

County commission approves Aptos Village park proposal

By CAROLYN HEEBNER-SWIFT

With the blessing of Aptos community leaders, the County Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services (POSCS) Wednesday approved the Aptos Village Parks Master Plan.

First phase improvements for the 6.5 acre park will cost an estimated \$100,000 and will include paving of the entrance road, lower lot parking for 36 cars, work on erosion and gopher problems, irrigation, and grading for the park's two usable acres. The remainder rests in a riparian corridor.

Dick Powell, a representative of the Citizens' Advisory Committee, that helped create the park plan, said that as a member of the Cabrillo Host Lions Club, he was pleased with the project, which will increase public use of the building his organization helped construct several years ago.

Glenn Specht, president of Aptos Chamber of Commerce, and Lucile Aldrich, a chamber director and member of the Aptos Ladies Tuesday evening Society, were the only two speakers during the public hearing. Both made comments that altered the commission's final motion of approval.

Commissioners agreed to Mrs. Specht's request for pedestrian access from the upper level of Soquel Drive behind the Pop Inn, along the creek bank.

The chamber president also said

that as an Aptos resident, she has had a long-time interest in the Village park and is now concerned about the park entrance, which is even less visible with the realignment of the T. Hopkins right-of-way. The entrance must also fit next to the access road into the proposed 90 unit Village Glen development project.

This road along the edge of the roadway into the park was granted to the developer by county supervisors, she said, and there now is some concern that both trees in the area and the park itself could suffer from the road construction. Mrs. Specht said the Forest of Nisene Marks Citizens Advisory Committee plans to ask county supervisors to reexamine their approval.

Parks commissioners agreed to note in their motion to "keep a watch on the Village Glen access road."

Mrs. Aldrich first expressed her worry that construction of the park project might begin this summer, perhaps at the time the park is most needed by the Aptos Ladies Tuesday Evening Society for its annual fourth of July Parade. She was assured by county parks staff however the work plans will be scheduled around the annual event.

She then stressed to commissioners the need to key the village park plan to the Aptos Village Development Plan in order to insure parking space in the upper portion of the village core.

Mrs. Aldrich noted that when her alternative route proposed for the Village Traffic Plan was denied by the Planning Commission, the specifications of the Aptos Village Plan were used as a justification. Therefore, she said, planners must adhere to the designation of parking for the community park in the area behind the Aptos Station project.

"The Aptos Village Plan does state that a lot will be built for recreational

parking," she said, "If there isn't one, park visitors will no doubt use the spaces for Aptos Station. And we don't want the park to become a nuisance. But it is a part of the village, and in planning, the whole village must be considered."

Mrs. Specht also commented the Forest of Nisene Marks planners also wish to see a lot provided in the same area for state park use. And traffic district studies have illustrated a further need for parking at that site.

Commissioners will ask the Board of Supervisors to keep an eye out for possible additional recreational parking space in the village itself.

Financing for park improvements may be provided through 1980 Park Bond Act funding. Robert Palmer of Ellmore, Titus Architects, designers of the park plan, said that the estimated cost of the project is about \$100,000, with the parking, road, and ball field to take up most of the funds.

Parks commissioners agreed to a distribution formula for the park bond monies Thursday night, and gave a general approval to the idea of using a portion of the money for the Aptos Village Park project. However, they will wait until Feb. 9 to make a final decision.

Features of the park plan include a multi-purpose playing field suitable for youth league games, a playground and tot-lot, horseshoes and volleyball court, jogging and nature trails. Security for the park will be provided by an on-site park staff to work in a small office that will be added to the building.

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