and he will be replaced by a yet-to-be-determined member of the Santa Cruz City Council.

That change could conceivably swing the vote away from Franich if the vote is delayed from April, but McCormick said he sees no reason for the April vote to be delayed.